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New Delhi-110057.

Ali Sardar Jafri, K. A. Abbas, lil Chaudhury, Utpal Dutt, Sova n, Suchitra Mitra, Hemango iswas. Subhash Mukhopadhyay, iti Banerjee, Sadhana Ray Chaudhury, Dilip Bose, Kali Banerjee, Shanta Gandhi, Dina Pathak, Dr. Vipin Gandhi etc

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P. S. LAMBA
Vice-Chancellor
Haryana Agricultural
University,
[illegible], Hissar.

The inadvertent mistakes are regretted—Editor.

Urdu Press

It is good that LINK has started a column on 'Urdu Press'. Urdu speaking people and all lovers of Urdu will welcome your move. Through your column, non-Urdu speaking people can have an idea of the problems in the way of Urdu's development.

O. K. Khan
New Delhi.

Appeal

A plan for publication of a commemoration volume on the late Dr. Benoy Roy of Jawaharlal Nehru University has, we understand, been undertaken by a friendly publisher. In this connection we urgently appeal to all friends and admirers of the late Dr. Roy, in India and abroad, who had been connected with him in the Indian Peoples Theatre, Trade Union or Communist movements as also with his educational and social activities to make this project a success by sending all relevant materials or information to :-

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INDIA

THURSDAY (Dec 22):

Opposition and Government leaders have reached consensus over the proposal that the fundamental right to life and liberty guaranteed by the constitution should not be suspended under any kind of emergency—internal or external.

FRIDAY (Dec 23):

The new industrial policy statement placed before Parliament on Friday seeks to promote cottage and small industries and guide the growth of the large scale sector on well demarcated lines keeping in view the country's socio-economic goals.

Presenting the statement, Industry Minister George Fernandes said so far the emphasis had been on large industries and cottage and small industries had been neglected. "It is the firm policy of this Government to change this approach," he said in the Lok Sabha.

SATURDAY (Dec 24):

President N. Sanjiva Reddy called for a national consensus on vital issues affecting the people such as rise in prices, unemployment, unrest among students, welfare of the economically weaker sections and social reforms.

Inaugurating a two-day conference of State Governors, the first to be held since he assumed the nation's highest office, Reddy said such consensus among parties sharing common ideals and goals would make legislation for social reform easy and smooth.

SUNDAY (Dec 25):

Mrs Indira Gandhi will preside over a "rebel AICC" session on New Year's Day, though it will be called a "National Convention of Congressmen." A formal announcement about the two-day "convention is expected to be made on Monday. Originally it was reported that Mr Kamlapati Tripathi would be the president.

MONDAY (Dec 26):

A split in the Congress seems certain with the suspension of Karnataka Chief Minister Devraj Urs from the party on Monday, following a formal announcement from Mrs Indira Gandhi's camp about the "rebel AICC" session called by her followers on January 1 and 2 in the guise of a "national convention of Congressmen."

TUESDAY (Dec 27):

The Indian National Congress split on the eve of its 92nd Birth Anniversary, as Mrs Indira Gandhi pulled her seven supporters out of the 21-member Working Committee, following a strong denunciation of her convention move by Congress president Brahmananda Reddy and Parliamentary Party leader Y B Chavan. The seven who resigned in protest against the suspension of Karnataka Chief Minister Devraj Urs from the Congress on Monday, were: Kamlapati Tripathi, P V Narasimha Rao, A P Sharma, Mir Qasim, Maragatham Chandrasekhar, Buta Singh and Virendra Verma.

WEDNESDAY (Dec 28):

The Congress Working Committee has by consensus came out against the "convention" move of Mrs Gandhi's followers.

ABROAD

THURSDAY (Dec 22):

An anti-apartheid group accused several West German and internationals firms of secretly supplying South Africa with equipment for a uranium enrichment plant.

Mongolian leader Yumzhagin Tsedenbal has launched a sharp attack on the Chinese leadership, alleging that it posed "an immense danger" to peace, Tass news agency said.

FRIDAY (Dec 23):

The Western Saharan Polisario Liberation Front will hand-over eight French hostages to United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim at the residence in Algiers of the representative of the UN Development Fund today, sources close to Dr Waldheim said.

SATURDAY (Dec 24):

The USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium has appointed Mr Yuli Vorontsov (48), who headed the Soviet delegation at the Belgrade conference on European security, as the USSR's new Ambassador to India.

President Anwar Sadat named Egypt's ambassador to Bonn Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel as Foreign Minister in succession to Mr Ismail Fahmi.

SUNDAY (Dec 25):

Premier Menachem Begin submitted to President Anwar Sadat Israel's proposals for a West Asia settlement during a full 20-minute session at their peace summit. Earlier, Mr Sadat and Mr Begin had talked alone for 55 minutes.

MONDAY (Dec 26):

President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Israeli Premier Menachem Begin today failed to achieve any breakthrough on the main obstacle to a West Asia peace—the Palestinian question—despite two days of intensive talks in Ismailia. Begin later flew back to Jerusalem.

TUESDAY (Dec 27):

Begun Nusrat Bhutto, wife of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and acting chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party, was detained in Lahore, police said.

WEDNESDAY (Dec 28):

President Anwar Sadat was quoted by Egyptian newspapers as saying Israel had not yet taken the tough decisions needed to produce West Asia peace.

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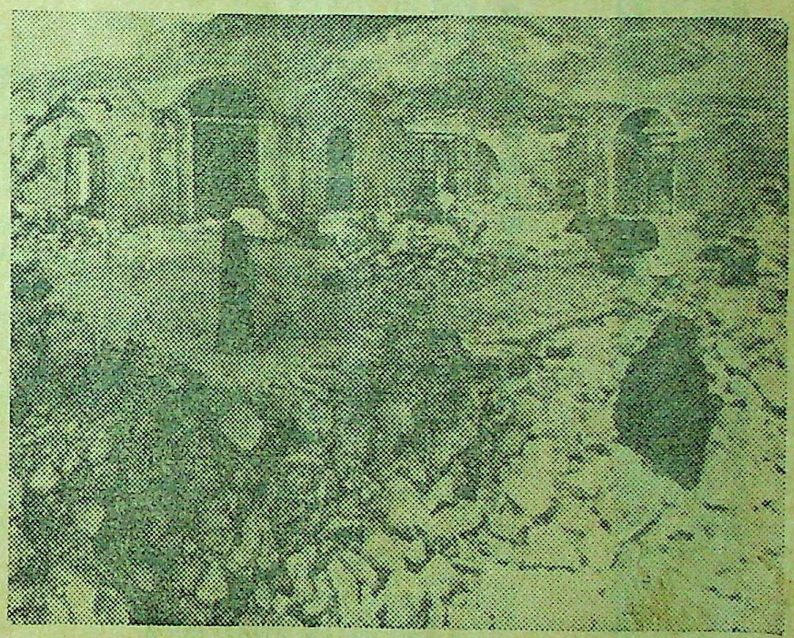
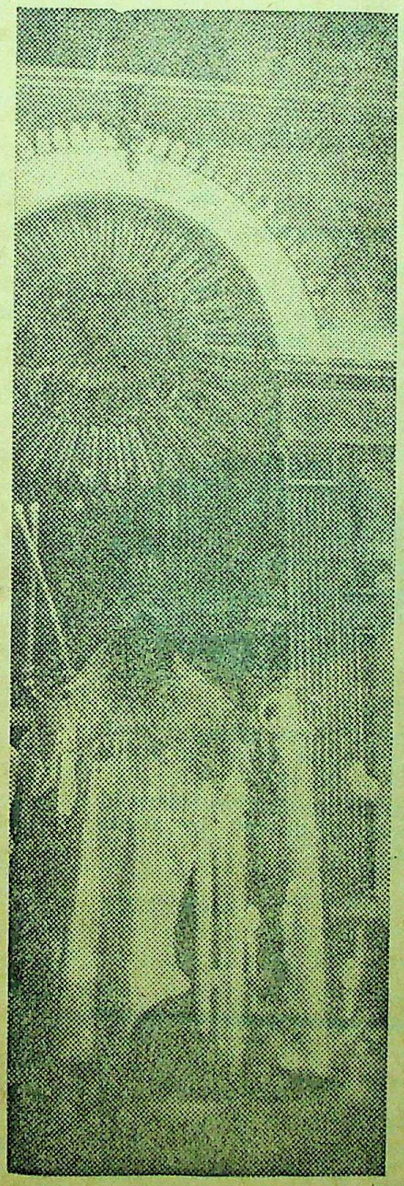
Master Peter Mark Andrew Phillips breaks into a half smile, as he is held by his mother, Britain's Princess Anne.

A veil clad woman mourns the loss of her family as she sits on the ruins of her home in the village of Bal-Tangol, epicentre of the recent earthquake in southern Iran.

Tanker 'Venoil' ablaze off Cape St. Francis.

Metropolitan Philaret, Exarch of the Muscovite Patriarchate for Berlin and Central Europe consecrating the renovated Russian orthodox church in Potsdam.





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JANUARY 1, 1978

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the week

THE happy hordes of South Block are about to have their maddest and merriest hour, for President Carter will be upon them and us soon. Untilted, genuine nonalignment will be ours. (If there had been any tinge of a tilt, would not Carter have included Peking or Rawalpindi in the itinerary?) Was it not he who gave us the "chit" that we too are a great nation in our region, just as his own is the greatest in the world? Was it not he, alone among western statesmen who perceived that we are the "greatest" democracy? He was; and it was his America's New Year present to us.

He may be coming to inspect the true genuineness of our nonalignment. His mission may be to buy a pair of Palkhiwala chappals for his mother. He may be after us to lasso us and yoke us to America's world nuclear policy under which America should be the greatest nuclear power and can explode as many atomic, hydrogen and neutron bombs as it wants to, and people like us should merely look on and marvel and never try to imitate our betters, the nuclear "sahbs." These, however, will not be all the contents of the Carter wagon. There may be dollars too in the visit, because Mr Palkhiwala is in Washington and no one can beat him at wheedling.

Heralding Mr Carter, we are told, have come American folk singers, journalists, security people—and naturally CIA folk, because they never lose sight of their President, not because they suspect him but because wherever he is there may be chances too to do a little snooping-and-destabilizing. Almost a whole five-star hotel has been taken up by this advance team, making the Indian hearts beating anywhere near them gladder and merrier.

Naturally, all of us find ourselves asking, "What shall we give Carter when Carter gives us so much?" We shall give him boundless love, honour and esteem; but these can be faked. What he really would like more than all these is of course concrete changes in our foreign and defence policies. We have given indications already that we are ready to be part of the sub-continent as Washington would like to reorganize it. That is good; but not good enough for Washington which—all of us must remember, without of course mentioning it—has lost Vietnam. Can the Janata Party Government and Subramanian Swami, who is about to go to China, do something about this?

THE EDITOR

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First Phase Of 2nd Congress Split

THE two-month-long suicidal struggle in the Congress landed it squarely in the first phase of the second split in the party on the eve of its 92nd birth anniversary this week. Indira Gandhi, checkmated in every move she made till then to oust the leadership and take over the party as a subservient tool, decided to step up the war of nerves she had waged. She pulled her seven supporters, several of them unhappy, out of the Congress Working Committee after setting the stage for her rebel "AICC" session on New Year's Day. Neither she nor the rump which stuck to her in a hangover of fear were willing to agree that they were splitting the party. Naturally, they were anxious to claim that they represented the real Congress.

The leadership headed by Brahmananda Reddy was not anxious to make any claims except to say it was not forcing anyone to leave the Congress. Indira Gandhi apparently banked on being able to provoke Reddy, Y B Chavan and other members of the party leadership to initiate disciplinary action and expel her and her supporters from the party so that she could then go before the "people" and say once again that she had been badly treated. Reddy, Chavan and their colleagues in the party High Command were not ready to provide her that opportunity. They decided to play it cool and let her get out of the party if she so decided for whatever reasons she had. The most commonly discussed was her desire to create a political shield for herself against any action the Janata Party Government might take on the basis of the reports of the enquiry commissions now going into various emergency excesses including her younger son's role in the most lurid or cruel of them.

The leadership appeared to have decided to ignore the resignation letters at least till they have had a clearer assessment of Indira Gandhi's intentions: this may come after the convention she has called, meets. In the meanwhile they will also know how the ordinary Congressman reacts—though even at midweek they were fairly sure that a majority of the Congress units in the various States and members of Parliament and legislatures were with them.

For Indira Gandhi herself, the response to the convention would show what she should do now—try to storm the AICC office with her firebrand followers or the goons hired by the caucus or leave the Congress and form a new party. The convention will thus mark the completion of the first phase of the second Congress split and the beginning of the more crucial second phase in which both sides may have to fight a grim protracted struggle to claim the party flag, the symbol and offices of the Indian National Congress—besides the allegiance of Congressmen across the country.

DISAPPOINTMENT

Indira Gandhi lost the first round of her challenge when she could not secure the support of more than seven members of the 21-member Working Committee. She must have felt disappointed when, even after personal telephone calls, several members declined to sign the joint resignation letter drafted by P V Narasimha Rao. Only her known followers—Kamlapati Tripathi, A P Sharma, Mir Qasim, Virendra Verma, P V Narasimha Rao, Maragatham, Chandrasekhar and Buta Singh — agreed to sign on the dotted line. The name of Shankar Dayal Sharma, all along known to have been close to her—though he never displayed this support in the manner the cruder "priests at her temple" like A R Antulay and V P Sathe—was missing from the list. Besides declining to sign the resignation letter, he announced his decision not to attend the convention called by her followers on January 1 and 2. Another notable name missing was that of K C Pant, who had carefully avoided taking sides in the current strife to maintain the neutral role of a peacemaker but who was expected by many to stand by Indira Gandhi when chips were down. Pant announced that he found no reason why he should resign and also that he would keep out of Indira Gandhi's convention. There was a report (unconfirmed till Wednesday) that like Mir Qasim, V P Naik may also end up on Indira Gandhi's side because of the personal and political equations in the Maharashtra Congress, if not for personal inclinations or antipathies. However, he also refused to quit the CWC at her behest or attend the convention.

Brahmananda Reddy and Mrs Gandhi at the AICC office after the Congress Founding Day flag hoisting.

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A majority of the Working Committee members—13 against eight—thus stood by the party leadership till mid-week. That kept the party High Command solid as a block, which must have dashed Indira Gandhi's hopes of sharply dividing the Working Committee so that she could claim to be the leader of the "real" Congress and drag her rivals into a long-drawn court case. It does not, however, mean that she is going to give up the claim easily even now. Her whole effort now is likely to be directed to ensure that Reddy and Chavan cannot take their men to the forthcoming Assembly polls as Congressmen.

What must have further caused despair in Indira Gandhi's camp is the wide support received by Reddy and Chavan to their call for the boycott of her convention from Congressmen throughout the country. Immediately as AICC general secretary V B Raju released the two-page joint statement of Reddy and Chavan (characterising the convention as a "facade and camouflage" for splitting the party), messages began pouring in from a large number of MPs, AICC members, PCC presidents and other office-bearers as well as prominent Congressmen endorsing their call. Within a few hours, the PCC presidents of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Assam as well as leaders of the legislature parties of several States announced their allegiance to the party High Command. Prominent Congressmen including K D Malaviya, Bhaktvatslam, Triloki Singh, Ramlakhan Yadav and many others came out strongly against the proposed convention. Of the four Congress Chief Ministers, only one, Karnataka's Devraj Urs, stood by her.

Thus, it appeared that even in the 639-member AICC, for which most of the men were hand picked by her at the time of the last organisational election in 1972, Indira Gandhi might not be able to secure majority support, particularly as many of Kamlapati Tripathi's followers in UP may desert him in the crucial battle. Senior UP Congressmen like Baldeo Singh Arya, Jagan Prasad Rawat, Dharam Dutt Vaidya, Lakshmi Shankar Yadav, Shiv Swaroop Singh and Shiv Nath Singh have already informed Reddy that they stand by the party leadership. There is still a possibility that if Tripathi mobilises all his men and resources, he may be able to secure a majority for Indira Gandhi among the AICC members in her home State. Another State where she expects to get a majority of AICC members on her side is Bihar, though many like Baliram Bhagat and Ramlakhan Singh Yadav say the majority of Congressmen in the legislature as well as the AICC will support the party High Command. Even in Karnataka, Urs himself expects only about 15 to 20 of the 32 AICC members to attend the convention.

Every move of hers since her outburst against Reddy and Chavan at the last AICC session is meticulously planned and precise in detail. There is thus reason to believe that she has a very definite plan for herself. As her close associates say, she had become suspect of Reddy's loyalty and intentions immediately after his election as the Congress president. She was unhappy about the resolution adopted at the AICC session held after the defeat of the party in the Lok Sabha poll. The resolution had referred critically to the emergency misuse of power. She was keen that the references be rescinded at an opportune time. She was also keen to ensure that those critical of the emergency excesses and misuse of power are not only denied any position of influence in the party but also gradually weeded out of it. Obviously, Reddy did not carry out her designs in this regard. This annoyed her much.

Perhaps, what annoyed her most was the unwillingness of Reddy and Chavan to use the Congress as a sheild to protect the guilty. She was unhappy about Reddy's refusal to take action against those who had recorded critical statements about emergency excesses with the Shah Commission investigators. She was also annoyed that Reddy and Chavan were not playing court to her as they used to in the past. Every decision Reddy or Chavan attempted to take independent of her angered Mrs Gandhi. This was particularly true in matters like constitution of the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka PCCs. While all those grievances were building up inside her, she seemed to be becoming ever more desperate over what was happening around her, particularly the various enquiries into the emergency affairs relating to her and her close associates.

Obviously Reddy and Chavan were reluctant to allow her to use the Congress as a shield to protect herself and her emergency associates, including her son, Sanjay Gandhi. But they were unwilling to agree to her demand that the Congress defend the emergency in toto. They seemed to argue that the Congress can defend its policies and programmes and any mistakes committed in their implementation by the partymen or the Indira Gandhi Government. But the Congress could not be used to defend misuse of power.

STRATEGY

Her strategy at first was to confront the party leadership with the two equally undesirable alternatives of either surrendering to her wishes or facing a split in the hope that, fearing a split, they would finally crumble down before her. That was the objective behind the requisition move, which failed miserably. She changed her tactics and this time threatened possible split by resigning from the Working Committee while encouraging Urs to defy the party leadership. Her followers soon began preparing for a rebel AICC session. The proposal was later amended under the pressure of peacemakers like Swaran Singh, V P Naik, K C Pant and Hitendra Desai. Instead of calling a "rebel AICC" session, they began calling it a convention of Congressmen. Indira Gandhi had hoped that once Reddy accepts her resignation, she will find enough support from among the CWC members on the plea that a split in the party was being forced by him and Chavan and not by her. However, Reddy and Chavan resolved to keep a decision on her resignation pending on the suggestion of the peacemakers. Feeling that they were showing signs of weakness, Indira Gandhi decided to give a boost to the convention by agreeing to preside over its two sessions. All the preparations continued to be made as if it were a rebel AICC session.

Reddy and Chavan shocked her with their decision to suspend Urs from the Congress. She hit back hard by pulling her seven supporters out of the Congress Working Committee, leaving only the split to be formalised which might be done soon after the convention.

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Kow-Towing To Carter

WE will never know the measurements Nani Palkhivala took of Lillian Carter's feet. But he has let the world know that the prospects of Indo-American relations measure truly up to the desire of all the like-minded people who would stoop to be conquered. He considers the possibilities unprecedented, and so do the official spokesmen of Washington. And, both sides stress their common grounds of hope.

It is striking that while, in the case of Indo-Soviet ties, both sides emphasize that the enduring friendship transcends all political barriers, both New Delhi and Washington should be harping on the point that Indo-American relations have reached a new phase of ardour with the recent changes of governments in the two countries. This may seem to imply a special kind of relations depending upon a selective bias, but it is actually sought to be projected as the correction of a past bias. The basic theme of the propagandists of the new tilt is that recent political changes have brought about a community of outlook between the two countries. It is claimed that both the Janata Government and the Carter Administration are committed to "democracy" and "decency in public life". The projection is then made from the international to foreign policies to posit that India has shifted to a stance of "genuine nonalignment" and the US to a more vigorous championship of "human rights".

President Carter's three-day visit to India, beginning on Sunday, it is rhapsodized, will herald a new age of joint Indo-American endeavour in the promotion of these hazy but high-sounding objectives. What this rhetorical camouflage conceals can help to reveal the shape of the concerted diplomatic and economic offensive directed against India's immediate and long-term interests.

IMPLICATIONS

What, in the first place, are the specific implications of "genuine nonalignment" or how in fact has it paved the way for better Indo-American relations? The first indication of change in this regard, noted approvingly by the Pentagon, was the Indian Government's decision to treat Diego Garcia as non-existent. If India had earlier aligned itself with the other littoral countries and the Socialist world in protesting against the building of a full-fledged imperialist military base in the Indian Ocean, posing a direct threat to it, it has now been decided to campaign against all "super-power presence" in the ocean—even though all absurd theories about the "Soviet presence" in the region have been disproved conclusively.

A second indication, of an even more serious nature, was Prime Minister Morarji Desai's off-the-cuff assurance that India would not conduct any more nuclear explosions even for peaceful purposes. It has since been clarified, following a public outcry, that this was not a policy announcement; but the men in Washington have continued to treat it precisely as such. Only recently, they ventured to suggest that since India had given up its right to conduct nuclear explosions on its own, it should have no objection to an international or American inspection of the Indian nuclear plants under construction also. New Delhi is reported to have rejected the proposal and pointed out that such an arrangement would amount to an encroachment on India's sovereignty. Undeterred, the Americans have gone on to express the hope that the Prime Minister's statement promises also to narrow the differences over the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

A third major proof of "genuine nonalignment" has been seen in India's ambiguous reaction to the Sadat mission to Israel. Somewhat in the style of the American establishment (where any outrageous foreign policy announcement is accompanied by media leaks about alleged differences between the White House, the State Department and the Congress about it), it was later said that it was only an official who had hailed the event, and that the Government itself has stuck to its position of not reacting to the situation — though clearly attempts were being made to disunite the anti-Zionist camp in West Asia and weaken the cause of the Palestinians.

CRUSADE

The heightened US commitment to "human rights" under Carter, similarly is beginning to be seen as an attempt to revive the cold war era of Dulles. The US rulers have revealed no new awareness of the threat to "human rights" posed by racism —the Black US permanent representative to the UN, Andrew Young, has in fact been sharply pulled up for talking too much about the subject, and American efforts are continuing to stall the peaceful settlement of the South African and Rhodesian issues. The mantra of "human rights", on the other hand, is being used as a cover for the stepped up activities of the military hawks and monopolist profiteers. A corollary to the theory of "human rights" has been a phenomenal increase in the US military budget under the new President. This has been accompanied by a new offensive to stall the dialogue with the Soviet Union on detente by making it conditional on Carter's right to pronounce frequently on Soviet internal affairs. It will be a genuine interpretation of the concept of nonalignment if the developing nations are not asked or expected to be neutral on such vital questions of world peace. But today's rulers of our country are not prepared to adopt such a position.

American propagandists preparing India for Carter are peddling the theory that the US foreign policy now represents a radical departure from the legacy of the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger years and seeks also to correct the "tilt" of that period against India. The basic change is spelt out in an official summary thus: "In the wake of the Vietnam experience and the domestic turmoil of the mid-1970s, Mr Carter realized that such an adjustment required the clearing away of some underbrush. This he did in an address to Notre Dame University on May 22, reminding the world that the United States was no longer paralyzed by self-doubt or governed by leaders infected with a 'covert pessimism' about the future of democratic systems".

It is against the perspective of this global role America under Carter is seeking to assert anew that the significance of the Carter visit has to be measured. The public emphasis on the occasion is likely to be put on the economic aspects of Indo-American relations (which will cover the proposal to activise the Indo-US Joint Commission in tune with the new Indian policy of indulgence towards multinationals). But no talk of "genuine nonalignment" can hide the dangerous political dimension of the special relationship that is being sought to be built.

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YEAR-END REVIEWS

Many Shocks, Many Questions

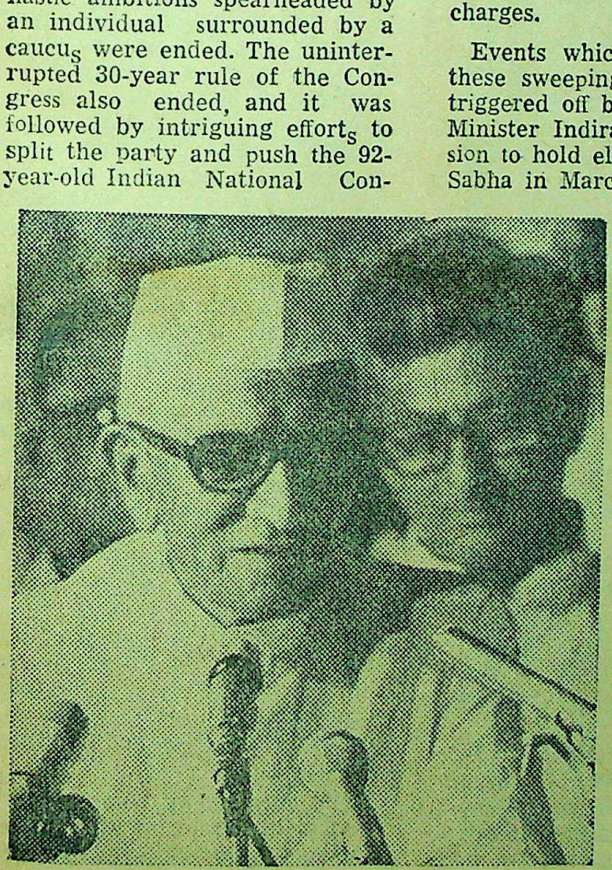
A YEAR of natural and other disasters, shocks, surprises, and collapse of an authoritarian regime the debri of which still clutters the political scene, mounting violence against the poor and growing disillusionment among the masses—1977 passes into history as the Indian horizon seems clouded by thick mists of uncertainty and anxiety. The polity is threatened with fragmentation, administration is in the doldrums; and in spite of a massive buffer stock and a comfortable foreign exchange position the economy is pulled in contradictory directions in bursts of passion and bigotry.

The year began under a continuing pull of emergency misrule, though it soon saw the people assert themselves at the first given opportunity with quiet determination, and with a vengeance, they rejected the emerging depotic structure. Dynastic ambitions spearheaded by an individual surrounded by a caucus were ended. The uninterrupted 30-year rule of the Congress also ended, and it was followed by intriguing efforts to split the party and push the 92-year-old Indian National Congress into a disastrous and uncertain future.

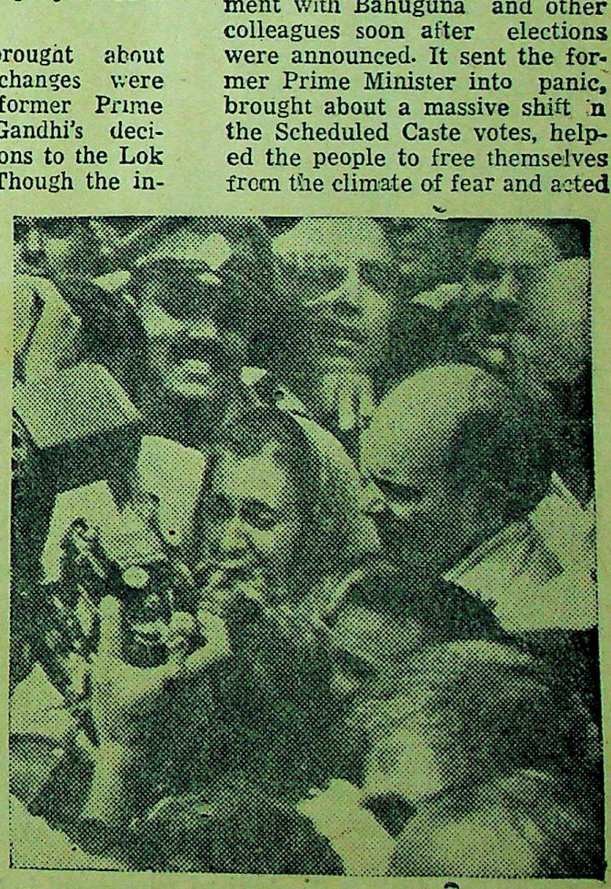
It was a year of poetic justice in that Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, whose candidature for the Presidentship of the Republic led to the 1969 split in the Congress, was installed as the head of the Republic with Congress support. Morarji Desai, whom historical forces had consigned to the political wilderness, emerged to assume the office of the Prime Minister which had sought for long and without success. And a recent fugitive from law and self-confessed planner of sabotage and subversion, George Fernandes became a member of the Central Council of Ministers. The Jayaprakash Narayan crusade against corruption out of which emerged the Janata Party failed to prevent the installation in the new Governments of persons involved before earlier Commissions of Enquiry on such charges.

Events which brought about these sweeping changes were triggered off by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's decision to hold elections to the Lok Sabha in March. Though the internal emergency proclaimed on fateful June 25, 1975, continued to be enforced, leaders of various political parties opposed to the Congress were released from jail. They managed to belie the expectation that their disperate groups — wedded to conflicting ideologies and pursuing divergent policies—would fail to put up a united front. By keeping them together in jail during the period of the emergency Indira Gandhi may have prepared the ground for their coming together. Their passion for revenge spurred them to push their differences under the carpet, and pursue single-mindedly the objective of pulling down Indira Gandhi from power.

But the one single development which electrified the atmosphere and finally tilted the scales against the Congress was Jagjivan Ram's decision to quit the Congress and the Government with Bahuguna and other colleagues soon after elections were announced. It sent the former Prime Minister into panic, brought about a massive shift in the Scheduled Caste votes, helped the people to free themselves from the climate of fear and acted



Prime Minister Morarji Desai after election as leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party.



Former Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi after her release.

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as a morale booster for the newly-born Janata Party. The alliance of Jagjivan Ram, Bahuguna and their friends enabled the communalists and obscurantists in the Janata Party to hide their real face, helped the minorities and the poor—a sizable section of the Muslims and the Harijans—swing in its support. Even the rural poor were lulled into supporting the defenders of the landlords and the socially and economically dominant classes in the country.

And, when elections came, as if by a giant broom, the Congress was swept off the political scene in the vast northern stretch from Punjab to West Bengal and Orissa. Not only the Prime Minister and her son suffered ignominous defeats but the Congress drew a blank in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab. the two other Hindi-speaking States, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh—first managed to send one Congress member each to the Lok Sabha. South of the Vidhyas, the picture was different. Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra voted for the Congress decisively. The United Front in Kerala and Tamilnadu added to the Congress strength and enabled it to become the biggest Opposition in the Lok Sabha.

The rout in the North appeared largely to be a consequence of the excesses committed in Delhi which had become the laboratory for the experiments conducted by the caucus surrounding the former Prime Minister—experiments with human lives and liberty. Indira Gandhi appeared to have completely cut herself off from public opinion and all channels of democratic communication were blocked. The intensity of the wrath of the people — which they had carefully kept concealed — came as a shock to the vanquished. Even the visitors were surprised; in the wildest of their dreams, they did not expect such sweeping success. The fury with which the people were determined to oust the Congress from power was revealed not only in the Janata Party victory but also in the success of the CPM-led Left Front in West Bengal.

The Congress lost in the North because the Opposition succeeded in making democracy versus dictatorship the main issue. It won in the South where the battle assumed the character of a trial of strength between the rich and the poor.

Riding on the crest of its success in the Lok Sabha elections, the Janata Party lost no time in its bid to consolidate its hold in the States; it dissolved the Assemblies in nine States, without caring for criticism and protest and once again ripped a rich harvest. The success of Janata Party and its allies, the CP-M and the Akalis, in the State Assembly elections completed the first chapter of the post-emergency hurricane which swept the country. The victory of the ADMK in Tamilnadu and later Sheikh Abdulla's success in Jammu and Kashmir highlighted the emergence of regional forces.

Saddled with power, the Janata Party Government felt lost —except where the various passions of its constituents became the base for the reversal of major policies specially in the field of economy, education, science and technology and planning. During the first few weeks the people were served with a plethora of attractive promises; removal of destitution, unemployment, and illiteracy, and promise of a new deal for the villagers, generous assurances to the industrial workers and freedom all round. But the euphoria began to wane rapidly. Prices began to shoot up, housewives and consumers started complaining, workers' agitations began to be greeted with growing intolerance and repression. But the biggest change that came about was in rural India. The landlords, confident that their Government in power, let loose a reign of terror against the Harijans and other sections of the rural poor. Belchi, where 16 poor Harijans were burnt alive, became the symbol of numerous other incidents of inhuman atrocities against and repression of the socially and economically oppressed sections of society.

Not surprisingly, implementation of land reforms was pushed to the background, the food policy altered to suit the wishes of the traders; and in the field of

Acting President B. D. Jatti ad ministering the oath of office of the Prime Minister of India to Morarji Desai.

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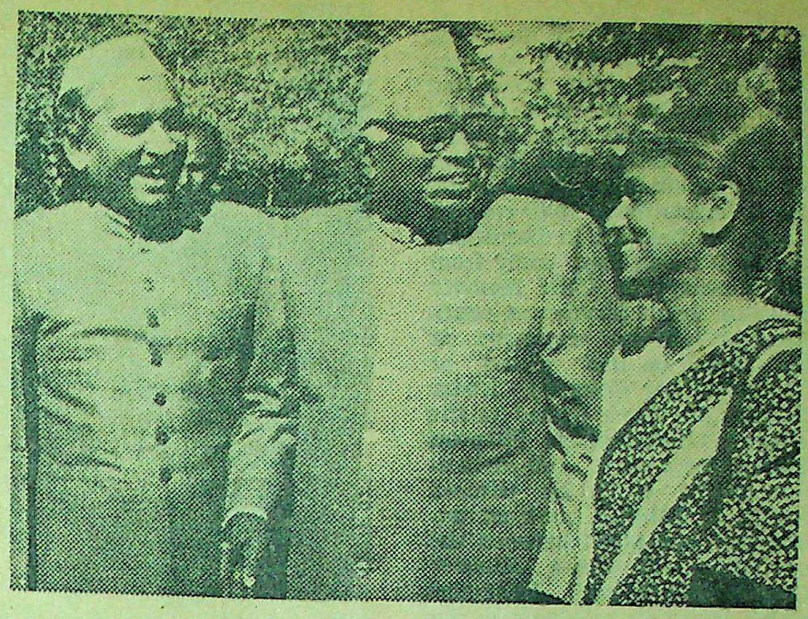
economy multinationals and big business began to be wooed. The planning process came under attack and the concept of time-bound target-oriented five-year Plans were sought to be scrapped with the introduction of the rolling Plan. The autonomy of scientific research institutions was sought to be undermined; and the Government's renunciation of nuclear explosions even for peaceful purposes and research was viewed by the scientific community as a surrender to American pressure. A policy of freezing India's industrial development was paraded as homage to the development of small and rural industries. In fact the role of the backward-looking forces in politics reflected itself in the field of economic policy.

While power acted as a binding force and enabled the disperate components of the Janata conglomerate to remain together, tensions erupted in several States and even as the year ended, there were little signs of the Janata Party acquiring the feature of a viable and homogenous political force. By striking a bargain between themselves, the Jana Sangh and BLD succeeded in capturing the chief-ministership in the Janata-run States. But this alerted the other components who discerned in the emerging pattern a silly device on the part of RSS to spread its tentacles far and wide.

Apart from the personal ambitions of Charan Singh, who continued to covet the primeministership, differences began to become sharper within the Janata Party on several issues. Denigration and defence of Jawaharlal Nehru, attack and support for the public sector, pleas for industrial development and opposition, support and opposition for an open door policy towards multinational corporations, implementation and shelving of land reforms and several other controversies revealed the difference in approach and policy amongst the various Janata leaders. At one stage, it appeared that a serious confrontation might develop.

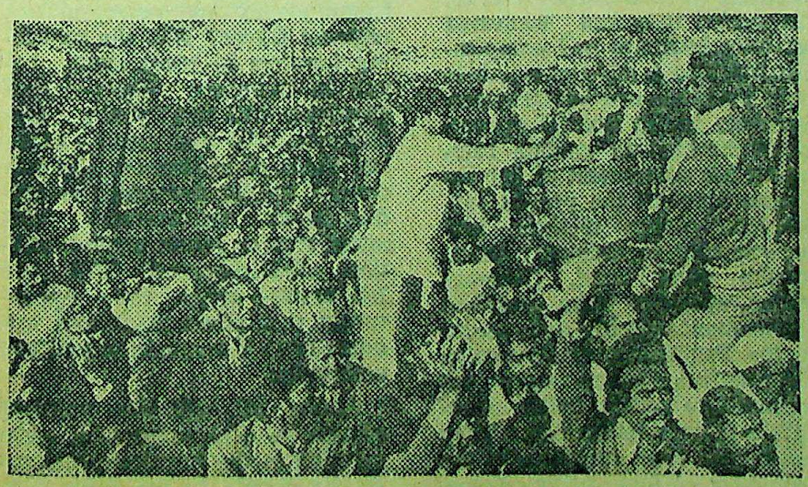


From left: H. N. Bahuguna, Jagjivan Ram and Nandini Satpathy.

The bungling evident in the arrest and release of Indira Gandhi and the volatile public reaction to it helped, on the one hand, the former Prime Minister to launch a big offensive to capture the Congress and, as a reaction, checked the process of differentiation between the various Janata Party groups. The fear of Indira Gandhi and the entire emergency retinue coming back to the forefront spurred the Janata leadership to patch up their differences at least for the time being.

Indira Gandhi, who drew big crowds during her visits to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Gujarat, launched a campaign to capture the Congress; and on meeting with resistance from the party leadership, she appeared determined to break it. While on the one hand she was engaged in forging a political instrument completely subservient to her, she simultaneously began a dogged legal battle on the question of the procedures followed by the Commission of Enquiry headed by Justice J. C. Shah. Depositions before the Commission included shocking allegations of atrocities, excesses, abuse of power, emergence of the extra-constitutional authority and actions that inflicted unheard of hardships on the poor, the weak and the defenceless. Commissions of enquiry were also set up to go into the affairs of the Maruti, the Nagarwala episode, allegations about amassing of wealth by former Defence Minister Bansi Lal.

While the proceedings of these commissions were given wide publicity (undoubtedly damaging the image of the former Prime Minister and her entourage) it did not help the Janata Party to maintain its hold on the popular mind or to keep its own house in order. From West Bengal, where the aged P. C. Sen refused to head the ad hoc State committee as a protest against the inclusion of allegedly undesirable elements in it, to Haryana where like his old foe Bansi Lal Janata Chief Minister Devi Lal was locked in a battle with the only woman Minister Shushma Swaraj, the Janata Party appeared to be in the grip of serious convulsions. A majority of the Janata



First Janata election rally at Ramlila grounds.

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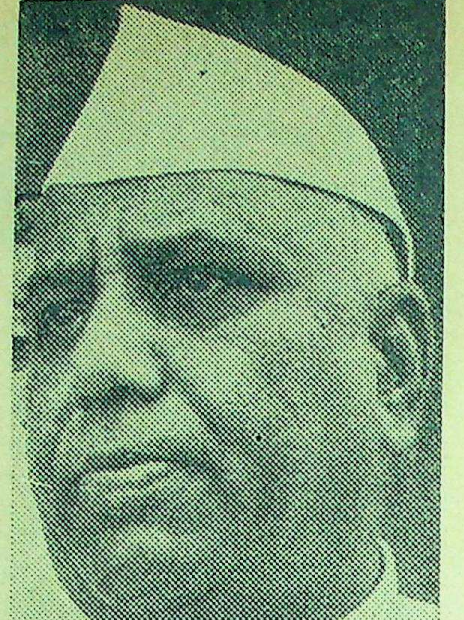
legislators were demanding the ouster of the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and the ailing Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kailash Joshi was struggling hard to survive the machinations of RSS strongman V K Saklecha (who had earlier been deprived of the chiefministership because the Socialists threw their support in Joshi's favour). In Rajasthan, the BLD group kept away from the Ministry and Chief Minister Bhairon Singh Shekhawat continued to postpone expansion of his Cabinet on one pretext or another. Bihar Cong(O) leader Satyanarain Singh waited in the wings as Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur went on a self-purification fast to repair his tattered image. In Uttar Pradesh an undeclared war raged between the supporters of Home Minister Charan Singh and Bahuguna which found its reflection in the defeat of the Janata Party in a by-election to the State Assembly from the Lucknow city constituency. Sensing that dissatisfaction was mounting within the Janata ranks against him and various constituent leaders were trying to isolate him, Charan Singh decided to demonstrate his strength by organising a massive rally on his birthday and staked the claims of the kisans to lead both the State and the Central Governments.

WARFARE

While the ruling Janata conglomeration was thus engaged in internicine warfare, the quality of the administration in the States continued to deteriorate. While a chain of about 500 railway accidents resulting in the death of over 250 people and injuries to an equal number led to the demand of Madhu Dandavate's resignation, many Janata legislators and others asked the Prime Minister to remove Charan Singh from the Home Ministry because of his failure to give effective protection to Harijans and other weaker sections. Deterioration in the administration was also reflected in the increasing incidents of communal and other disturbances. The Lucknow and the Varanasi riots were symbolic of the general failure of the administration. There was increasing evidence of intolerance towards working class agitations —the killings in Kanpur and Bhilai and the arrest of thousands of teachers in Madhya Pradesh were symptomatic of the Government's attitude.

While the Janata Party was struggling to acquire some coherence under these stresses and strains, the Congress for the



Y. B. Chavan

greater part of the year was engaged in a bitter internal struggle By encouraging the move for the ouster of Brahmananda Reddy from the Congress presidentship and installing herself in that office, Indira Gandhi set in motion a process reminiscent in form of the split in the Congress in 1969. The script appeared to be the same—charges of a conspiracy with the Janata Party, radical rhetoric, grievance about the persecution of supporters, the move to requisition an AICC meeting, etc. There was a difference. Unlike in 1969 when she was the Prime Minister and she was helped to earn a radical image by a majority of Congressmen who had for long felt thwarted by old-time bosses, this time Indira Gandhi was out of power and the people had before them the experience of several years of her unchallenged leadership. During this period they had witnessed not only intrigues and conspiracies but also a wide chasm between promises and performance. However, Indira Gandhi appeared determined to gamble relying on her assessment of her influence amongst the people, specially the poorer sections, and her capacity to activate them. On the other hand, Congress leaders specially party president Brahmananda Reddy and leader of the Parliamentary Opposition Yashwantrao Chavan were not prepared to accept Indira Gandhi's supreme leadership. They insisted on the acceptance of the principles of inner-party democracy and collective leadership as enunciated by the All India Congress Committee immediately after the Lok Sabha elections. But anxious as they were not to split the party specially when Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam and Meghalaya were go to the polls, senior Congress leaders continued to make desperate efforts to prevent a split.

LEFT UNITY

While the Janata Party and the Congress were thus embroiled in their own internal problems, hopes of left unity were yet to make any significant headway. The CPI, engaged as it was in a reappraisal of its policies and political postures during the last two years, gave a call for the unity of left and democratic forces. The CP-M, anxious to avoid a confrontation with the Centre, was not only acting as a regional status quo party in West Bengal but was also bending over backwards to keep itself on the right side of the Janata. Though Mr Namboodiripad's hope of pulling down the United Front Government in Kerala became somewhat subdued after Chief Minister A. K. Antony's victory in an Assembly by-election, the party continued to respond coolly to the offer of the evolution of a closer relationship between the two Communist parties.

As India enters the new year, the people face several challenges. Will the two major political parties be able to survive their internal strains? If they do not, will this lead to a new alignment of forces based on policies and programmes of secularism, socialism, commitment to democratic values, modernisation and rapid economic development through the instrumentality of planning and emphasis on the public sector? Does the country face the danger of political fragmentation and emergence of regional forces? Will the mounting tensions in rural areas result in increased violence and conflicts? Will the youth and students, who are again showing signs of restiveness (as evidenced by the disruption of studies in 42 universities) will again rise in revolt against political establishments? Will the left parties grasp the opportunity that offers itself and endeavour to emerge as a national alternative.

Above all, will the political system be able to provide some solution to the burning problems of the people before India enters the eighties?

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New Tensions In Kashmir

THE ushering in of durable political stability, resulting from unprecedented popular participation in the Assembly elections, tops the credit column of the year's balance-sheet of events in Jammu and Kashmir, while the promulgation of the repressive Public Safety Ordinance tops the debit column. Between these two, State experienced Governors' rule for the first time since independence following the fall of the Sheikh Abdullah Government after the Pradesh Congress withdrew its support within a few days of the sudden changeover at the Centre. Within three months, Abdullah swept his National Conference back to power through an impressive election victory and once again established his position in the State's politics.

A significant outcome of the Assembly elections was that the prolonged controversy over the question of the State's accession has been buried deep. All parties and groups, including the extremist secessionists participated actively in the elections and no one even mentioned accession. Serious aberrations in the past on this account had hampered growth both in the democratic and socio-economic spheres. The change augurs well for the country and the State. Perhaps it was with this in view that President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy during his autumn visit to the State observed that the people of the State had once again put their seal of approval on accession and in the process proved that their historic decision taken in 1947 was correct.

The Janata Party set up its unit in the State just before the election and the senior leaders including Morarji Desai, Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram sought to bolster its image. When the chips were down and the election results were announced it became clear that Kashmir soil is most unsuited for the growth of the Janata seed at least as long as it carries the stigma of RSS domination. The Congress too was mauled by Abdullah's regional National conference forcing it to vacate the seat of power. The fierce election rivalries however did not prevent Abdullah from offering a friendly hand to the Congress with one qualification: he favoured the Indira Gandhi faction.

EGO

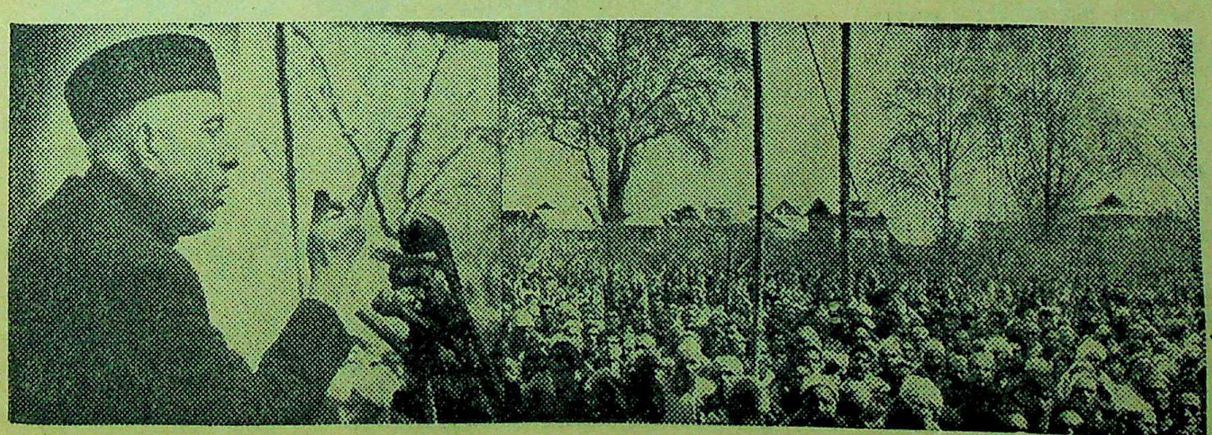
This in a way is an off-shoot of the Janata leaders' attitude towards Abdullah. He has not visited New Delhi even once during the last six months after assuming office. Relations between him and the Centre are anything but cordial known for his ego Abdullah sought to assert the State's autonomous powers vis-a-vis the Centre. He set up a six-member Cabinet sub-committee to review all Central laws extended to the State after August 1953. Whether he can achieve his purpose without the Centre's goodwill does not seen to bother him. He claims his Government is competent to reject Central laws found to be detrimental to the interests of the people of the State or encroaching upon the State's special status. Interestingly when the Congress managed to oust him from power in March. He tried his best to join hands with the Janata leaders but did not succeed. The Janata Party not only spurned him but went further to patronise every group and individual known to be opposed to Abdullah — of course, with disastrous results for the Janata Party. These developments left a trail of bitterness leading to strained Centre-State relations.

The promulgation of the Public Safety Ordinance, widely condemned for its repressive provisions has aggravated tensions. Abdullah's reply to Charan Singh's letter on the ordinance is an indication. Abdullah expressed surprise over the criticism of his action to "defend the security of the State and the country in which the Centre is also an equal partner".

While Abdullah has majority support in the Kashmir Valley, his position in Jammu and Ladakh is not all strong. Jammu's politics is in a melting pot with the Congress in disarray and the Janata in a shambles. Dr Karan Singh heads dissident Congressmen, while the RSS intrigues have split the Janata unit into three parallel bodies.

On the administrative front, Abdullah's Government took some bold decisions like the further reduction in food subsidy and introduction of the three language formula in educational institutions. But some of its actions have invited criticism. Denial of bonus to the industrial workers, the refusal to reinstate 14 office-bearers of the low-paid employees' federation who were dismissed summarily during the emergency and promulgation of the ordinance have created resentment. Abdullah has been accused of squandering the State's meagre resources by appointing an army of Ministers the Ministry with 24 members is the largest so far and acting vindictively against trade unions and the working class. Another disturbing feature is the manner in which Panchayat elections in the Kashmir Valley have been held. All Opposition parties have alleged large-scale rigging and violence, and the State Government has been unable to rebut this change effectively.

Among the distinguished visitors to the State during the year were,



Sheikh Abdullah addressing a mammoth rally at Hazrat-Bal.

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Anti-price rise rally.

besides President Reddy, Indira Gandhi and West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu. Basu came to seek Abdullah's support for his autonomy demand, but the Kashmir leader did not oblige him. Abdullah would like to preserve his distinctive position in the matter. He believes the State already enjoys a constitutionally guaranteed special status, which may get diluted by joining hands with other States aspiring to achieve such a position themselves.

Decimation of the opposition parties at the hustings has adversely affected labour organisations. It was evident from the lack of support forthcoming from the political parties for their bonus demand, and their own failure to organise a well sustained movement in this regard. Political expediencies have deprived them of their right to achieve their legitimate dues.

From Bad To Worse

IT has been a year of overall decline in Gujarat with a series of policy reversals by two successive ministries. In fact, the year dawned on the State with an enormous opening balance of achievements, carefully accumulated during the nine-month President's rule. The surrender to vested interests began with the Solanki Ministry assuming power on December 24, 1976. In striking contrast to the President's rule, the Congress Ministry went on ignoring its own Central Government's 20-point programme. Consequently, the work on land reforms got stuck; rural poor got only more lip service. Though the Labour Minister made some earnest efforts to improve things, they were submerged in the simmering ministerial crisis.

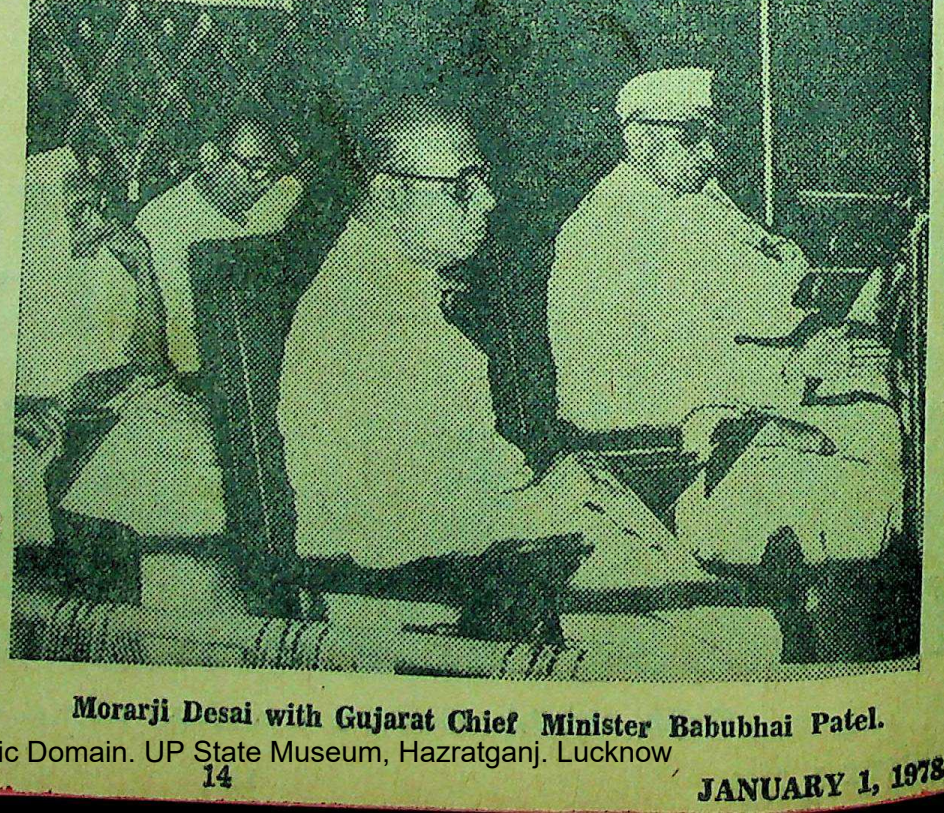
During the Governor's rule wholesale and retail prices of all essential commodities were fixed. Cinema rates, tailoring charges and prices of various dishes and beverages served in hotels and restaurants were regularised. Strict vigilance was kept on them by both the official agencies and popular committees. But when it came back to power, the Congress Ministry unceremoniously abandoned all this in one stroke.

However, if the 14-week-long Congress Ministry had left any unpopular measure unimplemented, the Janata Party Ministry that came to power on April 11, 1977, completed it. In fact, the Janata Ministers flouted their own election manifesto in freezing the implementation of land reforms in the State. They first appointed a committee to suggest measures to remove certain "difficulties" being faced by the "farmers". Soon, another land commission was set up to review the entire gamut of agriculture, including even the concept of ceiling, the very need for land reforms and the agriculture labour wages which were fixed two years ago. Curiously, the panel does not have any representative from the farm labour organisations.

HARASSMENT

Under the Janata ministry, the worst sufferers are the agricultural labourers and Harijans. The village and district-level social justice committees set up during the governor's rule to enforce agricultural minimum wages, untouchability law, etc. are a thing of past now. Nobody cares about the minimum wages. The large army of officials, including mamlatdars, who were entrusted with the implementations of land reforms provisions, have now other jobs. Police officials have even been ordered not to register any complaints regarding harassment of Harijans without the consent of district collectors. As a result, only 50 cases of harassment of Harijans, including half a dozen major incidents, were reported during the first three months of Janata rule.

To placate the pro-kulak Kisan Mazdoor Lok Paksh group in the



Morarji Desai with Gujarat Chief Minister Babubhai Patel.

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ruling party, the Babubhai Government even abandoned the groundnut oil levy with which a buffer stock was built last year, enabling the Government to supply oil to the weaker sections through fair price shops. This year the entire system has been abandoned with the result that the poor are forced to pay double the price for oil.

The Vallabhbhai group has been a constant irritation to the Ministry with occasional threats to topple it. For Babubhai, it has been a perennial worry with the Jana Sangh activists making determined bid to wrest control at all levels. In August last, two Jana Sangh Ministers even threatened to leave to force further favourable changes in portfolios. The situation today is that one has to approach the Sangh Ministers or their local satraps to get things done. Thus RSS elements are fast taking over everywhere even in police and public offices. However, the numerically stronger Cong(O) watch all this helplessly.

The Congress is really in an unenviable position with the two distinct groups wasting much energy in wranglings. The party, which had 110 MLAs at the beginning of the year, now has only 75. The fall of Indira Gandhi Ministry at the Centre touched off massive defections. In March-April alone, some 25 MLAs have defected to the Janata Party. It was in fact only a reverse flow. Most of those unscrupulous elements, who had defected to the Congress during emergency, have now gone back. In the process, the Congress has also lost many district panchayats. What has further damaged the Congress morale is the recent bid to split it.

A Violence Strewn Year In Bihar

NINETEEN SEVENTYSEVEN will be long remembered as the year which saw the end of the Congress monopoly of power in Bihar. But at the same time, it will be remembered for Belchi, Pathadda and Dharampura where the poor, the landless and the Harijans were burnt alive, shot down or mercilessly beaten only because they wished to live like human beings.

Increased atrocities on the poor, reversal of almost all progressive policies adopted by the previous Governments, all time rise in prices of almost all commodities and record rise in lawlessness marked the year which in the beginning promised to be eventful.

The victory of the Janata Party in both the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections made the exploiting classes more aggressive. They struck at Belchi and burnt alive over half a dozen people. This did shock the conscience of the people but the Janata leaders instead of drawing correct conclusions from it began comparing it with the atrocities during the Congress regime.

Pathadda followed. Here several Harijan farm workers were mercilessly beaten and their limbs were broken because they had the audacity to demand wages as per act. Again, the government evaded the problem. A minister even supported the perpetutators of violence.

In order to turn public attention from the economic issues involved in tension in the rural areas, a Harijan month was observed to seek social solution to an economic problem the result was Dharampura where landless were shot down by the landlords.

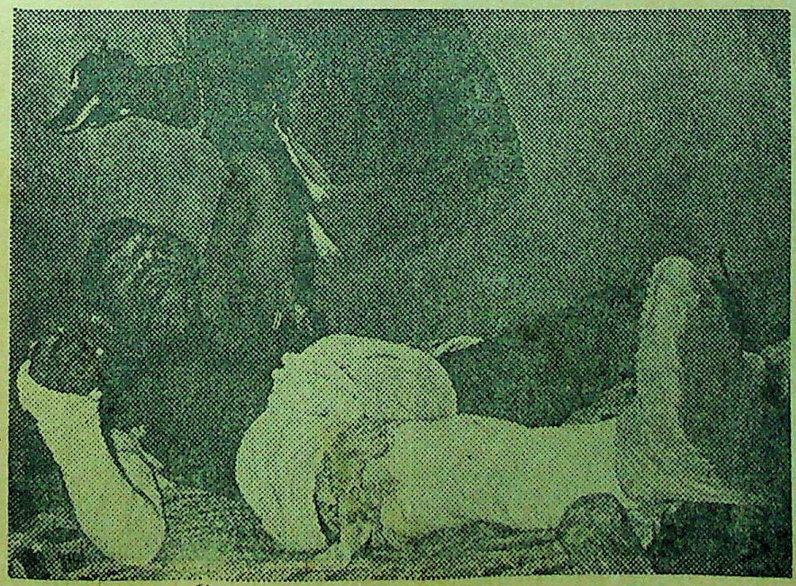
Meanwhile the police, the criminals and the landowners had formed an alliance. While in Barahiya the police and the criminals created a situation in which young boys were shot dead, the police and the landowners killed a Naxalite leader in the police custody and after initially suspending the involved police officers, the government offered them rewards for the "bravery" they had shown in beating to death an unarmed man in chains. This sums up the approach of the government that came to power riding the crest of popular democratic wave.

RELIEF

Implementation of the land ceiling act, minimum wages act for farm labour, debt redemption act all of which could give relief to the poor and go some way to change the socio-economic situation in the villages were given a go by.

Traders never had it so good. They cornered mustard oil and a host of other essential commodities pushing up their prices to an all time high and the government suddenly developed cold feet. It moved only when the situation became explosive. Raids were organized,, some stock seized but no body was arrested. In some cases certain erstwhile Jana Sangh Ministers stooped so low as to apologise to angry traders who demanded their stocks or their money back.

Corruption has also reached an all time high and the administration is paralysed. Minister's additional private secretaries are more powerful than the ministers. This is specially so in case of all but two Jana Sangh ministers because their additional private secretaries were senior to them in the RSS. And these additional private secretaries play havoc with the administration.



Parmeshwar Ravidas, a bonded labourer of Pathadda.

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Freedom of press was perhaps one of the biggest achievements of 1977. But towards the end of the year a fresh threat to press freedom loomed large in Bihar

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Two major developments affecting the economic and political life of Haryana marked Devi Lal's six months in office. These were the unprecedented floods that followed heavy rains in August and September. They caused a severe setback to the State's economy. In the political field, the several "omissions and commissions" of the regime since the Janata Ministers could no more tolerate looking themselves in public mirror nor were in a position to reform themselves.

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The dissidents have taken up their fight with renewed vigour, putting the ministerialists on extreme alert. Cornered, the Devi Lal group did its best to mobilize attendance for the two Delhi rallies and the Sangria visit of the Union Home Minister Charan Singh who is their main prop at the Centre. However, it is not clear how close they really are to the Home Minister. The rival faction consisting of Harijans and others, also worked for the rallies for a different reason—pledging allegiance to the Union Minister of State, Chand Ram.

Floods, which engulfed one-third of the State, demanded the new Government's attention for over two months. Ironically, it proved to be the most peaceful period for the Jat leader. For this once, all persons, including the dissidents disregarded their political differences and worked jointly in the relief programme. Barely had the Ministry recovered from the floods than it was faced by the Sushma Swaraj episode, which brought the leadership to the brink of ridicule. The Chief Minister, in his effort to stem the rot. Committed one political blunder after another. Ultimately Devi Lal was forced not only to readmit her to the Ministry but to promise to discipline his son and settle the grievances pointed out by the dissidents in separate meetings with members of the Parliamentary Board.

TALKS

One demand of the dissidents was for the resignation of some members from various State committees. With the reported high-level talks for the inclusion of some senior legislators in the Cabinet, it was thought that the political crisis would soon blow over. However, the talks have so far proved to be meaningless or at least half-hearted attempts at reaching agreement. Only two of the Chief Minister's relatives have resigned from the committees, while a score of others remain in office. The dissidents feel that with regard to the reconstitution of the Cabinet, the Chief Minister is trying to borrow time by keeping the aspirants guessing. But this cannot work as four of the five general secretaries of the State Janata unit are openly against the present leadership. Recent action against certain dissidents and their relatives has added fuel to the fire.

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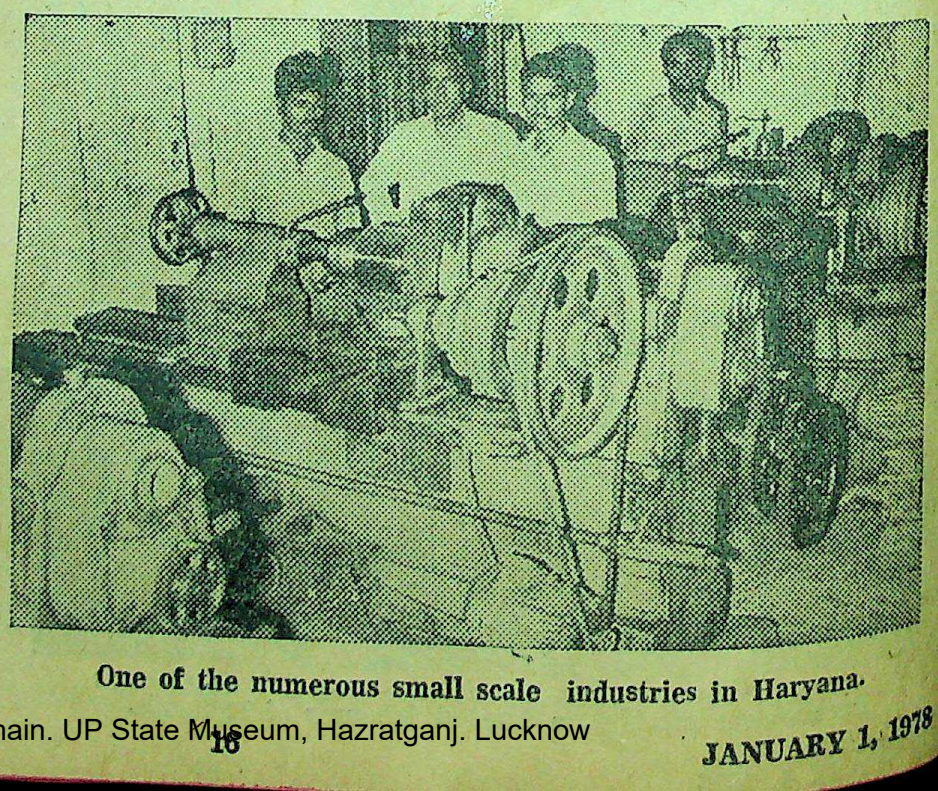

One of the numerous small scale industries in Haryana.

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Disillusionment In U.P.

IT was a year of great changes for Uttar Pradesh. The people avenged the emergency excesses in March dethroning the Congress and Indira Gandhi from power at the Centre. Three months later they repeated the performance by electing the Janata Party to power, with an overwhelming majority, in the State.

However, by the time the Assembly polls came the electorate had started getting disillusioned with the Janata Party. Between the March and June polls the Janata Party votes fell by 20 per cent. A large section of voters—particularly the poorest and consequently the most exploited—were completely disillusioned and in the Assembly elections most of them voted for the Congress, which increased its voting strength by eight per cent within three months.

Significantly, the Harijans were the first to be disillusioned with the Janata Party. After centuries of exploitation they had seen a ray of hope in the land distribution programme of the Indira Gandhi Government. It did not solve their economic problem but the little land it provided gave them some hope for a brighter future. This hope was shattered when immediately after the Lok Sabha polls there was a large scale eviction of Harijans from the land allotted to them during the emergency. The Janata Party Government which came in power after the Assembly elections in June at first took it easy. However, when the voices of protest rose louder, they were shaken out of their apathy to state: "No Harijan will be ejected from the land allotted in a regular manner". The pretext for inaction was that in many places land was taken away from the people in an irregular manner and given to Harijans. The fact was that the most of the land distributed amongst Harijans was the property of village Panchayats, which were under the irregular occupation of big landholders or village toughs. Their plea was that since they had been occupying the land for a large number of years they had established their claim on it. Apparently the Janata Government in the State found some force in this argument. Despite repeated queries about the number of ejectment cases of Harijans from their land, the State Government has kept silent.

The disillutionment of Harijans was followed by widespread disillusionment amongst Muslims, an economically and educationally backward minority. The State has witnessed three large scale riots after the installation of the Janata Government in the State. In Lucknow and Kanpur the riots were touched off by sectarian disputes amongst Muslims themselves. In Varanasi it was a communal clash. However, the most significant fact in these riots was not the loss of life and property suffered by Muslims or the other community at the hands of rioters, but the loss of life and property at the hands of the police and PAC. The PAC in UP, according to Janata legislators themselves, behaved as gang marauders and indulged in looting and killing during curfew hours. Despite protests and complaints by Janata Party legislators, the Government has taken no action against the police and PAC men responsible for these acts.

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There were agitations, demonstrations, hunger strikes, threats of violence by students and various sections of Government employees. Most of these agitations were withdrawn though the employees were not fully satisfied by the compromises which they had to accept. The biggest threat of a strike, averted at the last moment, was that of power workers, who accepted a compromise "in the interest of the people of the State", despite the graceless manner in which their demands were only partially conceded.

The UP Government, apparently decided to enter into a compromise with the power workers because their strike would have disrupted the economy of the State. But in the case of secondary school teachers there was no such worry and the State Government adopted a tough line with them, even though the education of millions of students was disrupted. The biggest tragedy was enacted in Kanpur where 11 workers were killed in police firing and two mill officers inside the mill were killed by workers. The workers of Swadeshi Cotton Mills were demanding arrears of their wages and their agitation led to tragedy.

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Ram Naresh Yadav being sworn in as the State Chief Minister.

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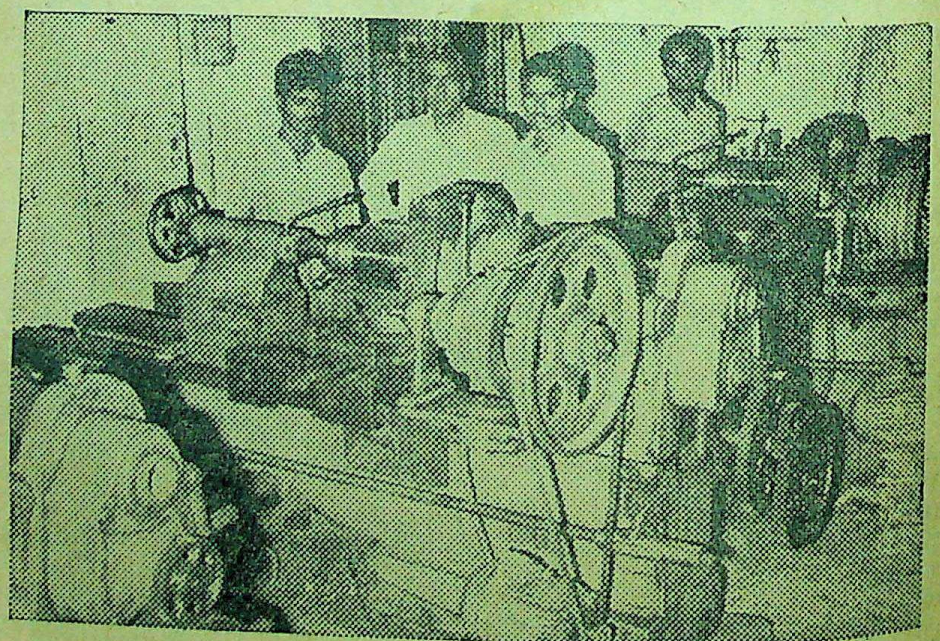

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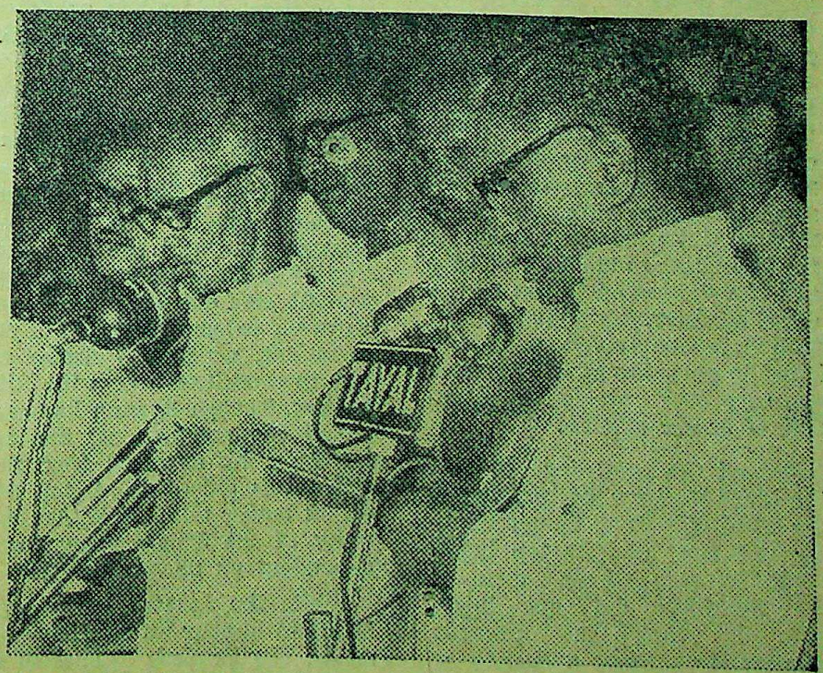

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such concessions. Reservations were made for the "backward castes" not because they were backward but because socially they were treated to a lower in status in society.

Factionalism was introduced in the Government on the very day of the formation of the State Government. The two major groups in the party, the Jana Sangh and BLD, combined to exclude others from power which led to tension on the very first day. It has become more acute. Even C. B. Gupta is disgusted with factional fights inside the party. There were demands from the ranks of the ruling groups for the replacement of Ram Naresh Yadav and at one stage Charan Singh also wanted to drop him.

The Janata Party had come in to power on the basis of freedom of expression and democratic rights. But its State Government has adopted the policy of penalising the press and papers which do not toe its line. In the present atmosphere they cannot do much, but they can deprive the critics of Government advertisements.

The doings of the Janata Party would have proved to be its undoing, but the rival opposition party, the Congress, was in disrray. There was division in the Congress at the State level as well as Centre, But the State level division would have been resolved had it not been for the differences at the Centre. That the Congressmen did not lack courage was well proved during the June electoral contest. But the differences and the infighting amongst the leaders paralysed them and they were unable to give any lead to the workers, students, Harijans and minorities who were struggling against the Janata Party Government.

An Unpopular Team

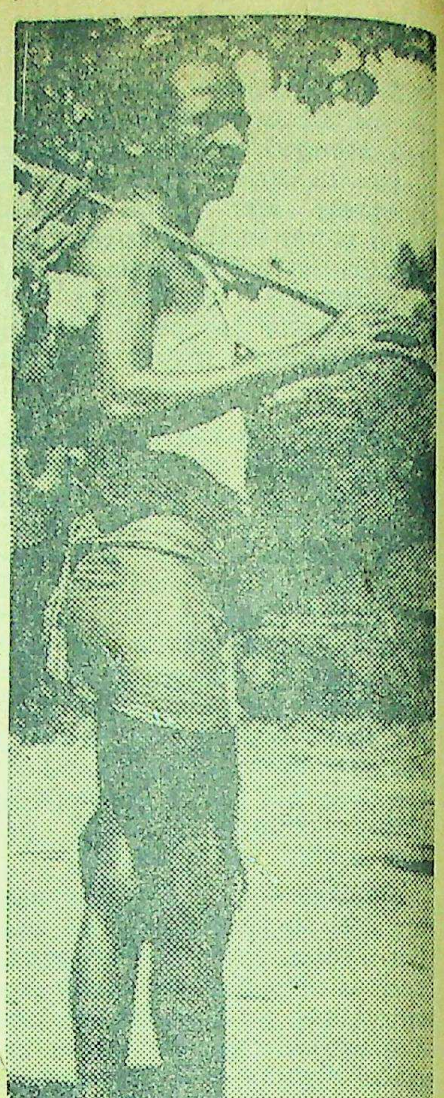
THE total rout of the Congress in the Lok Sabha poll as well as the Vidhan Sabha elections in June were outstanding events of 1977. But the six-month-old Janata Ministry has not covered itself with glory. It was a total failure on the price front. Essential edible items like pulses, groundnut oil, vegetabls including onions have become prohibitively costly. All this has caused disenchantment to the supporters of the Janata Party.

A number of Janata Party legislators publicly appealed to Chief Minister Kailash Joshi to give up his laissez faire policies and take strict action against the hoarders. Joshi promised at the time of assuming office an efficient and clean administration, restoration of basic freedoms and non-interference with the functioning of the judiciary. But with the in-fighting in the Janata Party and the protracted illness of the Chief Minister, the State administration is completely paralysed. Files do not move at all. Services are sore over vindictive transfers of senior officials.

Behind the campaign to oust the Chief Minister interestingly is the hand of a Jana Sangh Minister and most of its top brass. Joshi would have gone if the Socialists did not intervene in time and prevent temporarily at least a change in the stewardship of the State. Joshi eroded his popular base by promulgating the mini-MISA ordinance providing for preventive detention and aimed at foiling a strike by the electricity workers. The law has already divided the Janata Party and the Socialists have announced they would vote against the measure in the Assembly.

The RSS too helped to make the Ministry unpopular. They dominated the managing committees of dissolved cooperative institutions including banks. Minister for Cooperation L N Sharma, who belongs to the RSS hardcore, nominated a large number of RSS and Jana Sangh men. This led to a Cabinet crisis following a threat by the four Socialist Ministers to resign. The situation was saved only after the intervention of Union Minister for Cooperation Mohan Dharia, who rebuked Sharma to cancel the nominations. The Chief Minister pleaded that Sharma did not consult him when he announced the list of nominations, which was drawn by him in consultation with the RSS leaders. Though Sharma has cancelled the nominations, the demand for his dismissal from the Cabinet is mounting. A top Socialist leader told LINK that the unity of the Janata Party was dependent on Sharma's ouster.

While the Janata Party has failed to honour its election promises, the Pradesh Congress is embroiled in petty intrigues caused by the confrontation between Mrs Gandhi and the official Congress.



A tribal from MP.

Turbulent Days In Punjab

NINETEEN Seventy-seven was for Punjab a significant year as much for the emergency aftermath as the authoritarian experience of 21 months, writes our correspondent Shaukin from Punjab. Unprecedented unrest among the working people following the Janata Party's rise to power was the single most important phenomenon in the State. Workers of the State Government, the Electrictly Board, State Roadways, school and college teachers, industrial and agricultural workers and also youth and students had to resort to some kind of direct action in the 9 months of Janata Party rule. There had been token strikes, demonstrations and arrests. The Government in most of

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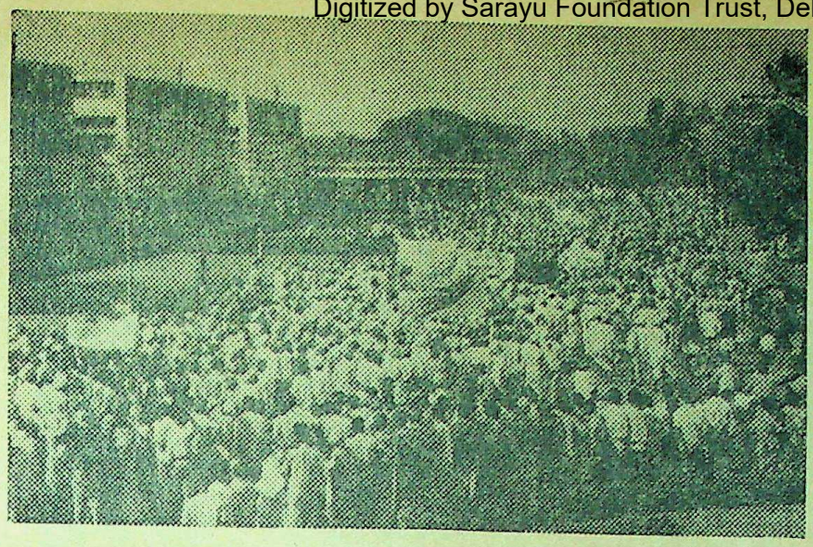

Spurt in popular agitations marked 1977.

the cases, took obstinate and even provocating positions like barricading the civil secretariat at the State headquarters and resorting to large scale police action in the districts, taking certain sections of the State's working masses on a collision course with the CPM backed coalition government. The beginning 1978 might see a chain of strikes and bandhs. Debate on the problems of the people in the State Assembly would continue when the House meets on 4 January for a pre-budget session.

The year 1977 also left behind a heavy financial deficit which the coalition government has not been able to make up so far because of its inability to levy new taxes, more so because of the Faridkot Lok Sabha and Anandpur Sahib State Assembly by elections. Detailed discussions on key policy matters like taxes and nationalisation of passenger transport were currently going on in the State and the year 1978 might see a wholesale reversal of well laid policies, which during the previous Congress regime were marked by a half hearted or poor implementation.

Verdict For Stability

FOR the United Front in Kerala, 1977 way t.ying and frustrating for the combined Oppositon. Not that the State had more than its share of vicissitudes the country had gone through. It was the peculiar political situation in the State. At the time of March elections, on one side of the line stood the ruling United Front (the Congress, the CPI, the Kerala Congress, the Muslim League, the RSP and the PSP) and on the other, the Opposition alliance, (the CPM, the Janata Party made up of Jana Sangh, the Congress (O) and the CFD, a rival Muslim League, a rival Kerala Congress, besides a rival RSP).

The United Front returned to power with a massive majority. The Opposition failed to win a single parliamentary seat. The massive mandate the ruling front received proved that the vast majority of the people did not want the Marxist Party and its Janata allies to come to power in the State. They also saw to it that the majority they gave the ruling front was such that its stability could not suffer even if one or the other of its constituents pull out of the Ministry.

However, this massive verdict in favour of the United Front was not acceptable to the Opposition, which thought it proper to hurl baseless charges of rigging only to demand the dissolution of the Assembly and fresh elections. Any development in the State or difficulty faced by the Government is seized by the Opposition to agitate for an exit of the Government, the dissolution of State Assembly and fresh elections. They lash in on every occasion from the religious feud rocking the Syrian Christian Church or court verdicts on the Rajan episode to the election petitions involving two State Ministers and a Lok Sabha member.

The importance of 1977 for Kerala is the rejection of alternatives to the United Front and of the hegemonical role for the CPM in an alliance.

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Fragile International Calm

THE sun is setting over the year 1977 against a relatively calm political horizon, internationally. There are clouds, no doubt, very dark clouds over southern Africa and West Asia as well as the Horn of Africa where a fratricidal war is on. There are also undercurrents, but they are not strong enough to raise a storm, except in the minds of the Chinese soothsayers, who have been forecasting a world war for more than a decade now. It looks as though East-West detente will hold unless some very important people go berserk. The fragility of the calm, however, lies in the fact that world peace is based not so much upon friendly cooperation among nations as on the sense of horror that the vision of a nuclear war creates. It is out of such fears that peace is kept.

This fear, coupled with the war merchants' desire to make profit, has given a fillip to a reckless arms race. As the year closes, the NATO countries have decided to strengthen their forces in Western Europe with the moth-eaten plea of fighting the Soviet threat. The threat, according to the NATO Defence Ministers, has arisen from the arms build-up of the Warsaw Pact countries. Hence, they have thought it necessary to add to their stock of anti-tank missiles by one-third of present strength or by about 45,000 more of them. The NATO powers have also been discussing the question of giving clearance to the US project to mass produce its new horror weapon, the neutron bomb, for deployment in West European countries.

NEO-COLONIAL THRUST

The arms race is partly the result of the neo-colonial ambitions of the Western world, headed by the US, and the lingering desire to "contain" Communism. The other very important reason is the lust for profit. The year has seen billion of dollars' worth of arms being sold to the Third World, mainly the Gulf states, for strategic and economic reasons. The arms race has acquired a new dimension, that of competition in the market. There has been much heartburning between the US and its Western partners, primarily Britain and France. Arms trade is most profitable, earning profits of between 50 and 500 per cent. How costly it becomes for the poorer countries can be judged from the fact that a jet bomber costs as much as the price of 100,000 tons of sugar. Understandably, no arms exporting country has supported the Soviet suggestion that there should be a cut of 10 per cent in the military budgets of the permanent members of the Security Council.

These reasons are also mainly responsible for the lack of progress in the Vienna and Geneva talks. The SALT-2 negotiations in Geneva have passed through several optimistic stages; for example, in September this year, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance met in Washington and declared in a communique that "progress was achieved in bringing closer the positions of the two sides." They decided that they would abide by the SALT-I agreement though it was to lapse early in October. Both were optimistic, though very cautious in making promises, and they are still optimistic for there is no rational alternative to the limitation of nuclear arms. But the differences are substantial and important, to use Gromyko's words. If any progress has been made, it is not yet known. The differences centre on categorising strategic nuclear arms and then fixing the permissible limit of the different categories. For example, whether the American "Cruise" missiles and the Soviet "Backfire" bombers are strategic nuclear weapons or only improved tactical weapons not covered by the present negotiations, has not been settled.

As for the Vienna talks on reduction of armed forces in Central Europe, they are showing no progress because the NATO countries insist that the Warsaw Pact countries have a superiority and that therefore their cut should be heavier. The Warsaw Pact countries stand by the agreed formula that the balance of strength evolved in Central Europe should not be disturbed. Therefore, cuts should be more or less equal, however, heavy they may be in absolute terms. They highlight the unreasonableness of the Western stand by pointing out that their proposal to freeze their respective military strengths at the present levels, till agreements are reached, has not been accepted.

BELGRADE

In view of the stockpiling of arms in different regions and the increasing number of armed forces, detente continues to be unstable. This is also evident from the differences of opinion in the Belgrade conference which has been in session for more than two months to assess the implementation of the Helsinki accord, which forms the basis of the East-West detente. The year 1977 has only confirmed that the West is still following its policies of domination and expansionism. At the same time it has also shown that the logic of

President of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev.

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times is compelling it to come to terms with the Socialist world and to also take into account the urges of the newly-liberated people.

An example of this is provided by the steady, though still slow, expansion of trade and economic collaboration between the two blocs which are no longer solidly opposed to each other in every field. The Soviet Union and Italy have signed a ten-year programme of economic cooperation and a long-term credit agreement. Similar agreements have been signed by the Soviet Union with West Germany, France, Japan and the US firms. The US will help the Soviet Union to build a mineral fertilizer complex and a centre for international trade and scientific ties in Moscow. The Soviet Union has now the offices of at least 130 Western concerns and the Socialist countries own at least 20 banks in Western Europe.

Whether the Western cold warriors like it or not detente is making a headway. This must be noted as a very important factor in international relations today. The tensions and frictions arising between the East and West get modified by the needs of economic cooperation.

THIRD WORLD

But the problems of the world are not exhausted by those involving the East and West. The Third World, trying to shake off the burdens imposed by centuries of imperialist domination, is facing acute problems of poverty, colonialism and racism, regional tensions and the mounting pressure of neo-colonial forces against their economic and political independence. Arabs in West Asia have still to free their occupied lands from the Israeli aggressor and the oppressed people of southern Africa are shedding their blood for liberation from the most inhuman racist rule, while the people of Latin America are ranged against Yankee exploitation that is aided by native dictators. All are united over the demand that a new international economic order be established—an order that will help the long exploited countries to achieve industrial breakthrough and secure the benefits of the scientific and technological revolution. The year 1977 is ending without promise in this regard.

The UN General Assembly session, which ended in the third week of December, was described by the President of the session Lazar Mojsov as a "working session" perhaps because the Assembly went through the agenda of 131 items and the Assembly and its committees met 537 times adopting 256 resolutions. But in terms of achievement it failed to produce "spectacular results" to quote Mosjov again. Ever since the sixth special session of the General Assembly (1974) adopted its proposal on a new world economic order, the UN and its committees as well as international organisations like the FAO have been trying to give some practical shape to the proposal in vain. The Third World asked for a restructuring of the international market so that a fair exchange between the primary commodities exported by them and industrial goods from the advanced countries is effected. They also asked for an easier access to capital and technology possessed by the industrialised countries and a reduction in debts and easing of repayment problems. What the UN General Assembly achieved in its latest session was no more than adopting the proposal that further discussions on a new world economic order should be conducted by the entire membership (149) of the Assembly. This, in fact, is a recognition of the failure of earlier attempts to take substantive decisions—for example in the Paris talks, popularly known as the North-South dialogue. The old discussions of such issues as the "Common Fund" for stabilising commodity prices, transfer of resources, etc will be continued at a larger gathering.

In the meantime the debt burden of the developing countries will grow heavier, and pass he already fantastic figure of 190 billion dollars. The West will continue to stint on the promised aid of 0.7 per cent of its GNP and may add a little to the present 0.36%. There is no indication that the European Common Market (EEC) will change its protectionist policy or that the gap between the prices of the primary commodities and the manufactured goods will decrease. On the contrary, in the light of the UNCTAD forecast, the poor nations may grow poorer in relation to the rich nations.

It is a gloomy picture. It may change, but not before the developing countries forge some kind of sanctions as the oil-rich OPEC group has done by acting in unity on the question of oil prices. This plus much greater regional cooperation is needed to exercise pressure upon the Western multinationals, without which they will not change their present ways of exploitation of the poorer countries.

WEST ASIA

Lack of Arab unity and the requisite degree of pressure on the Israeli aggressor and its patron, the United States, has also resulted in a certain worsening of the situation in West Asia. Fresidest Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November, followed next month by the talks between the Egyptian and Israeli officials, which was also attended by the US and United Nations representatives, and the Cairo summit where President Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem Begin exchanged views possessed all the features of a conspiracy against the Arab cause. It is not surprising that many radical Arabs have described the Egyptian President. as a traitor. This evoked an angry response from Mr

The remains of Chairman Mao lying in state.

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Sadat, who dubbed the Arab leaders attending the Tripoli conference as "stupid and ignorant pigmies". He broke diplomatic relations with four Arab countries and closed the Consulates of the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries. All this has grievously weakened the Arab struggle to liberate the occupied territories.

The most convincing "scenario" (to borrow an American phrase) of the West Asian prospect is that under US guidance, Cairo and Tel Aviv will reach a firm understanding about partial vacation of the Sinai peninsula. This will help strengthen Mr Sadat's position among his people and may soften Syrian resistance to piecemeal settlements. As for King Hussein, there is no one more willing to reach an understanding with Israel on the question of the West Bank, provided he has given some concessions and assured of protection from the wrath of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. He has always looked up to Britain and the USA for support and succour, even from the CIA.

The year 1977 is closing on a concerted attempt by the US and its clients in the Arab world to keep the Soviet Union out of any West Asian settlement, to postpone the proposed Geneva peace conference to an indefinite future and to persuade the unwilling parties to make mutual concessions, which in the final analysis will favour Israel and allow it to retain the most strategic portions of the occupied territories. The biggest loser, if the attempt succeeds, will be the Palestinian Arabs, who will be cheated of their right to a sovereign, independent homeland in the West Bank—after having been cheated of their ancestral home in the state of Palestine which disappeared with the birth of Israel.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

A more optimistic picture emerges in another arena where the oppressed people are fighting to free themselves and take destiny into their own hands. The Zimbabwe people in Rhodesia and the Namibian people in South Africa as well as the African population in the Republic of South Africa have stepped up their armed struggle against the racist regimes. The front-line African states have taken a united stand to support the guerilla fight and show no inhibitions in asking for moral and material help from the Soviet Union and other friendly countries. The Anglo-American axis has been doing its best to create illusions about the immediate possibility of negotiated settlements in Rhodesia and Namibia, if not in the Republic of South Africa where the John Vorster regime is well-entrenched.

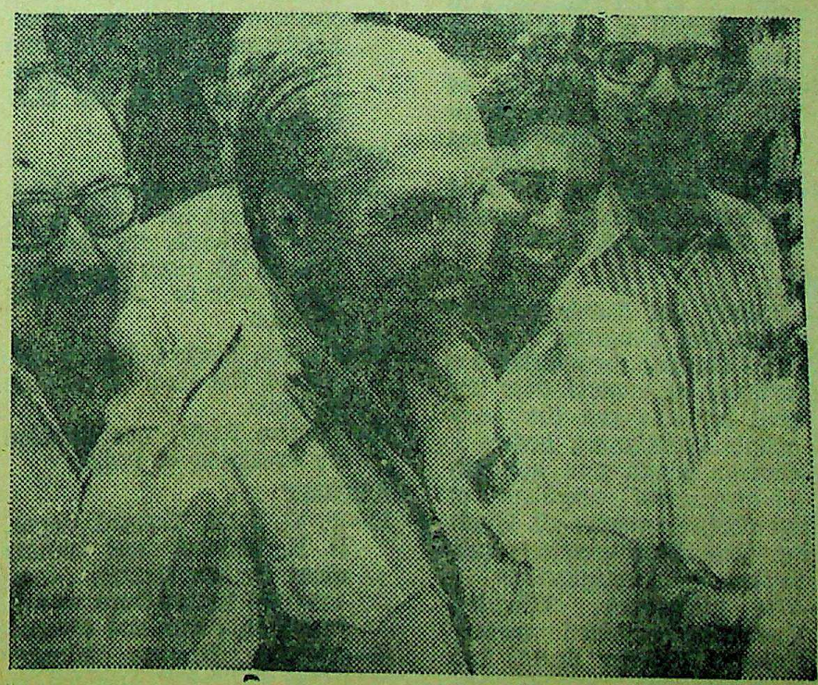
Bishop Muzorewa in Rhodesia and some tribal chiefs in Namibia (who held a constitutional conference in Windhoek) are in effect doing harm to their people by seeking unfavourable compromises with the illegal and brutish rulers. But it can be said that the year is ending not on a gloomy note, despite the treacherous and ugly role played by the racists and their imperialist patrons. The nationalists may not have scored big successes but they represent a vital force which is bound to grow with the passage of time and ultimately win full freedom for their people.

The outgoing year like any other in the past, is leaving a patchwork quilt of events and forces. The darkest patch is left by the neo-colonial, racist and zionist forces which tend to eat the rest of the world as provides of cheap labour or retainers. The most powerful contrast is provided by the growing forces of socialism, led by the Soviet Union. The socialist world is leading the battle for peace and cooperation among nations. The new Soviet constitution marks the coming of age an advanced socialist state, showing the way to radical changes. Only if the Chinese Communists had not pitted themselves against the Socialist world and not alienated large sections of the Third World, the international forces of progress would have been far stronger. But the Peking leaders have chosen to cast their lot with the US and its NATO allies in the hope of cutting a bigger slice from the world economy and military resources.

EUROPE

Europe provides a many-coloured view: the left forces growing in Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, which point new ways of advance to socialism; there is at the same time a recrudescence of fascist elements in West Germany and elsewhere, a danger to which Willy Brandt drew urgent attention; the urge to unify the European community is contending with the desire to defend national interests and there is no knowing which force will win.

The Third World as an entity is asserting with greater emphasis its policy of non-alignment and demanding a greater share in the world resources through a new economic order, but as separate states they do not always pull their weight in the same direction. The reactionary regimes most often act as reserves of the Western capitalist world, while those governed by progressive ideas take a bold stand against neo-colonialist and other reactionary forces in the world. Those who wish to have the best of both worlds—a rather difficult proposition— keep vacillating. Carter's visit to India and other countries will show where they stand at the dawn of the new year.



General Zia-ul-Haq.

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Major Events—1977

National

JANUARY

3—India was declared a 'Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic; 36 articles of the Constitution Act 1976 including amendments to the Preamble of the Constitution came into force.

19—President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed dissolved the fifth Lok Sabha.

FEBRUARY

2—Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Jagjivan Ram resigned from the Union Cabinet and the Congress.

10—President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed issued a notification in New Delhi calling upon the 542 parliamentary constituencies in the country to elect their representatives to the sixth Lok Sabha.

11—President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed succumbed to a massive heart attack a little after 6 a.m. He was pronounced dead at 8.52 a.m.

MARCH

16—The country went to the polls to elect the sixth Lok Sabha.

21—The Janata Party and its allies won absolute majority in the sixth general elections with a combined tally of 271 Lok Sabha seats out of 448 results declared.

22—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi submitted her resignation and that of her colleagues in the Council of Ministers to Acting President B. D. Jatti.

24—Morarji Desai, Chairman of the Janata Party was sworn in as the first non-Congress Prime Minister of India.

27—The Government revoked external emergency clamped on December 3, 1971.

APRIL

10—Gulzari Lal Nanda resigned from the Congress.

12—The Cabinet Secretariat was stripped of control over the civil services and the economic intelligence bodies.

13—Swaran Singh was appointed provisional president of the Congress party; all Working Committee members submitted their resignations.

14—The Congress Working Committee expelled former Defence Minister Bansi Lal from primary membership for six years; it also decided to reprimand former Information and Broadcasting Minister V. C. Shukla for misuse of power and abuse of mass media.

30—Acting President B. D. Jatti dissolved nine Legislative Assemblies with Congress majorities and brought the States under President's rule.

MAY

1—The leader of the Congress for Democracy, Jagjivan Ram decided to merge the CFD with the Janata Party; Chandra Shekhar was chosen president of the Janata Party.

19—A one-man commission comprising Justice J. C. Shah, retired Chief Justice of India was appointed to inquire into emergency excesses.

30—Over 46 persons were killed when the 13-Up Tezpur Express plunged into a flooded Beki river when the bridge on the Rangiya-Rangpura section collapsed.

JUNE

4—The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Government won the fourth General Elections to the territorial Assembly in the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu.

10—At least 19 persons were killed and many more injured in group clashes or police firings in the first round of polling in Bihar.

21—Election placed the State Legislature Party leadership predominantly in the hands of its Jana Sangh and BLD factions.

JULY

4—Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, leading his men in an electoral battle for the first time in 25 years was swept into power in Jammu and Kashmir.

21—Neelam Sanjiva Reddy was elected the sixth President of India.

25—Sanjiva Reddy was installed as President of India.

AUGUST

15—P. C. Sethi, Yashpal Kapur, R. K. Dhawan and others close to Mrs Gandhi were arrested in pre-dawn swoops in Delhi, Patna and Kanpur

23—Former Defence Minister Bansi Lal was arrested by the Haryana police.

SEPTEMBER

7—The Nascent Industrial District of Ghaziabad exploded in violence in arson and three-hour-long firing in which two were killed and 67 injured.

10—The Planning Commission decided to terminate the Fifth Five Year Plan one year ahead of schedule.

17—Former Orissa Chief Minister Nandini Satpathy was arrested and bailed out.

OCTOBER

3—Mrs Indira Gandhi and four of her former Cabinet colleagues—K. D. Malaviya, H.R. Gokhale, P. C. Sethi and D. P. Chattopadhyaya—were arrested by the CBI—

4—Mrs Gandhi was released by the Delhi Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.

10—Fiftythree persons were killed and 146 injured when the 103 Up Howrah-New Delhi Deluxe rammed into the rear of a stationary goods train at Naini Railway station.

23—A. K. Antony, Chief Minister, was declared elected to the Kerala Assembly.

NOVEMBER

4—Prime Minister Morarji Desai escaped with a split lip when the TU-124 Indian Air Force plane he was travelling in, crashlanded just outside Jorhat airport. Five crew members died.

6—Jammu and Kashmir Governor L. K. Jha promulgated an Ordinance giving sweeping powers to the State Government

19—Andhra Pradesh was hit by the worst ever cyclonic storm killing an estimated 10,000 people and destroying property worth crores and crops spread over about 30 lakh hectares.

21—Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declined to appear before the Shah Commission.

23—Twenty persons, including Rajya Sabha member Prakashvir Shastri, were killed and 21 seriously injured when the engine and 11 coaches of the Delhi-bound Ahmedabad mail derailed between Ajarka and Bawal stations.

DECEMBER

18—Mrs Gandhi resigned from the CWC.

28—Mrs Gandhi pulled her seven supporters from the CWC, taking the Congress to the verge of split.

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International

JANUARY

4—China and Bangladesh signed their first agreements—on trade and payments and economic and technical co-operation—in Peking.

10—Press censorship was clamped in Sri Lanka under emergency regulations.

12—Hundreds were reported killed in volcanic eruptions near Rwanda's border with Zaire.

18—Dzemel Bijedic, Yugoslav Prime Minister was killed in a plane crash near Sarajevo.

20—Jimmy Carter was sworn in as 39th President of U.S.A.

FEBRUARY

13—Edward Sokoine was appointed Tanzanian Prime Minister.

24—Former Bangladesh Head of State Khondakar Moshtaque Ahmed was sentenced to five years prison on charges of corruption.

MARCH

5—Thousands were killed in an earthquake in Southern Rumania.

11—An opposition strike call paralysed Karachi and army tanks moved in to check spreading violence.

16—Lebanese leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt was murdered in an ambush outside Beirut.

18—The first civilian Cabinet was formed in Afghanistan.

25—The Pakistan Government locked up the leaders of the nine party opposition alliance.

APRIL

1—The Soviet Union rejected American proposals on Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT).

3—President Anwar Sadat flew to Washington for talks with President Carter.

7—572 persons died in an earthquake which struck a number of villages in Iran.

9—At least 16 persons were shot dead in the worst anti-Government riots in Pakistan.

18—Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin resigned after his wife was fined a quarter of a million Israel pounds for a foreign currency offence.

21—Major-General Zia-ur-Rehaman was sworn in as President of Bangladesh following the resignation of Abu Sadat Mohammed Sayem.

23—Bangladesh dropped secularism as one of its state principles in favour of Islam.

MAY

10—A 15 nation NATO summit opened in London.

15—Pir of Pagaro, acting president of the opposition Pakistan National Alliance was placed under house arrest.

23—South Moluccan's held over 100 children in a Dutch school as hostages.

24—Soviet President Nikolai Podgomry was relieved of his duties as a member of the political bureau by the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee.

25—A four-ship US navy task group headed by a guided missile cruiser entered the Indian Ocean.

29—The Ethiopian Government closed the American, British and Egyptian defence attache offices in Addis Ababa.

31—Rhodesian forces occupied Mapai, Mozambique.

JUNE

2—A Pakistani High Court ruled the martial law imposed by Bhutto to be illegal under the constitution.

5—Left-winger Albert Rene seized power in Seychelles.

17—Communist Party General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev was unanimously elected President of the Supreme Soviet Presidium.

20—Menachim Begin took over as Israeli Prime Minister.

26—Djibouti gained independence.

JULY

5—The army took over the civil administration in Pakistan and imposed martial law.

8—President Carter relaxed control over foreign arms sales.

21—Egyptian forces destroyed Libyan tanks, armoured vehicles and shot down two jet fighters in a border clash.

22—The United National Party, led by J. R. Jayawardene won a landslide victory over the Sri Lanka Freedom Party in the eighth general elections.

30—Deputy Premier Teng Hsiao Ping returned to public life after 15 months political exile.

AUGUST

4—Archbishop Makarios, President of Cyprus died following a heart attack.

19—Hua Kuo-feng was chosen chairman of the Chinese Communist Party.

20—A 35-hour curfew was clamped in Sri Lanka.

SEPTEMBER

2—U.S.A. and Cuba opened missions at the two capitals.

3—Deposed Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto was arrested on murder charges.

9—Nepalese Prime Minister Tulsi Giri resigned.

12—Kirtinidhi Bista was appointed Nepal's Prime Minister.

13—Z. A. Bhutto, Former Pakistan Premier was released on bail.

15—The six year state of emergency was lifted in Pakistan.

17—The army arrested Bhutto and ten of his close supporters under martial law regulations.

21—Socialist Republic of Vietnam was admitted as a member of the United Nations.

OCTOBER

1—Elections in Pakistan were postponed indefinitely.

2—More than 100 people were reported killed in an abortive coup attempt by dissident Bangladesh troups in Dacca.

12—North Yemeni President Ibrahim Al-Hamadi was assassinated in the capital.

13—A Lufthansa Boeing with 86 aboard was hijacked.

18—West German police commandos blasted their way into the jet at Somalia's Mogadishu airport and freed all hostages.

20—The military seized power in Thailand.

NOVEMBER

9—Martial law orders were repealed in Bangladesh.

12—The South African Government adopted wartime powers.

24—Rhodesian forces attacked Mozambique.

DECEMBER

1—John Vorster's National Party won a majority in South African elections.

5—Egypt broke diplomatic relations with Syria, Libya, Algeria and South Yemen.

8—Portuguese Premier Mario Soares handed the resignation of his minority Socialist Government.

10—Malcolm Fraser was swept back into power in Australian elections.

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An Amorous Diversion

BIHAR Agriculture Minister Kapildeo Sinha's threat on the floor of the legislature to muzzle the press was not just an angry outburst of a Minister, for Kapildeo has been nursing a grievance against the CPI daily Janashakti for having opposed his patronage of Devan Singh, a criminal and pervert, whose conduct sparked off trouble at Barahiya in which seven young boys were killed and several others were maimed, Devan Singh is the son of Kapildeo Singh's cousin who had been given toll collecting contract for Balgudar Ghat for about rupees one lakh when the Government had earlier realised rupees three lakhs from the same ghat. Janashakti exposure not only resulted in the cancellation of the contract but led to even Jayaprakash Narayan indirectly indicting Kapildeo Singh.

Even at that time word was process to the officers of the Information Department to restrict flow of advertisement to some of the newspapers. The process was on when Janashakti came out with another exposure. This time it was about welfare Minister Kameshar Paswan's, visit twice to an 'after care home' and having developed fancy for a girl and trying to pressurise 'home' Superintendent Vidya Sinha to send the girl to him. When his own efforts failed, the Minister sent his friend Raja Prasad to persuade the Superintendent. He too failed and the Superintendent was transferred. The Janashakti report created a furore. Letters from the inmates went to the Chief Minister and Jayaprakash Narayan and the issue was raised in both the Assembly and the Council. The Chief Minister asked an officer of the Welfare Department to inquire into the charge. The officer found nothing against the Minister, his friend or staff and held the lady Superintendent guilty. Even Kapildeo Singh while replying to a calling attention motion by Mrs Kamla Sinha of the Janata Party and several others admitted that the enquiry was made by an officer of the Welfare Department, over which the accused Minister himself presided.

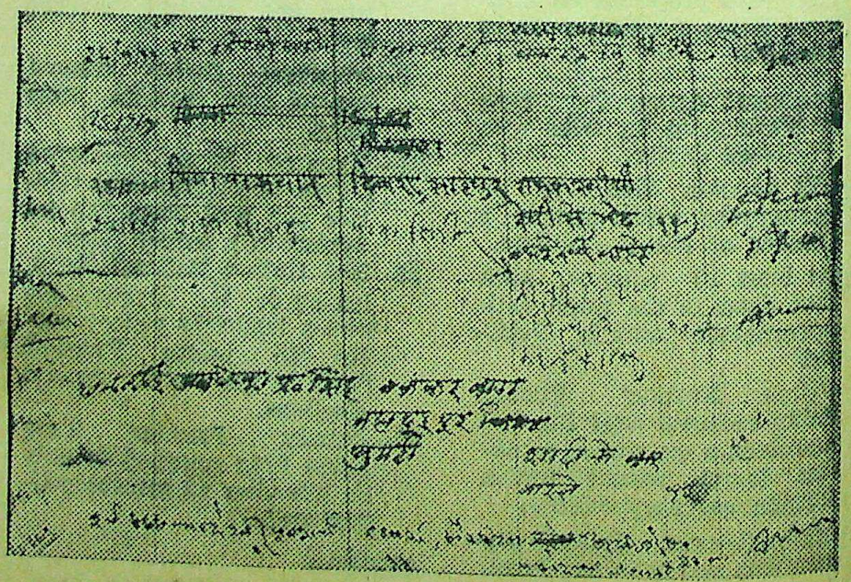
The 'after care home' is located in a dilapidated house in Patna. It is a misnomer that only socially condemned women are sent there. Rukmini, a sixteen year old handsome girl for whom the Minister is reported to have fallen, came to this 'home' while she was very young. Her father and relatives had been killed by dacoits and there was nobody to look her after. The police sent her to 'after care home'. Similarly there are girls who have married boys of their choice. Their parents filed suits on the plea that the girls were minors. The court sent them to the 'home' pending a decision. There are about 96 inmates in this 'home.'

GROUSE

The lady Superintendent of the home Mrs Vidya Sinha aged about 50 and her deputy Leela Devi were not on good terms and Leela Devi's husband who is said to be a retired peon used to report against Mrs Sinha to the higher authorities off and on. During Mrs Sinha's superintendentship one inmate had died and two had tried to escape one of whom was later caught. These complaints had been enquired into several times and Mrs Sinha had been exonerated. But the complaints, mostly anonymous, continued to be raised. This gave the Minister a pretext to visit the 'home' on July 17 within a few days of joining the Cabinet. he reached there with an army of officers, and was received by girls and the inspection continued for some time.

Along with the Minister, had also gone his additional private secretary and some of his close friends. The additional private secretaries in case of Jana Sangh Ministers—Paswan belongs to erstwhile Sangh—are in fact Ministers' bosses since they are invariably RSS men who held more important positions in the Sangh than the Ministers. Only two Jana Sangh Ministers who were themselves important RSS functionaries are exceptions.

The next day the lady Superintendent received a telephone from the Minister to see him with the file of Savitri. Since there were five Savitries the Superintendent went there with the files of all the five. According to the reports, the Minister was angry when he saw the lady Superintendent alone. He asked, "are you the custodian of files." The Minister talked indirectly in the beginning but when the lady Superintendent refused to take



A fascimile bearing the signature of Raja Prasad on the visitors book of the 'After Care Home.'

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his hint she was asked to bring the girl who had sung a welcome song. It was Rukmini, not Savitri.

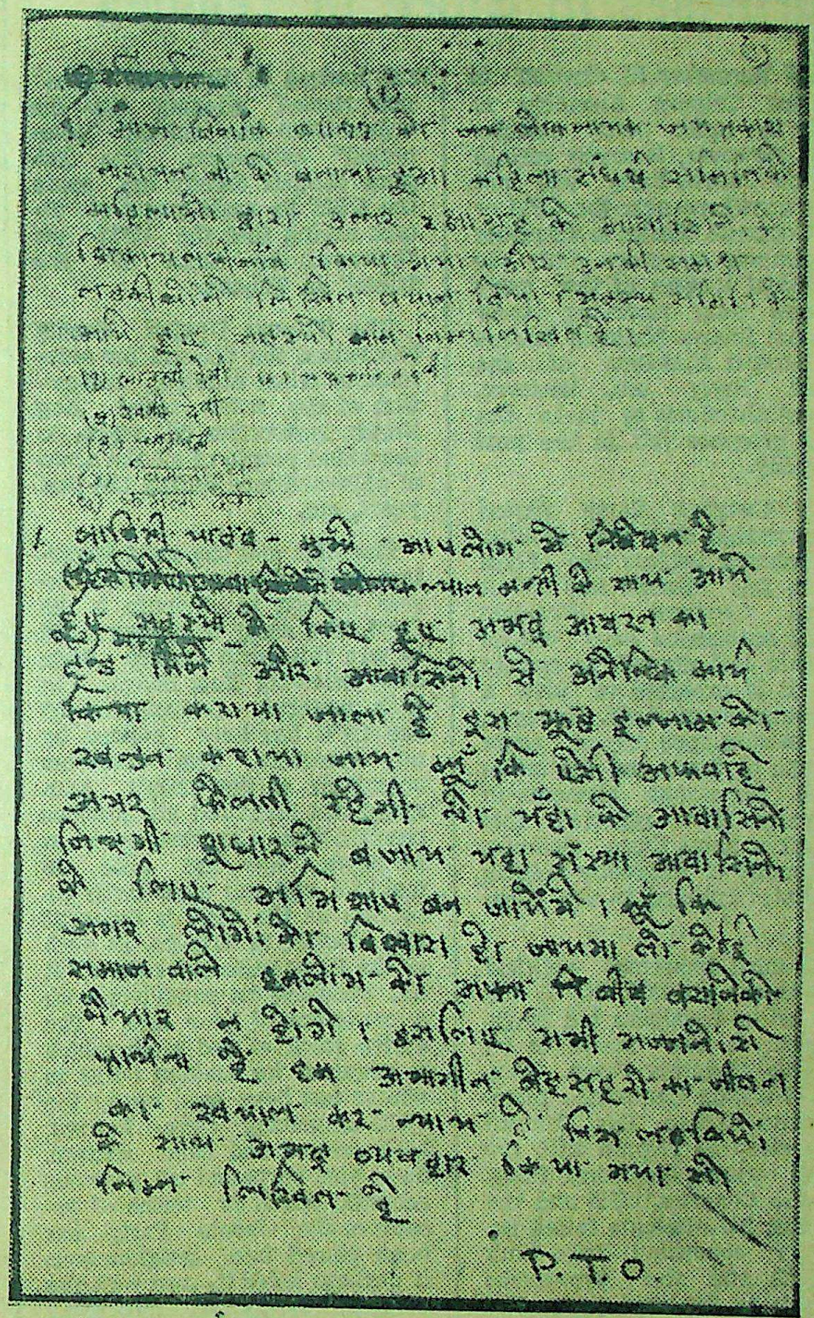
The lady Superintendent was also told that the Minister was considering her promotion. But it did not work.

From the next day, telephone calls to the lady Superintendent began. Some said she was being transferred, some said she was on the verge of suspension. Some one reached the 'home' on the pretext of adopting Rukmini. That was not possible since she was only 16.

On July 28, Raja Prasad, who claimed himself to be a close friend of the Minister went to meet the lady Superintendent. He tried to persuade Mrs Sinha to be reasonable and practical. He also threw hints that Kameshwar Paswan would do only what he wanted him to do. He telephoned the Minister's residence from there and said something in code and left promising to come again. Raja Prasad had visited the 'home' with the Minister on July 17 too. This time when he went alone he was asked to sign the visitors' book which he reluctantly did before he could meet the lady Superintedent. The Government does not deny Raja Prasad's friendship with the Minister but denies his visiting the 'home' on July 28. But the facsimile (see photo) which was placed on the table of the Council by Mrs Kamla Sinha gave lie to the Minister's claim and proves beyond doubt that Prasad did go there. But why did he go?

OLD CHARGES

Efforts to penalise Mrs Sinha continued. The old charges were raked up and the Minister reached the 'home' again with his staff and officers on October 10. But that day he was in a terrific mood. While he continued the inspection, members of his staff went inside and started alluring and vexing the girls. The girls later told the Superintendent also about it and wrote to Jayaprakash Narayan and the Chief Minister. A delegation of Mahila Sangharsa Samiti that visited the 'home' and examined the girls also found the charge correct. But the lady Superintendent remained firm. She was transferred. Mrs Sinha represented against her transfer to the Director of Welfare who sent the representation to Dy. Director for comment. The Dy Director in his comments made it clear that all charges against Mrs Sinha had been inquired into several times by Patna DM, Patna City SDO besides the Dy Director himself and had been found unsubstantiated. Yet Kapildeo Sinha while replying to the calling attention motion repeated the same charges to justify the Minister's visit. (He said the Minister visited the home only once but there are evidences to show that he went there twice).


P.T.O.

First page of the memorandum submitted by the inmates of the home.

But several questions arise, to which the Minister had no satisfactory reply. Why the charges against Mrs Vidya Sinha which had been found to be incorrect were raked up? How many Welfare Ministers had visited the home in the past? Why Raja Prasad, a friend of the Minister, visited the home and why the Government is denying that he visited the home? Why was Mrs Sinha transferred when the charges were not substantiated? Why does Government fight shy of a high level probe into the episode.

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Surprises In Store In Tripura

THE December 21 election to the Tripura Assembly is likely to upset many calculations. However, it seems certain that the Janata Party will not come anywhere near the CPM or the Congress. Theirs is therefore a lackluster campaign. Only the individual leaders of the party are now busy reserving their personal image. National leaders and Central Ministers of the Janata Party are, however, making all efforts to make the party presence felt in the next Assembly.

The Congress Party started the campaign on a low footing. But younger leaders like Priya Ranjan Das Munshi and West Bengal Congress President Purabi Mukherjee have helped it regain lost ground. In certain areas it is expected to give a good account of itself. However, it is handicapped by an acute shortage of funds and the antics of the pro-caucus elements in the party. It is reported that in certain areas these elements are directly or indirectly helping candidates opposed to the Congress.

The third important political party in the election fray is the CFD led by Sachindra Lal Singh. However, it now seems to be with the Congress Party. Congress Working Committee member Priya Ranjan Das Munshi had arrived in Tripura with the idea of forming an United Front with the Congress, CFD and the CPI. But his attempts failed because of opposition from both the CFD and the pro-caucus elements in his own party. Das Munshi's plan was for the Congress to fight in 35 constituencies, CFD in 20 and the CPI in five. He felt this combination would give Tripura an extremely stable Ministry.

CONCERN

The fourth important party in the election is the Tripura Upajati Juva Samity which is actually causing serious concern and anxiety to the CPM in this State. This party has been instrumental in breaking the CPM's strongest base in Tripura—the traditional Communist base. Seriously embarrassed by the tribal youths organisation, the important leaders of the CPM have now started alleging that the organisation has started "communal" campaigns. The Tripura Upajati Samity has made the CPM its main target of attack saying that the CPM has "betrayed the cause of the tribes" in Tripura.

The Tripura Upajati Samity has raised the demand for autonomous tribal districts, recognition of the tribal script Kog Borok, restoration of rights to the tribal people of all the areas of alienated land during the past years, etc.

The fifth and the most important political party in the present context in Tripura is the CPM. The Party is making a bid to win this north eastern State also, following West Bengal. The high powered campaigning by the CPM has been noticed by all observers. The resources seemingly at the party's command has surpassed all previous records. The Congress, even in its heyday, was not able to mobilise and use such large resources as the CPM is doing at this election in Tripura. In each of the 60 constituencies the CPM has provided its candidate with a minimum of four cars. The entire stock of red cloth which is required for making quilts in winter has been used up by the CPM in making flags. Posters, both printed and hand written, have also surpassed all previous records. While in terms of resources the Janata Party has been placed into insignificance, it perhaps holds its own with the CPM in terms of mobilising State leaders. While the Janata Party has concentrated on the Central leaders, a few West Bengal leaders and the Central Ministers, the CPM has mobilised its Central leaders and those from West Bengal and Assam.

STRENGTH

The CPM's main strength however lies in the organisation of the State Government employees. In Tripura, it is alleged, the Government employees have openly and directly involved themselves in the CPM's election campaign. Allegations were submitted to the Government against 400 such employees. There were counter allegations by the CPM also. So far the Government has issued show cause notices to 110 employees.

However, these show cause notices have not been taken seriously by many. Because in the past those employees who were punished by the previous Government were exonerated by the next. According to senior Government officials, this seriously affects discipline and morale of the administration. Government servants' involvement in electioneering has been referred to the Janata Party leaders in their election campaigns.

While discussing the election campaign one is inevitably drawn to a comparison of the parties standing for the Lok Sabha elections in March. At that time the Congress had gained a majority in 35 out of 60 Assembly constituencies, the CFD in 14, the CPM in only 10 constituencies and the Upajati Juva Samity in just one.

But in the Assembly elections this pattern is not likely to be repeated. There will be serious vote splitting because in every constituency there will be a multi-cornered fight. Splitting of votes will seriously affect the election results. The largest number of voters in one single constituency is just about 20,000. Thus most candidates will probably win their seats with very small margins. This is precisely the reason why observers feel that the election results will upset all calculations.

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Sugar Nationalisation

REPLYING to a half an hour discussion on nationalisation of sugar industry in Lok Sabha on 16 December, the State Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Bhanu Pratap Singh said: "we will not say 'no' to any proposal coming from any State Government which wants to nationalise it. We will not stand in that way. If the State Governments want to nationalise it, let them do it. There is no difficulty. The State Governments are as well empowered to take over sugar factories as Union Government."

But the situation is not so simple because at the moment no State Government seems to be insisting on nationalisation of the sugar industry Bhanu Pratap Singh earlier stated: "As the UP Government wrote to the Union Government several times not once, only once they wrote to the Janata Government after it was established here. Earlier they were writing to their own Government; they passed a resolution. They had ample time to implement that resolution. But they never intended to implement it. But they wanted to take advantage of it and held out a threat to the sugar magnates, perhaps. We cannot say what passed between the UP Government and the Union Government. As far as this Government is concerned, we received only one communication and that was in April 1977 perhaps. But before we could reply the Government in UP was also removed from office. The next government did not write to us. They did not press for it and they are not insisting that they be nationalised".

Why they were not insisting was clear from the reply Prime Minister Morarji Desai gave to a question in the Lok Sabha on 28 November, 1977. He said, "this prevailing problem is a complicated one. So far as UP and Bihar are concerned and more complicated because of low production of sugarcane. They have taken no steps to increase production. They go on asking for more and more prices because of bedeviling the whole issue. So it has to be gone into more deeply. We are trying to do that". Bhanu Pratap Singh was more categorical when he said that "seven public sector factories are under the control of UP State Sugar Corporation over the last four years and their performance is miserable."

Actually the sugarcane production has gone up. In 1976-77, the area under sugarcane cultivation was 29 lakh hectares which increased to 32 lakh hectares in 1977-78. The total production of 154 million tonnes of sugarcane in 1976-77, is expected to increase to 165 million tonnes in 1977-78.

As far as the sugarcane producer is concerned, his position remains the same. He has been receiving a uniform price of Rs 8.50 related to 8½% recovery from 1974. While the international price of sugar has fluctuated £ 700 a tonne to £ 100 a tonne in the world market, the Indian sugar magnate has been assured of a constant price which has been moving up in this country. Thus in spite of a slump in prices reported by the Minister for Food and Agriculture Bhanu Pratap Singh, the number of sugar factories in operation in India has increased. In 1975-76 231 factories were in operation. In 1976-77 this number rose to 235 and 1977-78, 257 factories were in operation on 22 December, 1977. This shows the sugar industry to be in a very satisfactory position in India regardless of the world market.

ARREARS

According to Bhanu Pratap Singh all these factories paid only Rs 590.80 crores as the price of sugarcane to the sugarcane producers. Even this was not paid monthly and on 30 September 1977 Rs 14.48 crores was in arrears.

Out of the 257 factories in operation during 1977-78, there are 103 sugarmills in UP and Bihar (30). Out of these sugar mills, 66 mills are more than 25 years old and some are more than 30 years old. At one time the sugar mills in UP and Bihar provided the bulk of the sugar for India. Even today these mills supply half of the sugar to India, the other half having been diverted to new mills in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Punjab. Ironically Maharashtra with 47 sugar mills produces the best quality of sugarcane. But the residents of Maharashtra despite this improvement in technique and production have to pay Rs 4.50 per kilogram of sugar. Therefore more efficient production in the cooperative sector, has not resulted in any relief to the consumer. On the other hand, the sugar industry has been heavily subsidised by the Government. The sugar industry has not made any efforts to modernise and get optimum output from the factories. The Public Accounts Committee in its 155 Report stated: "The Committee is firmly of the view that since no efforts have apparently been made by the sugar industry to modernise its equipment, adopt improved methods of production and expand their existing cane crushing capacity to make economic the gain of excise rebate and similar incentives have mainly put the premium on inefficiency and increased black-money". Even the Government could not benefit out of excise duty. While it was charging the excise duty on the basis of a price of Rs. 320 actually Rs 465 and more were being collected from the wholesale market in India and that was the price at Hapur.

EXCISE DUTY

The new Janata Government has benefited the sugar industry as much as the old Congress Government. They have reduced the excise duty by Rs. 47 which means there has been a sacrifice of revenue of Rs. 103 crores to the Central Government But this rebate has not been passed on the consumer. Out of Rs. 47, only Rs 25 has been passed on to the consumer and Rs 22 is being retained by the sugar factory owners. As far as the sugar industry is concerned, like all other private sector industries, it is also fi-

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nanced by the Government for the benefit of private industrialists An Economic Survey was made of 48 sugar companies by the Commission of Sugar Industry and it found that of these 48 Sugar companies the borrowing from the nationalised banks were of the tune of Rs. 97.44 crores from financial institutions Rs. 11.93 crores and from other public institutions Rs. 16.25 crores. It is with the money from these public institutions that these sugar factories operate. It is the money that the consumer pays which goes in their private pocket. A very little of it passes to the State in the form of taxes. They are so insulated that in spite of recession in the world sugar prices their profits and their prices not only remain intact but go on increasing. The Commission on Nationalisation of sugar industry recommended the entire private sector of the sugar industry other than the cooperative sugar factories should be nationalised.

The marketing at the level of wholesale trade should be completely nationalised;

Provision should be made for adequate representation of labour and cane growers in the nationalised sector and in the cooperative sugar factories at all levels;

For formulating and attacking policies in regard to the entire sugar industry, public sector and cooperative sector and for administration of the public sector of the sugar industries, statutory bodies and organisations should be set up.

These recommendations were not accepted by the Congress Government and it was left to the State Governments to nationalise the industry, though it was suggested that the States could take any action, the fact remains that the resources which enable the Government to take over sugar factories are in the hands of the Central Government and not in the hands of the State Government. Therefore no State Government, and here in particular UP and Bihar, where there are large sugar factories, can nationalise them. The Government is prepared to take over sick mills but it is not the sickmills but the mills that are not so sick which should be taken by the Government so that they can run in profit and provide adequate prices to the cane grower, adequate wages to the labour and sugar at reasonable prices to the consumer. There is a profit of Rs 200 per tonne which is just going into the black market and creating a parallel economy. The sugar lobby has been the most effective lobby in India and one of the biggest institutions of corruption of political life. If the sugar factories are nationalised, the State as well as the Central politics of India will be much better and cleaner. This will be an additional by product of the nationalisation of sugar industry apart from its economic benefits.

agriculture

Small Farmer : Unending Woes

THE Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee, in its 41st report presented to the Lok Sabha last week, has observed that there is no evidence in the material placed before it to show that all possible efforts were made to assess the requirements of various inputs and to ensure their availability to the cultivators in time, while launching the agricultural production programme. It is not surprising that set targets could not be achieved. But the PAC's conclusion that the whole programme was "patently over-optimistic and unrealistic", when read with its noting that not even a proper evaluation of the inputs needs was made prior to the implementation of the plan, raises the question; whose needs are to be fulfilled to achieve the success of a programme to boost agricultural production?

The improvements or changes in institutions and policies to effect plans, followups and to monitor the implementations can be beneficial only when priorities are properly aligned and coordinated to reach the level of the poorest farmers who are still bereft of the advantages of the all-round breakthrough in our agriculture. The Indian farming community is basically one of marginal farmers. The average holding of about 63 per cent of them is 2.27 hectares or 5 acres. Such farmers use their family labour for agricultural operation and when extra hands are needed as during paddy transformation, the neighbouring families help out each other on a mutual exchange basis. They employ traditional methods of ploughing, planning and sowing —often with much worn out implements. It is common to find a poor farmer borrowing a pair of bullocks to plough his land.

These small cultivators produce traditional crops. Some of them, whose lands are near a town do go in for vegetables in half an acre or so and take them to the vegetable mandis. But the price they get from the wholesalers is not sufficient to encourage modern techniques of vegetable plantation. This class of farmer is still selling its produce at the weekly village market—we mean, whatever, is left after the consumption by the family and the stock set aside for next year's seed requirements.

These small land holders have their own methods of planning and organisation, finance management and capital for cultivating their lands. The technological developments, introduction of tractors and other improved and quicker methods of preparation of fields, sowing or harvesting, is not available to them. The local agencies like cooperatives, Banks or extension officers consider these holdings too insignificant to give them any place in planning for higher production. If some of them do go in for HYV seeds or fertilisers, their lack of knowledge about proper application of the latest know-how, results in such a low yield compared to the increased cost of production of HYV seed crops that they immediately revert to traditional crops and methods. Even in areas which are easily accessible, the average gross cultivated land area under HYV is at the maximum 25 per cent

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or so; the rest of the holdings are still under traditional crops.

IDLE TIME

Apart from low yields, the use of local seeds affects cropping intensity, the multiple pattern of sowing is not possible as the maturity period of the local seed crops is very long. These small farmers have no agricultural activity for about four months in a year.

Fertilisers and irrigation, the most important of the inputs are not generally available to the marginal farmer, at least not at the correct time. Even if he manages to procure credit, it takes so long to fulfil the formalities that by the time he has the financial capacity to purchase the inputs, either the stocks finish or it becomes too late to get the full advantage of the use of fertilisers or watering.

The basic problems as can be visualised from the above discussion are two-fold; the farmtr's lack of knowledge of the innovations in agriculture and secondly the non-availability of credit facilities. To develop an awareness about the modern techniques and their advantages, field trials, demonstrations and adoption of the lands of small farmers are the only realistic method. Seminars and talks arranged by the fertilizer industry or agricultural departments even at block offices do not attract a small land holder. He is either busy on his own land or doing labour for neighbouring big farms or trying to earn wages in nearby towns. He does not have the time to attend such functions, where in any case he is given a very back seat. A practical demonstration at a field in his village, will develop, in small farmers, a greater confidence about the efficacy of modern methods.

Secondly, a very intensive planning has to be done for providing easy and quick financial assistance to small land holders. In this the major role will have to be given to nationalised banks. These farmers are too poor to become shareholders in cooperative societies. The banks that have rural branches or are the lead banks in particular areas should be encouraged to coordinate their financing role with the Agro-Service stations which provide tractors and other implements on hire, and Government seed and fertiliser stores, If a fixed target is given to the Extension departments and the banks to bring at the end of a season a particular number of small land holders under the various schemes of assistance, they will be more willing to persuade this class to take financial and technical help. Farmers can be grouped together to plan ploughing by tractor from Custom service stations and have the harvesting and other operations also carried out by machines. This ordinarily, a single small land holder would not be able to afford.

A farmer holding two hectares of land requires much less financial credit than bigger farmers who till now have been the major beneficiaries of the bank loans. Moreover a small farmer has lesser ability to resist or postpone payments. For a wheat crop on a 2-hectare holding the total outlay on preparation of land through tractor, fertiliser, seeds, pesticides and irrigation, harvesting and salt would come to approximately Rs 100 to Rs 1000 at the maximum. Compare this with the loan for a tractor which is now in the region of Rs 35000. If one advance for a tractor is withheld it can help about 30 marginal farmers. The bigger cultivator can make do by hiring a tractor from the Agro-Custom centres. The same amount of Rs 35000 can help construct 5 to 6 tubewells which can on a cooperative basis provide water for irrigation. The farmers can be charged for using these tubewells on the same basis as canal irrigation taxes.

A crash programme to bring them under credit schemes, and integrated development of the agricultural knowledge and expertise of these small farmers would go a long way in boosting total production and making social justice a reality in the rural sector.

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A Feature on Nepal

Rising Aspirations

A VISIT—even a short one—to Kathmandu, its neighbouring towns and the villages beyond can be a discovery. Suddenly, one realises how little one knows about the many changes which have come about in this Himalayan neighbour of ours, over the last one decade or so. Suddenly, the commonplace notions seem so incorrect excepting, of course, the view that Nepal is a land of rugged and awe inspiring beauty.

But Nepal is not merely a land of beauty. It is a land of rising aspirations like most developing nations of the world. It is in the developmental sphere that much change has come about in this Himalayan Kingdom, though as one moves to the interiors, there is the feeling that the change is little slow: Poverty is as serious a problem in Nepal as it is in many Indian villages. Then, Nepal is also faced with the problem of lack of resources due to the smallness of size and dearth of cultivable land.

RESOURCES

Only about one-sixth of the 54,718 square miles of its area is under agriculture, the rest being mountainous regions of dense forests and snows. There is little scope for any heavy industry, though efforts have been made in the recent years to explore possibilities in this sphere also. Perhaps, the major potential in Nepal lies in the field of cottage and small industries and exploitation of its forest and water resources.

However, this can be possible only with the cooperation of India because Nepal is not presently in a position to utilise all these resources to its advantage. The history of cooperation between the two countries is as old as their common land mass. As many others have noted in the past, no two other countries have ever had such close and intimate religious, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, geographical and economic ties as Nepal and India. This closeness has occasionally caused tensions between the two countries but the realisation that to prosper, they must live together has always enabled them to overcome such difficulties.

A major step forward in overcoming some such snags was taken during the recent visit of Prime Minister Morarji Desai to Kathmandu at the invitation of Prime Minister Kirtinidhi Bishta-India's friendly gesture in agreeing to sign two separate treaties on trade and transit met a long standing demand of Nepal. The issue had caused much bitterness between the two countries during the last couple of years. India also agreed to Nepal's proposal that instead of inserting a clause on curbing of smuggling in the trade or transit treaties, the two countries should evolve an understanding on joint administrative steps to solve this thorny problem.

Equally important were a series of agreements on several joint projects like the Karnali dam, the Panchesar and Mahakali or Sharda hydel projects. Desai allayed Nepal's apprehensions on such joint projects, when he said that India was not at all keen to benefit at the cost of Nepal's resources.

EXPERIMENTS

Like various other countries in the developing world, Nepal is experimenting in evolving a political and economic system which can meet the needs of its people. The panchayat and back to village institutions are part of an experiment to see how the rising aspirations of the people can be fulfilled and moulded with the general conditions of the country. There has been significant progress in several spheres like land reforms, expansion of education, development of cottage and small industry and social reforms, which is having an impact on the people of Nepal, though the impact may still not be quick or widespread.

The Khumjung valley.

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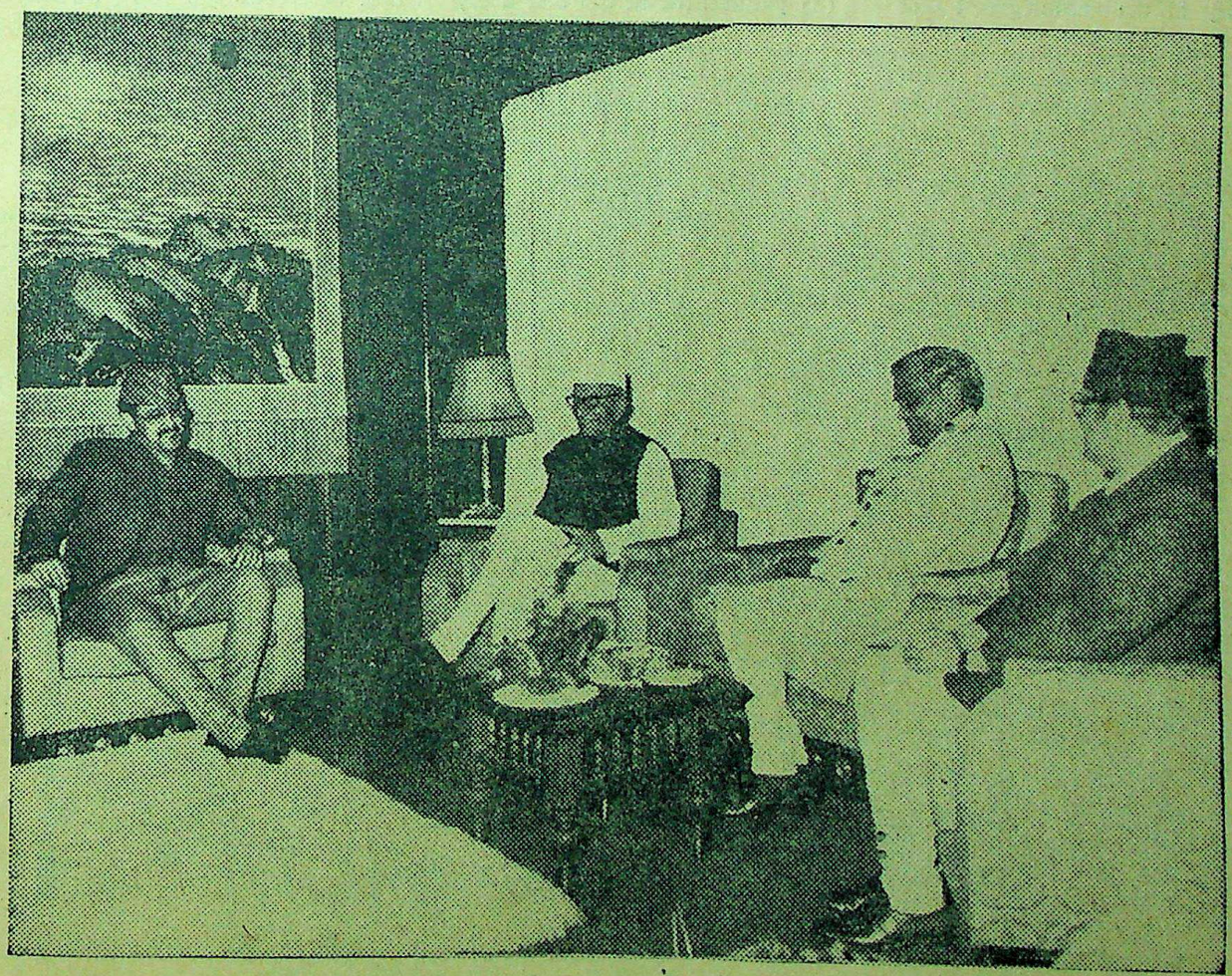
Synthesis Of Modernity And Tradition

Nepal, an international home for the Yogis and a playground for cultists and mystic explorers and adventurous travellers has emerged from the mists of history as a country determined to become a modern nation. No doubt, these people who "look at tradition" with unbelieving imagination. Tradition for better or worse, is looked up with suspicious eyes. The conflicts inherent in modernisation of an ancient land has been a subject of study by sociologists but without any real rewards. As King Birendra has observed: "...there are people who look at tradition with scepticism and grudge. They consider it as something of an anachronism that at least should be avoided to make way for rapid modernisation. Further still they regard tradition and modernity as contradictory goals where a choice has to be made if any headway towards progress is to be made at all. Personally I feel that this conflicting perception has come about as a result of the semantic confusion where two people draw different inference from the same word—namely tradition." Tradition is not linked necessarily to blind superstition, irrational faith and abscurantist ideas; it can be something of a valued experience. "It is tradition", King Birendra explains, that gives to a people its character and roots together with a sense of being and purpose. Without tradition people feel not only insecure but a sense of vaccum, rootlessness and alienation that unfortunately characterise some emergent societies. For a living human community is not a patch of deadwood but a thriving corporate body that through its collective identity seeks common goals and fulfilment."

HARMONY

Tradition and modernity in Nepal according to King Birendra are two aspects of the harmonious combination of the spiritual endeavour and material upliftment. "The people of Nepal make no allowance for fanaticism, rigidity or a lopsided growth, we as a nation, have fairly pragmatic, very tolerant and always open to embracing new ideas. We have eschewed casteism and have been free from sectarianism. The panchayat polity of Nepal enjoins on us to create a dynamic as against a static society. Like everything else in world when tradition gets tainted with the passage of time, when it gathers rust, bringing rigidity and a soul deadening creed, it surely needs change to permit a renewal of life, a revival and a regeneration. It is our belief that in the march of time everything should change, that which does not work, that which proved illusive, that which in the name of tradition only brings exploitation—all of these must change. Yet in the remorseless whirling of time, namely our tradition in which lies our independence, our freedom and the symbol of our identity that infuses life like soul to the body."

Indo-Nepal relations in the past decades have shown a remarkable resilience in maintaining friendly atmosphere despite many strains and stresses in the past. The unique and abiding ties between our two countries are a shared heritage which has



King Birendra with Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai during the latter's recent visit to Nepal.

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"the inevitability of a shared destiny". "Friendly relationship which has happily subsisted between our two countries since the dawn of history needs to be maintained and further consolidated in keeping with the spirit of time", said King Birendra. "The edifice of Nepal-India friendship stands on the pillars of equality, trust and mutual aspect and understanding of each others' aspirations, said Shri Morarji Desai, Prime Minister of India. "The benefits of our connection and our cooperation are immense. To allow pettiness or small gains by anti-social elements would be only to betray our destiny and be unworthy of our heritage. I am confident that under His Majesty's leadership, this will not happen. Mr. Desai continued, "I speaking in same view, can pledge to Your Majesty and the people of Nepal our inflinching commitment to share your burdens in the effort to bring prosperity to the country. The actual strategy of development or even the policies of Nepalese trade are within the rights of Sovereign Nepal to determine".

Earlier, Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Minister for External Affairs, affirmed that "there is no other country in the entire gamut of international relationship with which India has had such ancient and deeply interlinked relations as with Nepal...God and geography have linked our two nations and decreed that we live in friendship and any government which seeks to create a rift between us, will be doing so only against the interests and wishes of our two people. There may be divergencies in our policies and occasional differences in the policies of cooperation. But differences between us are only proof of our independence ...This vision of our destiny is to be true to our tradition and equality there is always room for difference of opinion between India and Nepal, but there must not be difference of mind between them. There has been a perennial crisis—crossing of our borders not only for trade or tourism but more importantly, for knowledge, enlightenment and even salvation. That has led to understanding of India aspiration by the people of Nepal, understanding of Nepalese aspirations by the people of India, understanding by both of our people of the aspirations of the whole of Asia and the world."

WHAT NEXT?

The King performs five duties: (a) punishment of the evil doer; (b) the recognition of merit; (c) augmenting the income of the country by honest means and spend it on developments; (d) impartial outlook; and (e) protection of the nation by all means. King Birendra is committed to this concept of Kingship.

In a traditional society where literacy and modern consciousness has yet to reach an ordinary household abstract ideas of constitution and nation cannot be understood without the aid of symbols. The monarchy provides that symbol which brings home to the ordinary masses the idea of the nation. The monarchy as an over-reaching symbol, knitting together Nepal into a nation carries a literal meaning, since the Shah dynasty has been ruling the country for the past 2500 years. Nepal today is an independent nation and cherishes the image of a joint struggle of the monarchy and people for democracy and progress. And it is this new meaning given to the traditional bond between the monarchy and people, and to the king's role as an instrument of modernisation of the country.

King Birendra is aware of his responsibilities of modernisation of Nepal. He has already

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Kumari—a liivng Nepali goddess being taken out on procession.

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announced the establishment of four regional growth centres for integrated and planned development. His emphasis on the equitable distribution of investments has been widely acclaimed. During the last five years, he has travelled and stayed in the difficult terrain and hills of the country to keep abreast of and accelerate the pace of development activities. He is committed to clean up and streamline the administration and make politics development oriented. The King of Back-to-Village campaign is a healthy step in this direction of weaving together the panchayat bodies into an organised force and mobilise them into action on the basis of a well-coordinated programme and through trained cadres.

The importance of the royal institution is, thus, too obvious: the monarchy has proved that it can play a significant role as an agent of change in the modernisation of Nepal to which major reforms such as the Land Reform Act, the Mukti Act, the New Education Plan and the Communication Plan, testify. His Majesty's call to the nation for unleashing the forces of development has evoked tremendous response which is a happy augury for the country's bright future.

Nepalese Ambassador to India Vidhanand Jha.

Tourism In Nepal

FROM the fertile plains of the Tarai to the soaring mystic heights of the Himalayas, Nepal offers much to fulfil the needs and aspirations of foreign visitors. Nepal holds a distinct personality. Two important religions —Hinduism and Budhism— contribute so harmoniously to make the cultural life of the nation. The exemplary spirit of religious tolerance runs through the whole multiplicity of festivals in Nepal. Primarily a mountain Kingdom pulsating with new vigour and rapid strides of development under the most able, dynamic and inspiring leadership of the beloved sovereign. His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, Nepal presents a rich heritage of art known to man— in stone and wood, in brick terracota, ivory, brass, bronze, silk and wool, in dance, music and folklore and in fact, in vision, deed and thought.

Although tourism in Nepal is comparatively a recent phenomenon it has played a significant role in the national economy of the country. Of course, in Nepal, tourism, in its modern sense, can be traced back to the beginning of the fifties when the country threw away the shackles of Rana regime and restored democratic rule but the concrete step to promote tourism was made when King Mahendra constituted a Nepal Tourism Development Committee under the chairmanship of prince Bir Bikram Shah in 1970.

The Nepal tourism master plan is a landmark in the history of tourism in Nepal. Looking at the growing importance and the priority this sector is commanding in the overall economic development of the country, the creation of a separate Ministry of Tourism this

A new town coming up in the valley.

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Rhodesia : End Of A Phase

IT now looks that talks as an instrument to solve the Rhodesian problem have lost their utility and even credibility. Ian Smith is again at his intransigent best. After the buffeting it had taken between the leaders of the Patriotic Front and Smith, the Anglo-US package plan, with an element of UN participation, is dead as a dodo. As usual Smith takes or at least should take a major share of the blame for dynamiting the Anglo-American plan which likes the curate's egg was good in parts. Inevitably, the Rhodesian Prime Minister feels free to fall back on his own methods to solve the problem and the nationalist guerillas too feel no holds are barred.

Smith has launched his new initiative involving the white minority and the black nationalists living in Rhodesia. He says that the problem can be only solved by Rhodesians themselves. However, Rhodesians themselves do not cover nationalist leaders like Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. It is the moderate and pliable leadership consisting of Bishop Muzorewa, Rev. Sithole and Chief Chiaru that Smith is holding talks with. A number of constructive proposals are reported to have been made by both sides at these unrepresentative talks. The discussions centred round the subject of parliamentary representation and constitutional safeguards. Government representatives formally announced Smith's willingness to accept the principle of one man one-vote.

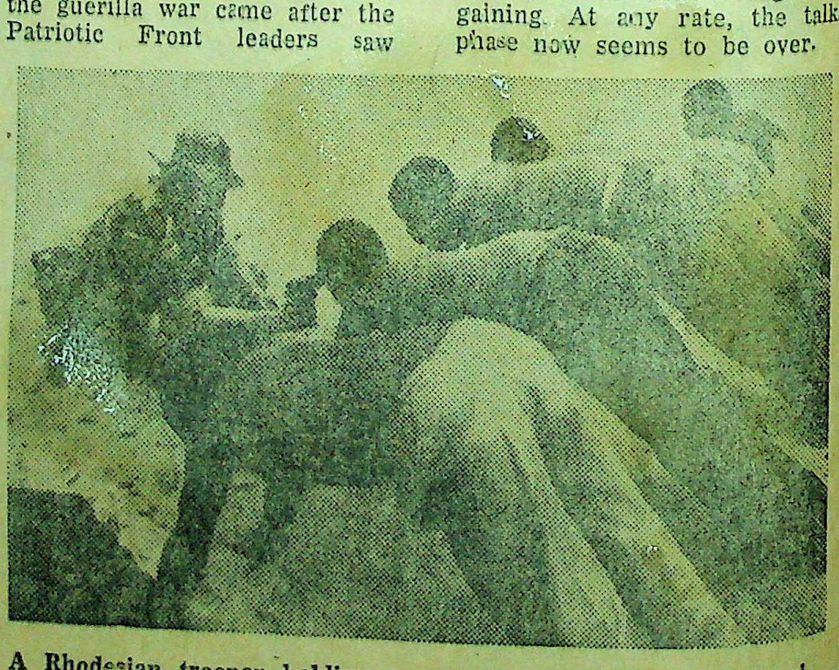
However, the internal settlement talks are not progressing satisfactorily. There is an area of disagreement between Smith and Bishop Muzorewa concerning the mechanics of a proposed safeguard for the whites in the form of a veto of legislation considered detrimental to the interests of the whites. Muzorewa hopes that by the time the talks end successfully, all opposition to them would disappear. He claims that there is already a general acceptance among the blacks and the white Rhodesians of imminent and decisive political change. Muzorewa says that Smith cannot remain immune to pressure even assuming that he is not trustworthy. The onset of rains and the exodus of whites should put him in a more reasonable frame of mind, says Muzorewa.

The exodus has already begun to worry the Smith administration because it clearly tells Smith that the whites no more have a sense of security. Though Salisbury has been reluctant to give out the true figures of this emigration, it is believed that one-tenth of the Rhodesia's white population has left the country. This does not include those persons who have left on the 'chicken run' either with a view of avoiding taxes or because they did not want that their friends should know they are quitting. Though the government attributes this exodus to the shortage of jobs at home and the fear of a call-up, it amounts to an admission that guerillas are gaining the upper hand in their battle, with government forces.

Last week, the guerillas bombarded the Grand Reef airforce base, killing 22 Rhodesian pilots. Earlier, they liquidated several dozen regulars of the white army and brought down three helicopters. This escalation of the guerilla war came after the Patriotic Front leaders saw through the Anglo-American game and recognised the futility of talking to Smith, Nkomo and Mugabe also rejected an invitation of British Foreign Secretary David Owen for talks in London. Smith knows that the internal settlement talks and any consequent solution would not stem the tide of guerilla attack.

He has, therefore, opened a new front of agression with a view to draw the free African states into the conflagration and internationalise the Rhodesian situation. Mozambique is already on the alert as the first prospective victim of Smith's new plan. It is expecting a military invasion any time. Whereas previous attacks on Mozambique were made by the Smith troops on the excuse of allegedly pursuing the nationalist guerillas fleeing into Mozambique, under the new strategy the invasion would be directed at Mozambique itself.

Then it would spread to other frontline states. Ultimately, Smith calculates, the whole of southern Africa would be plunged into widespread war and the could ask friendly western powers to intervene. The nuclear arsenal in South Africa could then be activated. A war of such dimensions is bound to push the Zimbabwean and Namibian questions to the background. In the international mediation that is bound to follow, Smith thinks he could do some tough bargaining. At any rate, the talks phase now seems to be over.



A Rhodesian trooper holding a gun in front of a line of prisoners being interrogated near Kikidoo, Rhodesia.

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Pointless Parleys

NOTHING significant is likely to emerge from the present round of talks between the Soviet Union and the United States at Berne on the Indian Ocean. The US is seeking a freezing of naval deployment by the two parties at the existing levels. This amounts to indirectly demanding that it is free to retain the giant Diego Garcia military base and also to suggesting that the Soviet Union has bases in the Indian Ocean. Washington also claims that Moscow wants that the freeze proposal should be reinforced with a mutual pledge to reduce their naval force significantly. However, the Carter administration is unwilling to meet the crucial Soviet demand that nuclear-armed vessels should not enter the region because acceptance would mean barring US nuclear-armed aircraft carriers plying in the Indian Ocean.

Last week a Soviet spokesman was claiming that "things went more smoothly and quickly than expected". It was expected that before the next round begins, proposals made by both sides at Berne would be discussed at Moscow and Washington, where the first and second rounds were held in June and October respectively.

DETENTE

After this hard posture by the US, the Soviet Union expressed its willingness to agree to a stage-by-stage approach to detente in the ocean because the US was not ready to take radical steps. In the Soviet view "daring radical steps are required to have a fundamental solution of the question of consolidating peace in the Indian ocean area—it is necessary to eliminate all foreign military bases there and reduce the military presence of non-coastal states."

The Soviet representatives made these points at Berne: (1) That the talks would proceed on the basis of equality and undiminished security giving no unilateral advantage; (2) The concept of spheres of influence was alien to Soviet thinking and (3) It was the US which was striving for stabilization of military activity in the Indian Ocean at the first stage and the Soviet Union agreed only to help bring closer the Soviet and American positions. The US strategy was admitted by the Director of US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the head of US team to Berne Paul Warnke. He said that his country wants stabilization first and then only would consider the possibility of reductions.

This obviously means that the US intends to confine the scope of the Berne meeting to a possible understanding on limiting naval activity in the Indian Ocean at the current level. This implies the retention of US gains in the ocean including the Diego Garcia installation. The US is against including this in the talks. It details task forces from its Seventh Fleet to this area and makes use of naval facilities at Subic Bay in the Philippines and at Simonstown in South Africa. In addition there are bases and facilities in the ocean being used by Britain and France.

Washington has also tried to suggest at the instance of Pentagon advisers that the US would be ready to let the Soviet Union to use naval facilities at Berbera in Somalia. The fact, however, is that even before its breach with Mogadishu, Moscow did not have any base in Somalia or anywhere in the Indian Ocean. Obviously, the US is trying to reverse its previous policy of including Diego Garcia in the agenda by suggesting that Moscow is free to retain its alleged presence in the Indian Ocean.

There are also other factors like the so-called US experts who are hampering the conclusion of an agreement by fostering the fear of an alleged Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. Retired Admiral Thomas Moorer and A. Cottrell, staff member of the Washington Centre for Strategic and International Studies declare that the Soviet-American negotiations allegedly give the Russians more advantages. On this basis they urge the US administration to expand the US base at Diego Garcia. All this is said when the talks are being held on the basis of strict adherence to the principles of equality and undiminished security. The Chinese too have been levelling baseless charges against the Soviet Union.

PEACE ZONE

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, consistently favours the dismantling of all foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean, as elsewhere, and is against the navies of great powers plying the waters for a long time far from their shores. It regards with understanding and approval the idea put forward by Sri Lanka and supported by a UN General Assembly resolution for turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. This stand was reaffirmed in Moscow recently, when in the presence of Prime Minister Morarji Desai, Leonid Brezhnev emphasised that it was high time to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace and to negotiate an agreement on the reduction of military activity in that area. This, he said, would meet the interests of Asian nations and promote the cause of peace.

Brandt's Mission

WHY has Willy Brandt come to India? That it is on an invitation from the Indian Council of Cultural Relations, is the formal explanation. From the West German side, Brandt is hitting important capitals in connection with the newly set up North-South Commission on Development Issues. The real mission however, could be to get a foothold in the Indian administration for Socialist International manoeuvres to peddle a variant of capitalism. The Socialist International has already a votary in Delhi. The vocal Industries Minister George Fernandes, released freshly from jail, was feted and lionised by the Bonn Government to an embarrassing degree this April. Brandt assumes Fernades is not one who would forget such felicitation

Fernandes has announced a new industrial policy which would set aside fears and remove obstacles

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coming in the way of both domestic and foreign investors. Significantly, he broke this news first before the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce. Besides, an official of the West German Government is reported to have advance information of India's industrial policy specially in respect of investment. This makes Fernandes' Bonn connection curioser. The private banks in West Germany, which offered to invest a billion dollars in the next two years for the industrial development of India, could not have done it for the love of India. It is a cautious response to the present drift in the Janata Government's policies.

Brandt visited India not only as a West German Social Democrat but also as the chairman of the Socialist International which is slowly spreading its activities in the Third World countries specially in Asia and Africa. The goal is to create a "democratic socialist" movement and merge into it all non-Marxist socialists opposed to Communism. The mission is mainly political and the North-South dialogue is a poor disguise. Socialism in West Germany has always had an odd context. Hitler called himself a National Socialist. The rightist Bavarian Party calls itself Christian Socialist though its goals are very close to those of Hitler's Nazi Party. And the present ruling Social Democrats are neither socialist nor democratic.

West Germany has become militarist under the Social Democratic Party which is a member of the Socialist International Willy Brandt is heading. Bonn has moved closer to NATO and farther from peace for which Brandt got his Nobel Prize. Brandt has done nothing to prevent the Social Democratic Party from abandoning the Ostpolitik. The Helsinki obligations are honoured more in the breach by propaganda offensive against the German Democratic Republic. The military budget has grown from 26 billion marks in 1970 to 47.5 billion marks in 1976. While its armed forces are growing in size, its armoury is being modernised with new missiles, aircraft and naval vessels.

The military ambitions of the Social Democrat Government are buttressed by huge investments by the multinationals trying to reverse the process of detente in Europe and keep tensions alive in Africa and West Asia. Bonn's nuclear alliance with South Africa and Israel is a testimony to the role the Nobel Peace Prize winner's party is playing in Europe.

Most of the monopoly firms manufacturing arms and military hardware in West Germany are those very firms which had helped Hitler to create his war machine. They have 400 subsidiaries operating in South Africa, of which 300 are devoted to armaments business. These firms have helped Spain (under Franco) to build aircraft, Turkey to assemble Leaopard tanks, Malaysia to make torpedo boats and Thailand to make rifles for Pinochet's Chile. The Socialist International and Brandt fully support these activities of the Social Democrats because they help boost West German political, economic and technological potential.

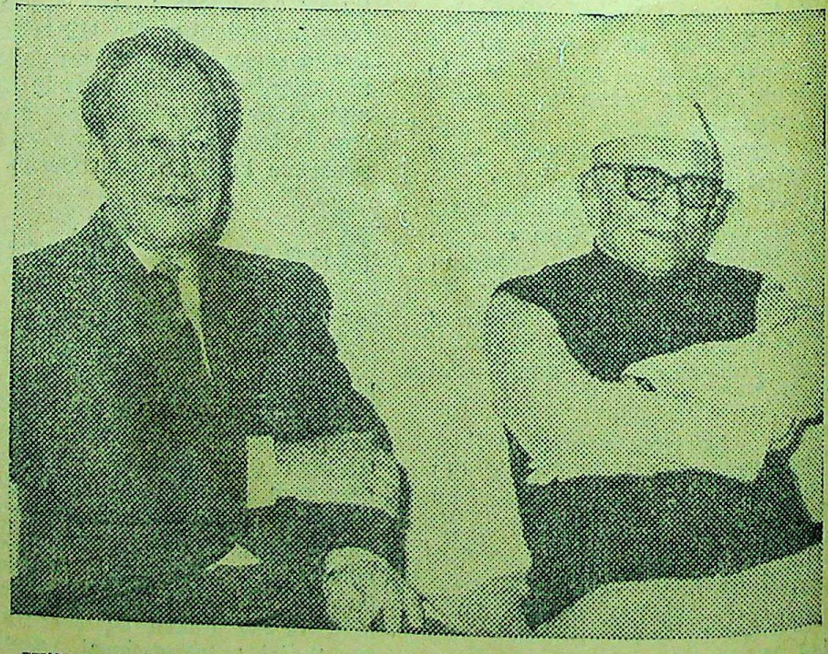
SUSPECT COMMISSION

The North-South Commission which Brandt is heading itself is suspect. That it is the brainchild of World Bank chairman Robert McNamara imparts it a dubious distinction. It is a diversionary device to deflect the heat industrial countries are subjected to at the Paris dialogue. The issues at the North-South dialogue are clear. They break down every time for only one reason, that is, the lack of political will on the part of the developed nations. Is Brandt confident that he can make the West adopt helpful attitudes? He should then be visiting the reluctant rich countries instead of Delhi. The obvious conclusion would be that he is trying to divide the developing countries into threshold states and developing nations.

In contrast to these ambitions of Bonn in regard to India, the ties between Delhi and Berlin present a picture of cordiality and trust. The first economic contacts between the two countries began in the midfifties, though diplomatic relations were established much later in 1972. The Indo-GDR joint economic commission set up in 1974 oversees economic, scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries. The trade turnover has increased 13-fold since 1955.

Besides traditional Indian export products, the GDR imports an ever-increasing volume of non-traditional items too. GDR exports mainly comprise machine tools, cargo ships, printing and textile machines, plants for electric data processing, for agriculture and food processing, scientific instruments, fertilisers and products of petrochemistry. Its printing machines too have gained good reputation.

Electronic small and medium-sized computers, modern office computers as well as products of precess-computing technique and large-scale computers are some of the important items GDR offers. The GDR foreign trade enterprise (Electrotechnik Export Import) is an important supplier of hardening and melting plants for the Indian metal working and machine-building industry and for foundry techniques. The economic development of the GDR and India opens up new opportunities to expand and deepen economic and scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries on a long-term and stable basis.



Willy Brandt with Prime Minis ter Morarji Desai at the residence.

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Coomaraswamy Vay Of Seeing

COOMARASWAMY's integral approach to art combined the formal and stylistic study with the meaning and content of art. He believed that the actual shapes and structures of works of art are determined by their real content and that the knowledge of religious and philosophical background is indispensable for the understanding of the history of art.

Coomaraswamy attempted to understand and interpret the art of India in the content of the Indian pattern of culture. He differentiated the approach to art as manifest in Indian culture from that of the West on the basis of different principles involved in their relationship to nature. His exposition of the Indian view of art helps us to understand the disregard or lack of scientific perspective in Indian art. In Indian art, according to him, there is no mimesis or copying of nature or model but the artist obtains the image by a process of mental visualization or **dhyana.**

MEMORY IMAGE

"Thus the form is always reached by a process of synthesis and abstraction, rather than by observation, and is always in the last analysis a memory image. When we perceive increased reality or truth, we must ascribe this not to a change of habit, but to heightened consciousness, a more complete identification of consciousness with the theme itself—in other words to a more profound empathy." He gives evidence from Silpa texts and works like the **Sukrantitisara** to support this view of Indian art. He also says, "Those who wish to study the development of Indian art must emancipate themselves entirely from the innate European tendency to use a supposedly greater or lesser degree of observation of Nature as a measuring rod by which to trace stylistic sequences or recongnize aesthetic merit."

Though Coomaraswamy was himself interested in bringing forth the metaphysical foundations of Indian culture, his study draws our attention to the hold of 'types' in the presentation of an object. The artist would present a tree in painting or sculpture in accordance with the convention of presenting a tree rather than according to what he actually sees or as is seen in reality. Similarly, a queen would be presented according to the canons of depicting a **padmini** type rather than drawing her actual portrait. It is this fixation for presenting art objects according to types that explains, for example, the absence of portraiture in Indian art.

Sociologically speaking, this fixation for types can be intrepreted as a trait of the Indian pattern of culture which conditioned the Indian mind to conventions, not only in the visual arts but also in court literature, donative inscriptions, eulogies, etc. Instead of giving the actual account of kings in their **charitas** and inscriptions, the court poets presented romantic fictions which could apply to an ideal king. Such an attitude almost inhibited the writing of history in ancient India, at least up to the time of Kalhana. The empirical study of Indian art also shows a strong hold of conventions which becomes stronger from the 10th century A.D. onwards. For a socio-cultural study of Indian art it would be pertinent to find out the factors in history which led to thinking and viewing in terms of 'types' and to conventionalism and traditionalism.

A motif which first appeared in Coomaraswamy's "Rajput Painting".

In his **History of Indian and indonesian Art,** the **Yakshas,** and his various other works Coomaraswamy was conscious of the cultural setting of Indian art of which, however, he presents only scattered glimpses. While describing the art of Ajanta, for instance, he rightly draws attention to its courtly character and says that Ajanta paintings reflect the same phase of luxurious aristocratic culture as does the work of Kalidasa, Bana and other court-dramatists. Similarly, in his paper on terracottas written in 1928 while mainly dealing with the stylistic traits or formal analysis of terracottas of different periods he also deals with the cultural background of some of the terracottas suggesting the anthropological interest of some other types. He says, "Important for the history of art and technically interesting as the terracottas may be, it should not be overlooked that they are also documents of life."

SOCIAL CONTEXT

However, it may be mentioned that though Coomaraswamy was conscious of the cultural setting of Indian art and he brought out the fundamental ideas of Indian culture in relation to Indian art, there is no systematic or consistently worked out cultural or social history of art in his writings. No doubt, it was not his approach or intention to treat art as a part of the social framework. He was concerned rather with the religious and philosophical foundations of Indian art and culture. However, one can point out that some of his views are a historical and ideal rather that related to an actual sociohistorical situation. He stated, for instance, that the traditional artist was not interested in self-expression and that the patron was not interested in self-glorification.

One would like to comment here that instead of accepting a static and ideal picture from the Silpasastras and higher varna texts, we need to study texts in their historical contexts. Even cultural ideals can be viewed from a sociohistorical point with questions such as in what social situation could such ideals be formulated, who helped to foster them and what was their hold on actual life. We need to have material on the actual or concrete situation as regards the artists, patrons or public and their interrelationship

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as obtained under different stages of Indian history.

Ancient Indian society was not static as believed by the 19th century and early 20th century historians. Recently, social historians have drawn attention to different stages or periods in Indian based on differing socio-economic conditions. Thus, in the period circa 300 B.C.—A.D. 500, the period of heightened trade, commodity production and urban prosperity, the position of **silpins** or craftsmen improved considerably and money could be invested with their guilds, as we know from inscriptions. The art was mainly patronized by the urban or **nagaraka** class consisting of merchants, traders, artisan and craft guilds, common people and royal families.

Whereas in the period circa A.D. 500—900, when trade and commodity production was on decline, the **nagaraka** culture was replaced by the **samanta** or feudal culture. The craftsmen could be pressurized to forced labour or **visti**, though some of them joined the feudal order or rank of **ranaka** and **thakkura** in the period A.D. 900-1300. The inscriptions on numerous temple walls eulogize the might and prowess of patrons who built temples "for fame and glory."

BETTER IN SIGHT

The point is that the ideal and static picture as reflected in texts has to be critically studied against the material available on the concrete historical situation. Art has to be treated in a total framework against a network of relationship —social, economic, cultural, religious, etc.—a network which is dynamic and changing in history. The work done by Coomaraswamy, Stella Kramrisch, Zimmer, V.S. Agrawala and others has deepened our understanding of the ideational background of Indian art. They have given us insight into the relationship between the metaphysical structure and artistic creations, both of which ultimately can be viewed as reflections of the total socio-cultural framework. In this direction, with a view to understand the actual behaviour, modes of thinking and feeling, the stress laid on the interdisciplinary approach by Niharranjan Ray, Kapila Vatsyayan and others will be of vital importance.

—Devangana Desai

CINEMA

Search For Identity

SINCE the first James Bond film Dr No came out in 1962, there has been an increasing number of films which deal with spies, government space programmes and projects, loss of top secret documents pertaining to them, etc. Such films usually involve suspense-oriented actions, ruthless violence and brittle romances which spring from strange encounters. The technique, pace and style of presenting action-packed thrillers on the screen may vary in quality but the formula remains very much the same.

The Groundstar Conspiracy has a novel way of presenting the ruthless power of the State to destroy an individual in its own self-interests. The film's over-all chilling effect and suspense is achieved through an extraordinary teamwork of brilliant direction, subtle and sensitive photography and good acting by a trio of players appearing in order of merit Michael Sarrazin, George Peppard and Christine Belford.

The top secret government space project installation called Groundstar is in the news when an explosion in its premises kills six scientists and almost kills the seventh—John Welles (Michael Sarrazin). Badly wounded, Welles uncertainly makes his way to nearby seaside cottage. On seeing him, Nicole Devor (Christine Belford) who lives in that cottage screams with terror.

Later, security men from the project meet Welles and find on him not only an identity card but also a stolen tape detailing top secret data. They conclude that Welles sabotaged the project. George Peppard as Tuxan, the security head is determined to find the reason and investigate the activities of the persons involved.

Though Welles' life is saved through surgery, his traumatic amenesia deprives him of his identity. He cannot remember who he is or the circumstances which brought him to the Groundstar project.

It is the intensity of Welles' personal feelings...his passionate search for his identity after he has been cruelly deprived of his memory by electro-shock treatment which is given to him under Tuxan's instructions so that he may fit the personality of the man whose identity card he carries...the awakening of memory through images, the sound of foreign words and through flashbacks make it an impressive film. The interior and exterior forces are synthesized and the strange happenings in Welles' life are told with considerable dramatic effect.

Welles' return to the seaside cottage and his friendship with Nicole enable him to partially recapture the past. His ignorance about himself adds suspense to the story. The film reaches in an unusual way a high crescendo of suspense and surprise towards the end.

Christine Belford who decorates the film with her almost bare torso and shapely limbs is soon involved in an affair with Welles, and enacts with him a few (supposed to be) scorching bedroom scenes which reflect the swinging ideas of today's permissive society.

Miracles All The Way

IN Hindi films miracles never cease to happen, and Parvarish abounds with them.

Director Man Mohan Desai's treatment of smugglers and pickpockets is fantastic. People want to buy dreams and it has been his endeavour (as in the film under review) not to sell them sweet, smooth, complete dreams but a hotch potch of dreams spiced with the kind of violence that has been the stock-in-trade of the 'fight composers' of our films.

Two young pickpockets played by Neetu Singh and Shabana Azmi make a desperate bid to get married to their dream boys Amitabh Bachchan and Vinod Khanna respectively. They first pick their pockets, apologise for their misdeeds, then brazenly propose to them...When their proposals are turned down they threaten to commit suicide... This amuses the two boys im-

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mensely, and so their attempts to commit suicide are treated as a joke by them. They then approach the boys' parents who are also shocked and amused but nevertheless favourably impressed by them. So much so that even when they pick their pockets and purses they still want their sons to marry them.

Amitabh Bachchan plays the role of the son of the notorious dacoit Mangal Singh. As a police officer his ambition is to prevent people from indulging in anti-social activities. Adopted by the 'Police Commissioner' and his wife he proves to be an efficient and dedicated officer. Their own son played by Vinod Khanna joins a gang of gold and diamond smugglers.

Tales of two brothers' relations and the nefarious activities of smugglers have been narrated many times on the screen. It was therefore, unnecessary to produce another one.

The film is at times tense, superficial...Yet it has some original cinematic moments like the one when submarines are employed by the smugglers—the alternating scenes of look-back which are linked to the present. Shabana Azmi and Neetu Singh are involved with the comical situations of delinquents. At the same time they are out to murder the notorious dacoit Mangal Singh who is responsible for killing their parents.

Meanwhile, groups of hoodlums clash with the police... there are chases, fights.—pleasant farcical sequences, songs and dances...Everything is, as usual smoothened out at the end. A fewer dances and songs might have fitted the story just as well and perhaps shortened its length.

THEATRE

Contemporary Dimension

WHAT holds our interest in a Tanvir production is mainly form: a Sanskrit play with its rigid classical structure is given a new form through assimilation of the freer airs of the improvisation techniques of the folk theatre Of the three modern adaptations from the Sanskrit drama so far enacted—Shudraka's "Mrichhakatika," Vishakhadutt's "Mudrarakshasa" and Bhavabhuti's "Uttara Ram Charit" "Mitti Ki Gadi" in its Chhattisgarhi outfit has the contemporary texture, and its judicious blending of modern theatre techniques with the rural universe of a folk culture as reflected in the natcha style of the Chhattisgarhi actors. Their interpretation of Shudraka has the imprint of their characteristic vitality. The play has a certain restraint it must be said that has a markedly urban touch.

Mitti Ki Gadi is a new production—as fresh perhaps as a freshly painted mud wall, and succeeds in establishing immediate rapport with the urban audience. Though at place the play seems allegorical Tanvir's genius has transformed it into a contemporary experience. The slogans and militant marches by a rebellious people determined to overthrow an atrocious regime and the king's brother-in-law's bullying of the judge has the flavour of recent history.

Since music is an essential component of folk theatre, the performers have to be good singers. And the singing with sprinkling of melodies that have a thumri touch enliven the narrative.

The Chhattisgarhi players' uninhibited zest is really infectious. Ram Lal as Sansthanaka, king's brother-in-law, his boisterousness, his buffoonery has the ranting air of a maniac. If he tends to exaggerate, Udai puts in a far too restrained performance: seldom does he raise his voice or change his serene smile of self-content to anything more expressive. The play's Chhattisgarhi colouring, the improvisations indulged in too often by individual performers, the spontaneity of the gesture and movement and its mid-stage low and round platform, leaving enough space for a circular movement—an old device no doubt—have given to the new production of Mitti Ki Gadi a contemporary dimension which is in keeping with its classical milieu.

Agents for

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Outstanding Performers

Sarangi's Glory

PANDIT Ram Narayan's contribution to sarangi music is unique. The sarangi which had been degraded and its audience limited to the visitors of the tawaifs, has been restored to its past glory.

Ram Narayan fell in love with the sarangi when he was about five years old. So fascinated was he by the melodies he could reproduce on the sarangi that he wanted to play it all the time. He preferred to play the sarangi than attend to his school work. His father did not discourage him but when he thought he was mature enough to understand the hard facts of life he told him about the plight of most sarangias. So he promised his father that he would never work for tawaifs and told him that his aim was to save the sarangi from extinction.

Ram Narayan gave his first solo performance in 1954 at the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall, Bombay. The unruly audience greeted his performance with jeers. He was hooted off the stage. This experience depressed him so much that he thought of dropping the idea of specialising as a soloist. But he was fortunate to have friends who had faith in him. They insisted that he should give himself another chance to perform as a soloist in public. His triumph came when the same organisation which had sponsored his first solo performance invited him to perform again. Over 3000 persons attended and applauded his second performance and that marked the beginning of his career as a soloist.

Today Pt Ram Narayan has to his credit hundreds of successful concerts in India and abroad. He has performed in several cities of the Soviet Union, China, France, Germany, Holland the UK, the USA, Canada..In India there are many musicians who belong to the Ram Narayan Gharana, and specialise in presenting his compositions and his style of playing the sarangi. He believes that new styles and compositions enrichen classical music. An artiste's calibre can be judged by his new contributions. At present Pt Ram Narayan is the Head of the Department of Music and Executive Director of the National Centre for Performing Arts, Bombay.

Pandit Ram Narayan.

Michael Ferreira

VERY few Indians have had the merit to qualify as individual world champions in the field of sport. Wilson Jones, who won the world billiards title on two occasions, is considered the first Indian to earn that distinction. Some however say that wrestler Game was the first. Michael Ferreira has now become the second Indian in recent times to wear the world "crown" by beating all-comers in the World Amateur Billiards Championship at Brisbane And bettering Wilson, with whom he has had many happy huntings, Ferreira also annexed the World Open title, played in New Zealand immediately after.

"King" Michael has been seeking the crown for long. And everyone has acknowledged that he had the genius in him. Yet, he failed to pull it off in seven earlier attempts entering the final thrice. Each time it was as if the 'crown' lay just beyond the bend. It was said that Ferreira always "lost to himself", that he was his own enemy. He was compared to Ken Rosewall, of tennis, for falling this side of the threshold of final story.

Sportsmen of a lesser calibre may have given up long back, but not Michael. He succeeded in breaking the hoodoo in his eigth attempt and the fourth final appearance. He beat off an early challenge from Bob Close and then grabbed the crown.

For those who have never had the occasion to know Ferreira apart from the brief score-figures tucked away in most sports pages, his own reporting from Melbourne and Auckland must have been a revelation. He is so humane, so philosophical yet down to earth, so observant and so lucid with a touch of sophisticated humour, and above all so proud of being an Indian. His personality comes throuhg when he says:, "How you react to the bitterness of losing will determine whether you have the stuff of which champions are made of".

Billiards may not be one of the so-called "major" games played in India. Yet it has enough Indian votaries of class to buttress the country's claim to be considered a major "power" in world billiards. A game of British origin, played in countries where John Bull left his colonial mark, it may appear to be a ponderous one, like cricket. But it is a demanding and complex

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sport, calling for exceptional and diverse skills. Geometry, mathematics, pin-point accuracy, quick and clear-headed planning and approach, keen sight and perception and stamina are some of them. Age is an asset, not a bar, for the game but it requires complete dedication as in any other sport to reach the top.

There have been sportsmen who have been honoured by the nation for lesser glories in other "popular" sports than those earned by dedicated men like Ferreira. Although it may be too much to expect the type of welcome home as is accorded to our victorious cricket or hockey teams, Ferreira is a national hero, and should be received and honoured thus in all quarters.

Truffaut's Choice

She is the Screen's Most Beautiful Woman. With sea green eyes, flawless skin, sculptured face and magnificent body, she has come to be recognized as one of the great movie beauties of all times. At 33, and with over two dozen movies behind her, Jacqueline Bisset is not the Best Actress or Biggest Star though she is well on her way to achieving major international stardom.

Jacqueline has worked with big names like directors John Huston, Francois Truffaut and actors Paul Newman, Belnondo, Mastroianni and Steve McQueen. At present she is filming "The Greek Tycoon" in which she plays the part of a widow of an assassinated American President married to a shipping billionaire.

She was born in 1944 at Surrey, England. Her father, Frazer Bisset is a Scottish physician and her mother half-French. After the war her family settled in Reading where Jackie and her older brother grew up in a "nice" atmosphere of books and music. After some modelling and walk-on movie parts she managed an audition with Roman Polanski and eventually a small part in his 'Cul de Sac'. Her next movie was 'Two For a Road' which launched her on a string of bad Hollywood films. While filming 'The Sweet Ride' she met Michael Sarazzin with whom she lived for seven years. After being cast in a series of 'girl friend' roles to the stars of male-action films Jackie has now begun to complement her looks with sensitive acting. She was excellent

Jacqueline Bisset.

in 'The Grasshopper' and 'The Mephisto Wallz.'

Truffaut is probably the only director to have exploited Jackie's acting talent as well as her beauty. in his 'Day for Night' where she plays an English movie star. Of her he says, "She's probably the most beautiful actress I've ever worked with. Most women with sexy bodies lack that particular spark of mystery, but she has both." Edith Head, the famous designer describes Jackie as "one of the greatest bodies I've ever worked with. But besides that she is rather the opposite, because she is so damned intelligent. It is a strange combination, almost a double personality."

At presnt Jackie is living with Victor Drai, a Frenchman in his early 30's. They lead a quiet life with Jackle pursuing her favourite hobby of cooking and Drai his of backgammon.

Her parents were divorced after 32 years of marriage which perhaps has influenced her views on men. She is very distrustful of the opposite sex particularly of their fidelity level. She does not want to get married though only thinks of it "vaguely" when she is depressed.

Jackie's problem is of being a sane person in a crazy world and lacking a bizarre personality like Marilyn Monroe's which sells. Her beauty has doubtless given her a sense of power whi h is sells. Her beauty has doubtless given her a sense of power which nevertheless tinged with pathos as her beauty, like that of others, is food for everyone's fantasies but her own. It is a dangerous glory as very few—Katherine Hepburn amongst them — have been able to keep this power to themselves.

A Dancer is Born

BALLET, the most stylised of the arts, is a poetry of movements which have a spatial orientation. The stylised movements are composed like film frames the spectator providing the ground for a transition from one action to another. Bharat Sharma emerged with his performance in the Wolf-boy, the award winning ballet at the all-India ballet competition as dancer who has the power to create a chain of usual sensations. He has mastered the art of free-style dancing to which he gives a cutting edge by importing movements from chhau dance. With a hypnotic gaze and a long graceful neck, large eyes and a wiry body he was able to convey a dream quality mixing unreality of the dance movements with the real-looking mannerism of a wolf. He has an actor's felicity of expression and enables us to read into his face every shade of emotion and their complexity.

The son of a noted dancer-choreographer Narendra Sharma and dancer Jayanti Sharma Bharat grew up almost in the rehearsal rooms and this has made him a dancer.

Bharat Sharma

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Geo-thermal Energy

THE present position of consumption of various energy sources in the world is: (i) Coal 32.7 per cent (ii) Natural Gas 19.2 per cent, and (iii) Petroleum products 44,2 per cent. The remaining is taken are of by the Atomic Energy. But all these sources are slowly getting depleted which necessitates a search for alternate energy sources. Even in advanced countries like USA., which has 63 atomic power plants working and 70 under planning, it is expected that the energy supply will last only for another 70 years. The two most talked about alternate sources are solar energy and geo-thermal energy. Solar energy no doubt has already got the attention of scientists.

In a number of countries though the geo-thermal energy has not been taken up on the same scale, various experiments carried out at a number of places have shown that the temperatures under the earth's crest are very high. This discovery has brought the attention of the scientists to whether the heat available could be converted into useful energy. The taking out of geo-thermal energy is something like discovering oil on shore. The first layer below earth is a solid matter after which is a liquid layer. This again is followed up by a solid layer which could be as thick as 3400 kms. The temperature in between these two thick layers are very high which can be as much as 3,000 degree C to 4,000 degree C. The available there cannot be calculated or estimated with the present scientific knowledge available. If this energy is taken out and converted into electricity, it will serve the purpose where low energy supply is necessary. This heat source is the basic source for geo-thermal energy. The various layers of earth are made up of different radioactive elements collected over thousands of years. The advantages of geo-thermal energy are that the pollution is reduced to a very low limit or almost negligible, low cost of production and never ending energy supply. But it has certain disadvantages also. While drilling for geo-thermal energy gases like carbon dioxide, ammonia, hydrogen sulphite will also surface.

The initial work done on geo-thermal energy production has been based on the technology applied to petroleum well drilling. This is one of the reasons why only the petroleum companies are taking interest in such projects. These companies are fully aware that on the one hand these sources will provide pollution free energy sources but on the other hand will have hazards like blowing of some of the drilling wells similar to what happens in oil and natural gas drilling. They have the experience and knowledge to take care of such hazards on the basis of the experience they have gained with petroleum drilling.

HOT SPRINGS

Most of the geo-thermal energy centres are the hot water sources under the earth. The temperature of this hot water sources can be anywhere between 200 to 360 degree C. When a well is drilled and the pressure is relieved, only 15 to 20 per cent of water gets converted into stam. This can be used for production of electricity. The remaining quantity of water can be used for other work. The hot springs have the highest supply potential for geo-thermal energy. Apart from this, there are seven more geo-thermal energy sources e.g. the dry water regions, low emthaply regions, geo-pressure regions, and mecma deposits. Of these sources have their own distinct qualities. The first two sources are known as hydro thermal sources and are supposed to be the best geo-thermal energy sources. In California, jets of hot waters emerge from the earth crest from which steam is separated and generators are run on the steam to produce electricity. The hot water separated is used for heating homes and desalination of sea water. In India, there are about 250 hot water springs having temperature up to 140 degree centigrade and sources of good wet steam. By the end of July 1977, in Puga region in Ladakh which is 230 kms from Leh in Himalayas, geo-thermal energy plant of 7 megawatt was under experimental stage. Geological Survey of India has drilled 16 wells up to a depth of 15 to 17 metres and nearly a hundred tonne of wet steam is coming out of it at a temperature of up to 140 degree centigrade. Various regions in which work on geo-thermal energy in India has been undertaken are Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sarguja area in Madhya Pradesh, Cambay and Western Ghats of Maharashtra.

Geo-thermal energy did not receive any attention till now mainly for two reasons. Firstly the other energy sources which were easily attainable were freely available and secondly, industrially developed countries had no legal provision for running geo-thermal projects. At present, the non-Communist countries which has a capacity of developing up to 8 lakh megawatt of electricity do not develop even one per cent from geo-thermal energy. In a report published in 1974, 80 countries round the world had the capacity to use geo-thermal energy but so far only USSR, Italy, Japan, USA, Mexico, Kenya, Ethiopia, Hungary, Turkey, El Salvador and India have made any progress in this field. The US Administration expects that by 1985, 10 to 15 thousand megawatt electricity would be generated from geo-thermal sources. Though the scientists expectations in America are that by the end of this century geo-thermal energy would be used to develop up to 4 lakh megawatt of electricity. Japan has also encouraged private enterprise to invest in this field. USSR has developed a geo-thermal energy centre at Kamchatka Peninsula and the progress has been remarkable.

There was not much of progress in this field in our country. A committee was set up in 1966 whose report is still lying buried in files. Based on a report of 1974, a 30 megawatt capacity geo-thermal electricity plant working at a 90 per cent load factor will cost Rs. 5 crores whereas a thermal power plant based on coal will cost Rs 6 crores and the atomic power plant would need up to Rs 11 crores. Considering these various factors and the energy supply requirements which are likely to go up to 40,000 megawatt in 1980 for our country, it is necessary that these geo-thermal energy sources are given due consideration.

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Science Policy Planning

A sound national science policy evolved as early as 1958 has failed to yield the expected results because of lop-sided implementation. This is how Dr. Harinarain, Director, National Geophysical Research Institute summed up the country's science and technology scene. He felt that the Indian scientists have done great work during the past three decades. Deputy Director of Regional Research Laboratory, Hyderabad, Dr. P. M. Bhargava also shared this view and highlighted various achievements free India has to her credit. Dr. Harinarayan felt that we must evolve priorities and that priorities have to be formulated by people at helm of national affairs. Quoting Atmaram and Naiudamma, Dr. Harinarain said that we have been simply following western techniques in science and technology which are capital intensive and labour saving. Such technology was meant for western countries where manpower was a problem. In the Indian situation, we need a different technology. We have problems of capital and energy and not shortage of man-rties where manpower was a propower. He said that Indian scientific community today had sufficient know how to solve most of the problems of the Indian masses. It was for the Government to see that results of research and development reached masses. According to Harinarain a break through is possible if complacency is shed by authorities and plans and programmes are projected by the coordination council for natural resources in the planning commission. The National Council will help in formulating national policies, priorities and integrated plans while the main emphasis at the State level will have to be on integrated land soil, water management. Harinarain said, time, was the most crucial factor in economic and industrial development.

Dr. Bhargava was critical of Indian scientific research and development. While Indian expertise in various branches of science and technology could be excelled by only a few countries, he said, the prime reason for failure was the non-involvement of the scientific community in framing science and technology policies. He regretted the influence of bureaucracy on science and technology and the fact that only lip service was being paid to the development of a scientific temper.

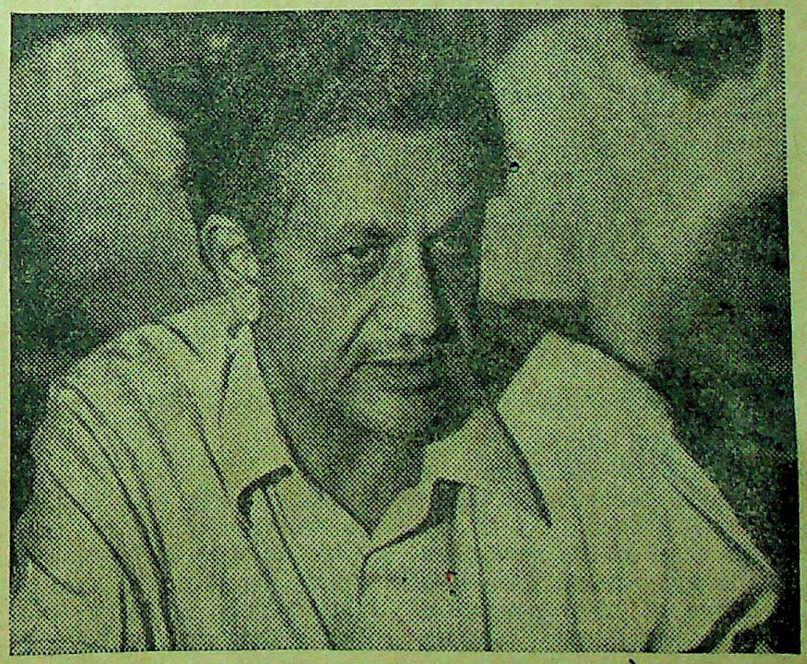
Policy makers, he added, had opened doors to neo-colonialism by their indiscriminate import of foreign technology. With the exception of Bhabha, Bhatnagar, Dr. Zaheer Hussain and Sarabhai, most of those appointed to high administrative positions had little commitment to science and much less to society. Besides some of them had no faith in scientific methods and values and hence created a situation in which scientific research suffered and irrational unscientific beliefs flourished. Dr. Bhargava outlined a nine point programme as the only way out of this situation. Contributions by Indian scientists and technologists should be adequately recognised. Non scientific and anti science attitudes should be discouraged and methodology based on this approach should be incorporated in the directive principles of the Indian Constitution for making policies and finding solutions to problems. His other suggestions included minimising import of foreign technology, recognition to quality based research and dispensing with present class and caste systems of education.

Nuclear Strategy

VIBRATIONS from the shock waves that the nuclear blast at Pokhran created three years ago, have still to subside. Reactions of dismay and doubt about India's utilization of its know-how for peaceful purposes were more or less along expected lines. India's ability to harness atomic energy for material development was however never in doubt.

Of the men, who have spent their lifetime to bring India to the threshhold of being called a nuclear power, Dr Homi Nusserwanji Sethna, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India comes to mind most naturally. A close collaborator with Dr Homi Bhabha, Dr Sethna was responsible for the designing and construction of the plutonium plant at Trombay. Currently busy in developing an adequate breeder power programme, he acknowledges that the "breeding" which enables fuller use of scarcer materials and hence makes energy production economical is "necessary and attractive."

At the recent Dr Hiralal Roy Memorial lecture, departed from the prepared demogogic text to speak to the audience in a language they could understand. Dr Sethna not only knows what he is saying but has his priorities clear. There is reason to hope that India's scientists and engineers engaged in making fast breeder power reactors would make them a commercial proposition by the end of this century.



Dr H. N. Sethna.

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Not Good For Moraie

"IT is too much for (the health of) the heart", skipper Bishan Singh Bedi said after the nerve-tingling end of the second Test against Australia at Perth. With just five of the 15 mandatory overs remaining, the home team were left only with the two tailend wickets and about eight runs more to get to their second successive victory in the series. After five days of sea-saw cricket in blistering heat, the result hung on those precious few minutes; with the Aussies just tipping the balance in their favour at the end. If the results at Brisbane and Perth are the pattern for the rest of the three Tests, Bedi's warning is ominous.

From India's point of view it was the repetition of tragedy —they lost another Test they should have won, or could have easily drawn. The heat in the Perth bowl—and the annoying flies that constantly buzzed around—must have done something to the Indians on the fourth afternoon. How else does one explain the side tumbling from 240 for one to 330 for nine with time to spare in the last two hours of play on that day? Ageing Sam Ganon, who had been their tormentor 10 years back, suddenly looked a demon and claimed two wickets each in two of his post-tea overs to puncture the Indian innings. Surely, after fending off the fire to Thomson, the Indians should have learnt to defend their wickets against anything-else the Aussies could hurl at them in the name of pace.

INEPTITUDE

On the final day, the foxy Simpson guided his team so methodically through the Indian spin maze (which, of course, has lost most of its mysticism) that although wickets were lost, the tempo of runs scored in good time was always kept up to the last minute. In that, he got unexpected assistance from nightwatchman Tony Mann; the first nightwatchman in cricket history who ended up with a century!

In the final analysis it was the triumph of Aussie application over Indian ineptitude; the former seizing even a half-chance, and Indians squandering their opportunities like the earnings of a gambler, recklessly. What a pity that the excellent work of Mohinder Amarnath (90 and 100) of Chetan Chauhan (88 and 32) and Sunil Gavaskar (127) at the start of the two innings should have been pushed down the drain by the latter-order batsmen. What a pity again that neither Chandrasekhar nor Venkataraghavan could come to the assistance of Bedi in either taking wickets or containing the run rate. The valient skipper almost bowled single-handed, claiming five wickets each in the two Aussie innings. His bowling, especially in the excitement-packed last day, was tremendous indeed.

With so much of experience behind him, Vishwanath continues to be an enigma; unable to continue his innings beyond the 30's and 40's Coming at No. four he should be doing far, far better than exhibit those juvenile streaks. Batting sense seems to have deserted both Brijesh Patel and Madan Lal, both walking up to their doom time and again like rabbits caught in the glare of torchlights. There was a time when India had a batting line-up down to even No eight or nine In the past it was the Indian "middle" that held after the collapse at the start of an innings. There has been a complete reversal of that now Down Under.

AMATEURISH

All said and done the difference between the two teams, with all their differing endowments, is not much. What tilted the balance in favour of the home team on two successive occasions was that while Bedi and team-mates approached their task rather like amateurs Simpson was able to marshal his green-horns with a more professional approach. Again, temperamentally, the Indian cricketer has always displayed frail traits; when the going becomes a little tough, he just caves in.

With eight consecutive victories before the first Test, the Indians exuded confidence It was so quickly shattered by the narrow defeat at Brisbane. This showed while they lost the match against Western Australia at Perth itself before the second Test. The second Test defeat has brought the morale of the team further down. This was seen when the tourists lost the one-day match at Tasmania in the last over. With further injuries suffered by Surinder Amarnath on whom Bedi must have been banking heavily to strengthen the batting line-up in the remaining Tests and the loss of form of so many of his key players, including bowlers, it is too much to expect that his team will rise as if from the ashes in the remaining three encounters which follow in quick succession.

Travel-weariness is already reported to be showing among the team members. Morale is also low. The tactics which skipper Simpson has so successfully adopted so far—softening up the Indian batsmen with brief spells of "Thommo" fire to spoil their appetite, and later litting the second-liners like Clark Ganon or Hurst collect the falling leaves—is sure to be repeated in the remaining Tests. The measure to which our batsmen count this systematic attack will determine the final results of the series.

The two close results have been applauded as a "victory for cricket" by the Australian press in a chorus, now in the midst of their campaign to run down the Packer circus. Would they have done the same had the Indians won by these small margins?

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SUNDAY

Exclusive report from Pakistan by Peter Niesewand

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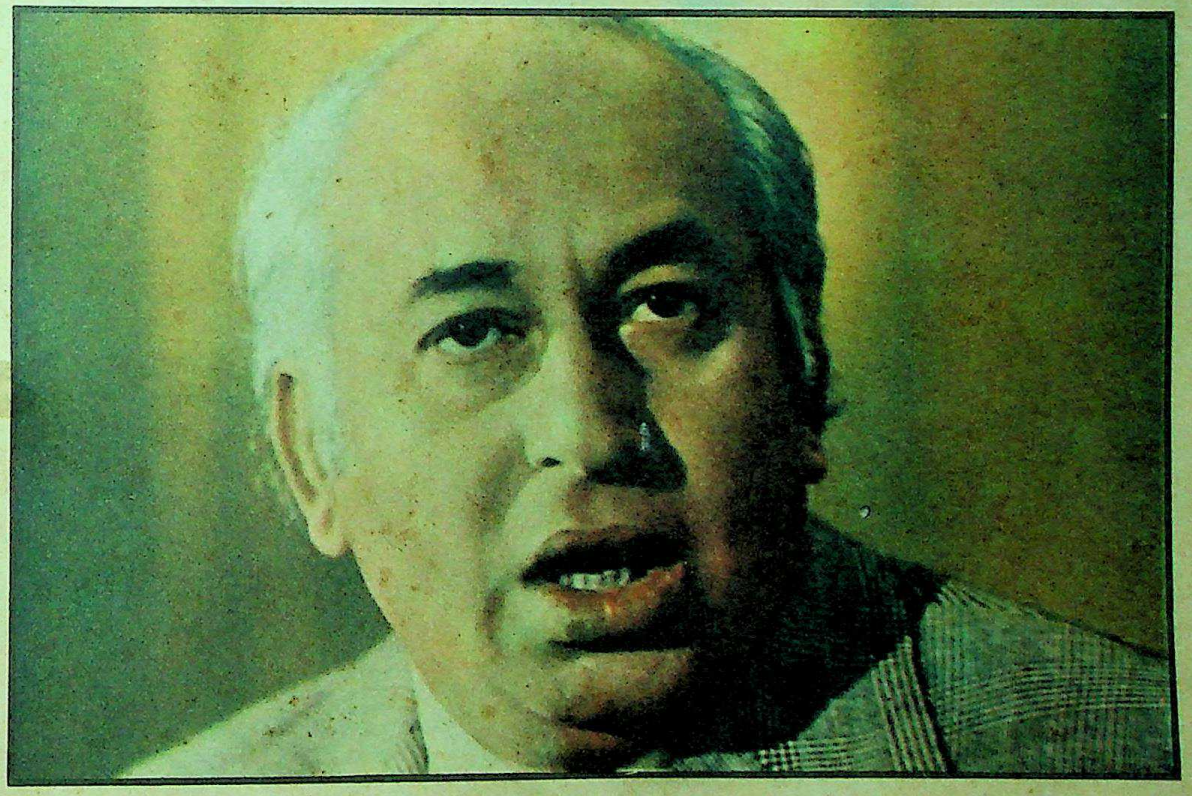
How Muslim nations treat their leaders



Has Bhutto been silenced?

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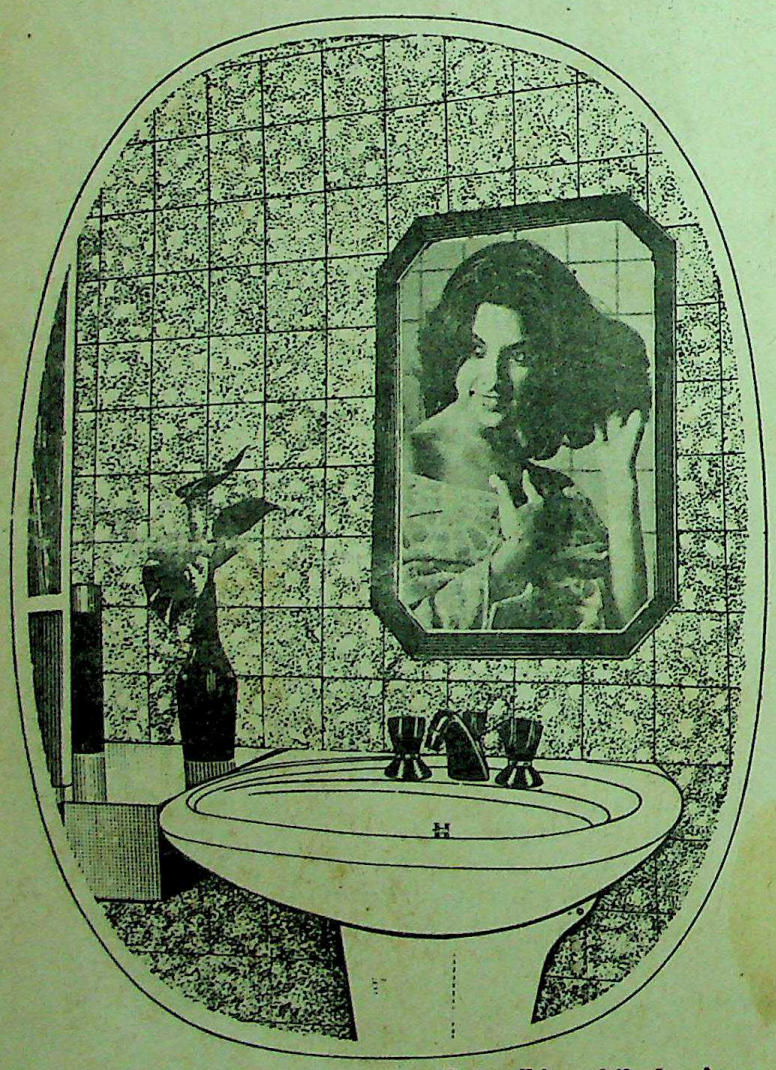

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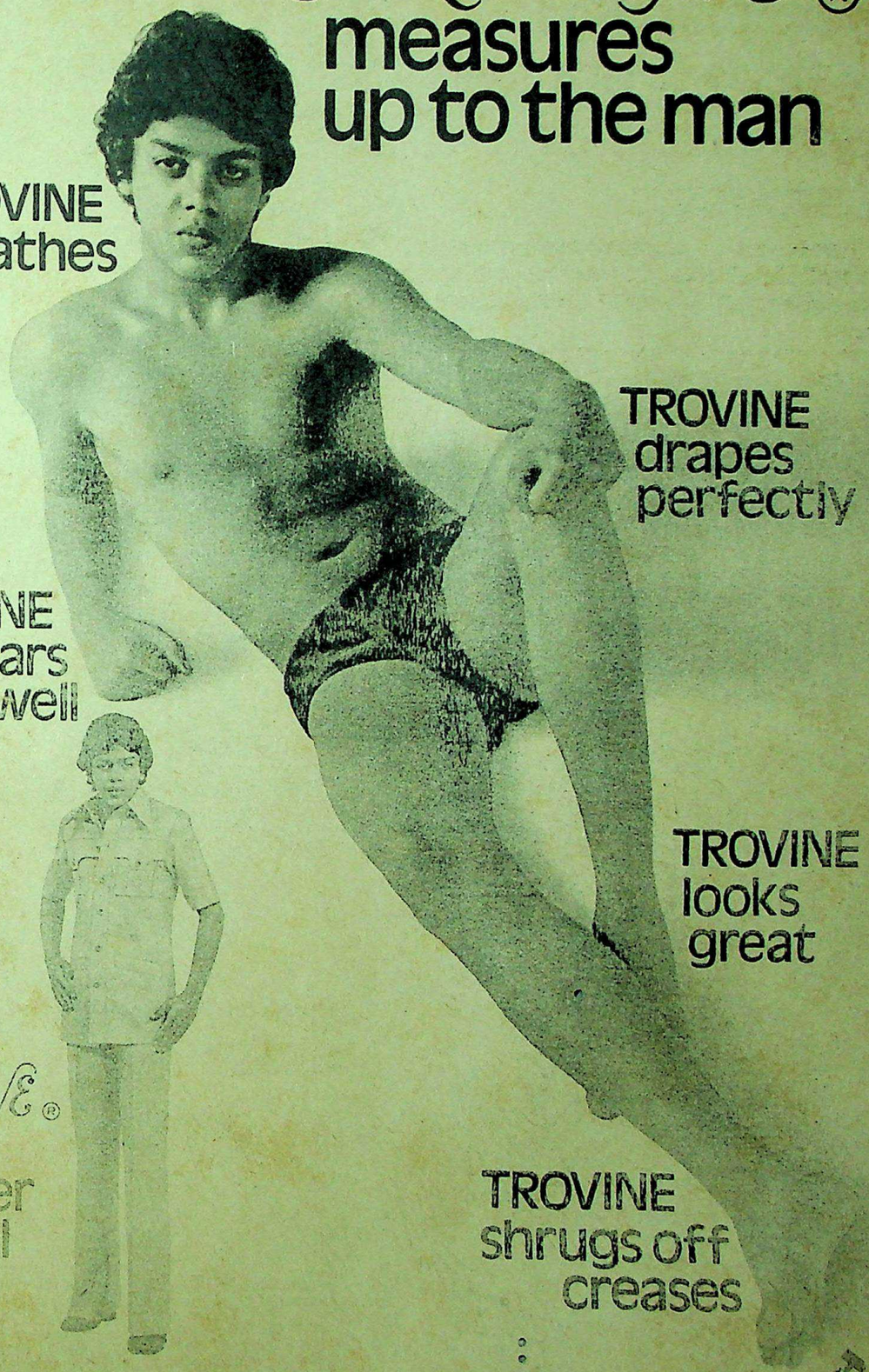

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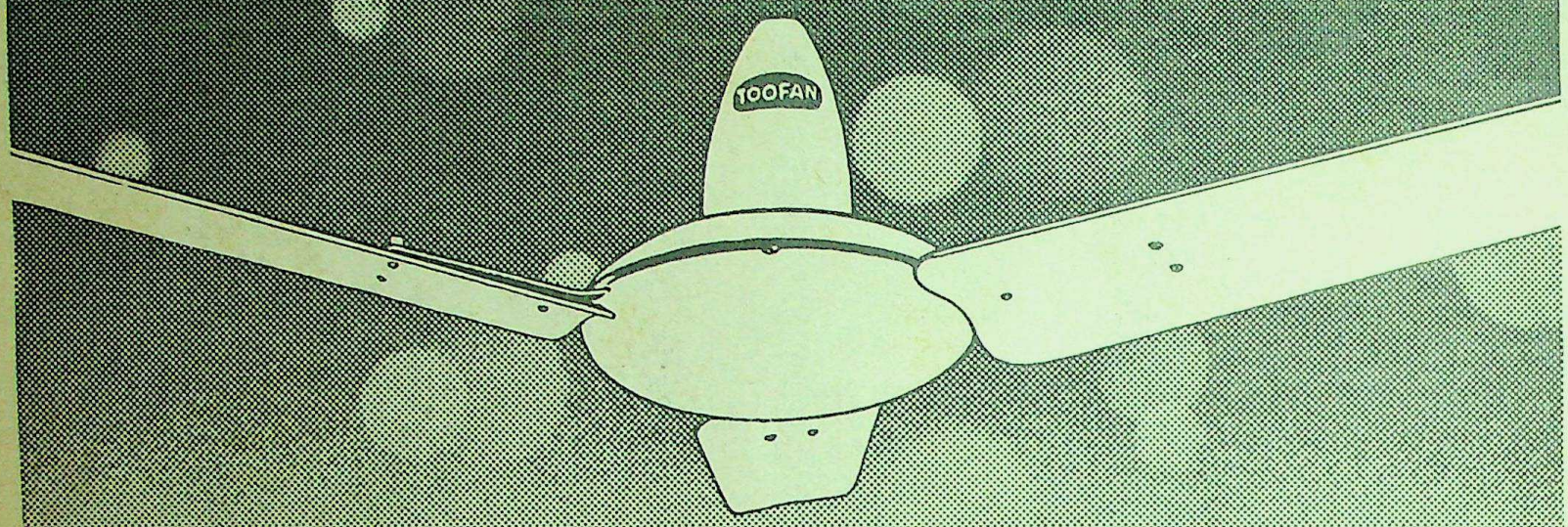

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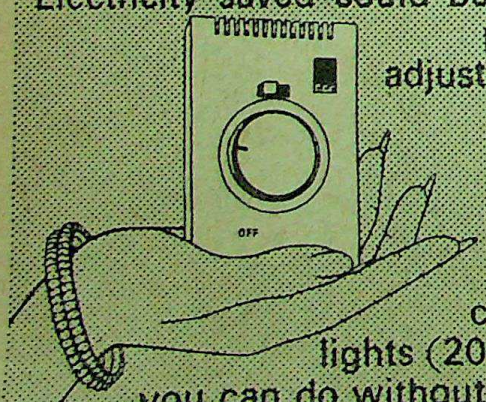

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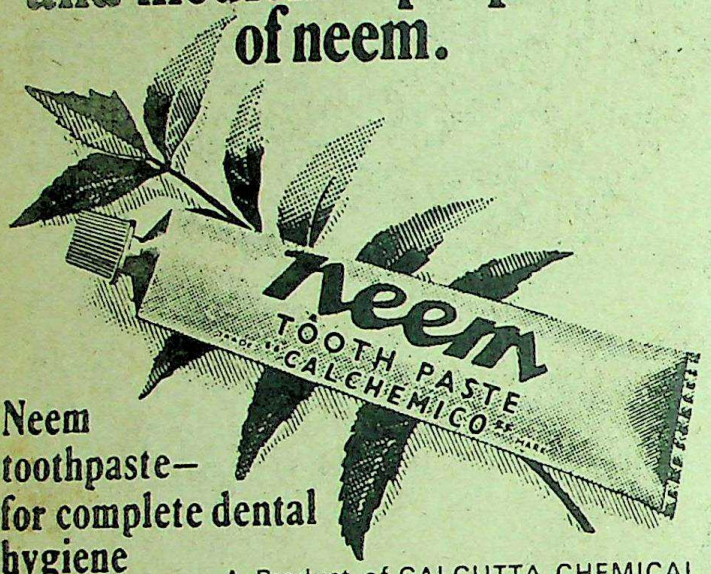

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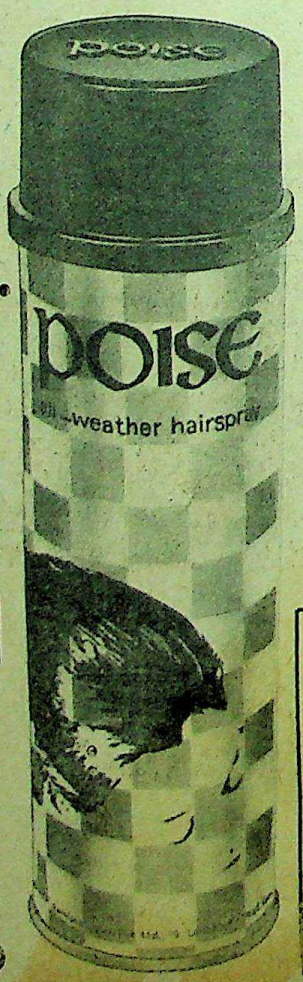

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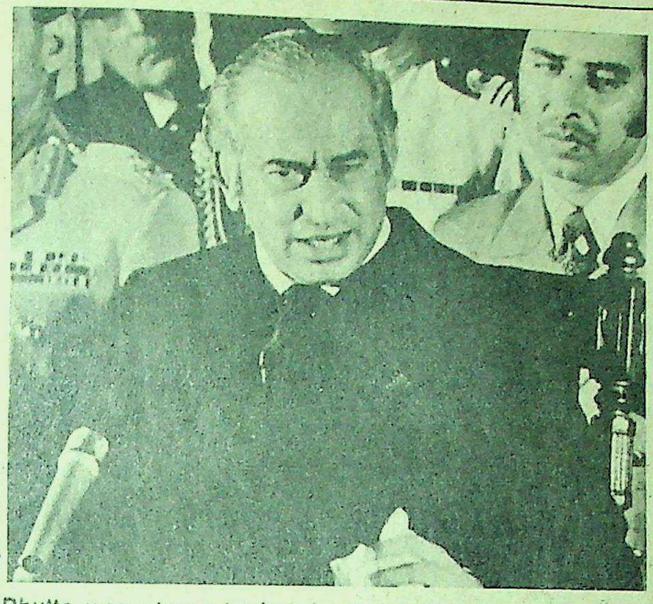

Aloke Mitra

Bhutto was stunned when he heard that he would be hanged; his fellow prisoners joined him spontaneously as he read the Quran in his cell just before his execution—PETER NIESEWAND reports from Islamabad on Bhutto's last hours and the bewildered Pakistan he leaves behind. Tarapada Basu interviews the exiled Pakistani firebrand, Tariq Ali, in London on Pakistan's past and future.

"RSS as an organisation, even for its presumed narrow sectarian interests, would never like to have communal disturbances in the country," the Janata Party President, Chandrashekhar, tells BHOLA CHATTERJEE in an exclusive interview.

An income-tax raid on a Lucknow tailor's shop in 1976 led to an amazing discovery — a copper plate bearing an inscription in Persian which may provide the clue to a fabulous treasure hidden somewhere. Since then a relentless search has been on, which has now led to Faizabad. TANIA SHAH visited Lucknow and Faizabad to trace the course of this obsessive treasure-hunt.

When in 1919, General Dyer's troops shot down hundreds of Indians at Jallianwalla Bagh, his superiors condoned his action and the Lords' passed a motion in his support. In the first part of the serialisation of "Farewell the Trumpets" James Morris recounts the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre and traces Gandhi's role in the early phase of the Independence movement.

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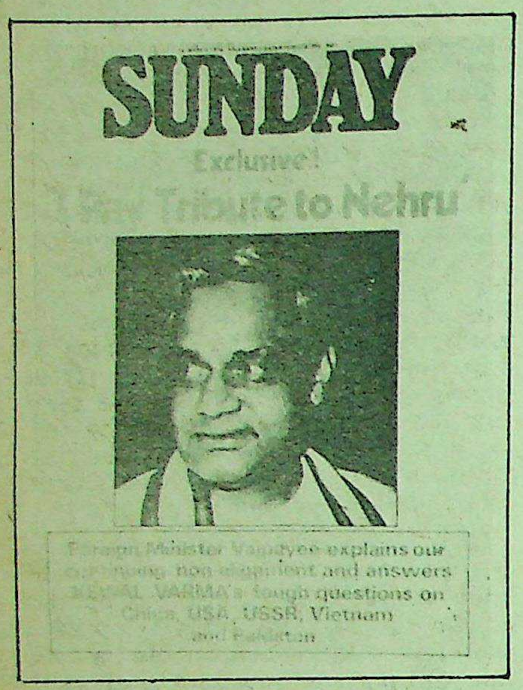

Brilliant debate

KEWAL VARMA's interview with the Foreign Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee: "I pay tribute to Nehru" (March 18) was a marvellous debate that outmatches all verbal exchanges in Parliament on foreign policy. Mr Varma was at his best in his queries and succeeded in laying bare the hypocrisy of the Janata's "genuine non-alignment". Mr Vajpayee had to seek shelter in loud laughter when Mr Varma cornered him quite effectively on many inconvenient issues. It is time such effective journalism came into vogue, to evaluate the Janata Government's performances rather than allow it to persist with the memory of the "Emergency excesses".
Mohammad Aslam, New Delhi.

THE interview has improved the image of the Janata Government, and Mr Vajpayee's in particular.
Tainwala R. K., Gangtok

THE cover story was enlightening, particularly Mr Vajpayee's answer to the question about the implications of the Islamic resurgence for India: "India is the world's second most populous Muslim country and Muslims in India, like all other communities, are free to practise their religious beliefs. However all religions have to come to terms with modernisation and this applies to Islam as well." In fact, *Janata,* the weekly magazine of the socialist movement published from Bombay, has been continuously calling for the modernisation of all Indians as an alternative to the RSS' slogan of Indianisation of non-Hindus. With due respect to Mr Vajpayee, he should know that like charity, modernisation begins at home.
Chundi Jagannatham, Hyderabad.

THOUGH most other important matters regarding India's foreign policy were talked about in detail, no mention was made by either Mr Vajpayee or Mr Varma of the Karakoram Highway which the Chinese are constructing in Pakistan. Before Mr Vajpayee's departure for China, this matter was raised as it is believed to be a threat to India's security. The Foreign Minister assured the nation that he would lodge a protest on the issue with the Chinese leaders, but even after his return there is no indication of his having had any discussion on the issue.
Deepak Daftuar, Chaibasa (Bihar)

THE authors of our foreign policy perhaps thought that by prefixing the word "genuine" to qualify the already complete and comprehensive concept of non-alignment, they would succeed in qualifying their own formulative capacity. Little do they realise that the word "genuine"

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is redundant and meaningless in the context. Clearly, the term has been coined to serve political ends. It is pointless to debate whether the meaning of the term rests on "nuances" or "content" and whether it serves our "being non-aligned." Obviously, Mr Vajpayee has been cornered by Mr Varma.
Hrishi Kesh, Kanpur.

IT IS time we learnt of China's real intentions. The Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiao Ping's assertion about the Sino-Indian border dispute is dubious. China also underestimates India's potential (Deng's statement that Vietnam is stronger than India), is keeping quiet about Sikkim, and insisting on helping the Naga rebels, which is definitely an interference in our internal affairs. Again, China's attack on Vietnam to "teach her a lesson" is a grim reminder that her sole ideology is to attack wherever she finds convenient. Hence, India should not agree to normalise relations with China without a settlement of the border dispute.
Sibaram Padhi, Berhampur (Orissa)

Kissa badtamizi ka

THE report "Kissa Sanjay ka" by Ajoy Bose (March 18) enables one to assess the magnitude of highhandedness which Sanjay could have displayed when his mother was the Prime Minister. What he and his hirelings did in court leads to contempt of court and the least Justice Vohra could have done was to sue Mr Gandhi. If the offenders go unpunished it will be setting a precedent and compelling others to believe that even in law there are double standards.
Shiv Kumar Jha, Daltonganj.

That's great

IN THE modern rat-race it is most striking and refreshing to see one magazine (SUNDAY) calling another magazine (NEW DELHI) a "stablemate". Not only this, you have also implored all those who have been missing Khushwant Singh's column to read it in NEW DELHI. Till today, I was proud to be a regular reader of SUNDAY but now, I am proud of SUNDAY.
N. Anantaraman, Calcutta.

Plan the Commission

IN HIS article: "Janata's Plan: will it roll on?" (February 18) Dr D. M. Nachane is right in saying that "the early history of Indian planning is largely the story of Nehru's personal triumph and tragedy". But I do not agree with his view that the failure of planning is due to the lack of "a sense of mass participation". He seems to lament the fact that in spite of all his plus points, Nehru "could not identify with the masses the way Gandhiji could".

It was the fault of the makers of our Constitution that they did not provide for any planning body. Our first PM, though quite aware of the need for a planning commission, never cared to make it an independent advisory body. Perhaps, nobody in the Government then wanted the Commission to come up with plans that did not suit their personal likings. Why does the Planning Commission have Cabinet Ministers as members? It is clear the Commission is a political body because senior Ministers review its operations and lay down directives for it at two superior levels, the National Development Council and the Union Cabinet. But the detailed working and formation of the Plan, the decision of marking priorities and the choice of a particular line of growth from among various alternatives, are technical matters which should be left to economists. As such the top members of the Commission should necessarily be economic experts.

It is this aspect which reviewers of our economy should emphasise. They should help form public opinion in regard to the setting up of a Planning Commission with a set membership and Constitutional sanction. The talk of a "sense of mass participation" and "identifying with the masses" is empty rhetoric. If a person were to gain in some measure from a Plan, and feel its presence in his daily life, why would he not deve-

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lop a sense of participation in it? Good measures always win the support of the public.

Even a man of Roosevelt's farsight cared to respect the advice of economists when programming his New Deal. In India it is perhaps by a strange coincidence that both the Plans and General Elections come up after every five years, and political leaders take up the Plans as part of their election campaigns. While the aim of an election is achieved in a short time, the aim of a Plan is not. If the Congress (I) comes to power in the next elections, the Planning Commission would be forced to take another somersault. So before the Planning Commission starts chalking out the Seventh Five Year Plan, it is necessary to plan the Commission itself.

Ravi Shankar Chowdhury, Silchar.

I WOULD like to point out a few errors in the table accompanying Dr D. M. Nachane's article, of the "Distribution of Public Sector Outlay among different sectors in the Five Plans". The total outlays given under the First and Second Plans are the revised outlays, and those given under the Third and Fifth Plans are from the draft plans. As far as I know, the total outlay given under the Fourth Plan is neither the revised nor the actual figure. Again, if the allocations under different heads are added, the results do not tally with the total figures mentioned under the Third, Fourth and Fifth Plans. Further, under the Fifth Plan, the allocation against Industries and Minerals i.e., Rs 8,939 crores is not 24.2 per cent of the total outlay, Rs 37,250 crores, as mentioned. 24.4 per cent of Rs 37,240 crores is Rs 9,029. crores, which was actually the figure for Industries and Minerals in the Draft Fifth Plan. Besides, the total of all percentages against different heads under the Second Plan comes to 109 and not 100, because 445 is not 19 per cent but approximately 10 per cent of 4,600.

Sucharita Choudhury, Shillong.

Editor's Note: You are correct. Except for the total outlay given under the First Plan, (Rs 1,960 crores) the other figures given under the Second, Third, Fourth and and Fifth Plans are wrong. Instead of Rs 4,600 crores, Rs 7,500 crores, Rs 16,774 crores and Rs 37,250 crores, they should read Rs 4,672 crores, Rs 8,577 crores, Rs 15,779 crores and Rs 39,287.49 crores for the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Plans respectively. These are the final figures. Sorry for the lapse.

Stop the chaos

AJOY BOSE, in his article "Dhanbad: city of terror" (March 11) has outlined the level of degradation to which our trade union movements have sunk, as also the attitude of our Government. It seems that the trade union movement under A. K. Roy is the only hope for the common man. His supporters have resorted to bows and arrows and taken the law into their own hands.

Mohammed Akhtar, Banpur

AJOY BOSE did a marvellous job. Incidentally, most copies of the March 11 issue of SUNDAY in Dhanbad were bought by the union toughs and burnt to prevent them from being circulated among the colliery workers.

N. Dave, Dhanbad

Exploiter, did you say?

I WOULD like to draw your attention to certain inaccuracies in the article "Lampholder to gangster-millionaire" (March 11). First, it has been reported that Suryadeo Singh joined me and made plans to capture the Boragarh and Kustore Unions and further that I was a CPI leader in 1967. I would like to state that I had no connection with the CPI then nor with the SVD Government, and Suryadeo Singh did not join me. At that time the Krantikari Koyala Mazdoor Sangh was not affiliated to the AITUC but instead to the IFITU.

As a matter of fact, Suryadeo Singh did not become a trade unionist till 1973. Secondly, it is a fact that following the assault on Rafique Khan, and his subsequent death, the management of M/s K. Wara and Co got me implicated in the case of his murder, but it is not true that the then Chief Minister, Mahamaya Prasad Singh, tried to help me. He was not approached at all. I was subsequently released on bail. No witness has so far turned up in the case. It is not a fact that I tried to decamp. On receiving the information that I was implicated in the case, I voluntarily surrendered. Judging by the reporting it seems that Suryadeo Singh and I had conversed while we were in jail. This is not true. I had no connection with Suryadeo Singh and no such conversation took place. I do not see how the author could have reported this. Third, I was never the "guru" of Suryadeo Singh. I did not have any battle, let alone battles, with him on the road or in the colliery areas. I had no musclemen nor did I try to extort 'chanda' from the poor miners. Further, I never tried to capture the INTUC Union at Boragarh and no one was either killed or injured in the alleged attempt to capture the INTUC Union at Boragarh. I am a trade unionist and I do not believe in holding on to a union in a manner unbecoming of a man. Fourth, the report relating to the counterattack on my assailants lacks credibility. I was attacked as soon as my car stopped in front of my house and there was no opportunity or occasion for me to counterattack the assailants.

As regards your suggestion that I did not mention the counter attack in the FIR because I had an unlicensed firearm with me, I would like to inform you that I have a licensed revolver that I always carry with me for the purpose of my own safety Fifth, I met A. K. Roy and he has categorically denied having said what has been attributed to him as an answer to the question: "In Dhanbad, what are the communist unions doing?". Finally, contrary to what has been reported, I do not own any car and the car I happen to travel in is maintained by the union I serve. I have no house or land in Dhanbad. I live in a rented flat. I am not involved in the exploitation of workers. So far there has not been any complaint against me to this effect.

Sheo Kumar Rai, President, United Coal Workers Union, Dhanbad.

In defence of the RSS

WHILE you are entitled to your own views as a free journal, I feel that most of your articles on the RSS are thoroughly one-sided and unjust. Very seldom is an attempt made to show what the RSS exactly stands for, and what it is doing in this country. Undoubtedly, the organisation has its roots in Hindu *dharma*, but it also works for the social, moral and religious uplift of the people. While the RSS does mobilise Hindu support for its goals, it does not preach hatred toward any other religion in this country or abroad. During Mrs Gandhi's regime, an enquiry commission was appointed to investigate the real cause of communal disturbances, and the RSS was not found guilty. Even in the riots at Aligarh, the UP Government did not find the hand of the RSS behind them.

The RSS is only helping to reform the moral character of the people and trying to infuse in them a spirit of patriotism. These qualities stand the nation in good stead when it is faced with foreign aggression, natural calamity or an era like the Emergency. The late Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in fact had spoken highly of the RSS' role during the 1965 war with Pakistan. Besides, many political bigwigs would not enjoy positions of prominence today if the RSS had not stood behind them.

Rajendranath Roychowdhury, Calcutta

We are sad to announce the death of Col B. N. Kaul, author of "Puritanism or survival?" (March 11), of a heart attack on March 15, 1979. — Editor, SUNDAY.

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Has Bhutto been silenced?

PETER NIESEWAND reports from Islamabad

Raghu Rai

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IT was Begum Nusrat and his daughter Benazir who broke the news to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on Tuesday (April 3) that he was to be hanged a few hours later. Prison sources said that when the two women were brought from house arrest at Sihala, about 15 miles away, for their last meeting with the deposed Prime Minister, Bhutto had not been officially informed of his impending execution. The women mentioned that it was their final visit and Bhutto looked stunned. The prison superintendent was summoned, and he confirmed then that the plan was for a hanging in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

In the appalling days before Bhutto mounted the scaffold, the military authorities made sure he suffered. They took away his bed and made him sleep on the cement floor of a cell which was infested with red and black ants. They removed books and writing materials. They refused to let him use the adjoining lavatory, but gave him a commode in his cell which they rarely emptied so that visitors came away nauseated by the stench. The steel bars of the death cell door were kept permanently locked. At the final anguished meeting with his wife and daughter, the authorities would not even allow them a last embrace. The family held hands and kissed farewell through the bars. Then a police car sped back to house arrest both women, staring straight ahead, their faces shocked. Their application to attend the funeral was turned down. They were not even permitted to see Bhutto's body.

Hangings in Pakistan—and there have been about 400 of them since General Zia-ul-Haq took over—are usually carried out at dawn, but Bhutto was executed furtively, in the dead of night. Armed troops moved in at midnight, surrounding the gaol and arresting Pakistani journalists they found watching the activity. Bhutto wrote out his will and the magistrate, who was soon to see him die, witnessed his signature. Gaol officials claimed next day that Bhutto had later changed his mind and burned it, but it seemed more likely they had done so. He was allowed a bath and given some verses from the Qufan to read. In cells around him, other prisoners began loudly chanting recitations from the holy book.

A few minutes before the appointed time of 2 a.m., the prison superintendent arrived at the death cell to identify Bhutto as the man named in the black warrant, and to read to him the sequence of the rejection of his appeal by the Supreme Court, and the refusal of the soldier who overthrew him to accept mercy petitions lodged on his behalf. Bhutto's hands were pinioned behind his back and he was escorted, in slow procession, to the scaffold : two warders in front of him, two behind, and one

In the last hour the other prisoners in the cells around Bhutto began loudly chanting recitations from the Quran.

holding each arm. His escorts kept their eyes downcast.

They positioned Bhutto on the trap directly beneath the beam to which the manila rope had been attached, and the hangman bent down to strap his legs tightly together. Bhutto cried out: "Oh Lord help me, for I am innocent." A hood was then placed over his head, and the noose was tightened around his neck. The warders holding his arms stood back, and Pakistan's last elected Prime Minister waited for the trap to crash open. The medical officer stood with the hangman and the other witnesses for 30 minutes before going down to check that Bhutto's heart had stopped beating. He pronounced : "Life extinct", and the body was cut down and placed in a plain wooden coffin. It was taken by truck and aircraft to the remote hamlet of Ghari Bhutto near the town of Larkana, where Bhutto was born 51 years earlier, and where the family graveyard is located.

Three relatives were informed of the execution and allowed to attend the funeral: two uncles and Bhutto's first wife Amir Begum. Amir Begum looked into the coffin. She said: "I saw the face. They had shaved him and it was obvious that he had been hanged. But he looked as innocent as a flower."

Most Pakistanis were stunned and angered by the execution. Employees in Government offices wept openly. A man said: "Now this country will be like Iran". A wave of demonstrations and riots swept Pakistan—spontaneous outbursts—not organised by those currently holding the torch passed down from Bhutto.

Bhutto's PPP is at its lowest ebb : confused, impotent and lacking in courage. Even an angry group of 30 PPP student supporters, who broke into the house in Islamabad where the Central Executive Committee was meeting earlier this month to demand that they stop their polite discussions and take to the streets to lead demonstrations, failed to make an impact.

PPP officials reported stirrings of anger in the countryside, but admitted they were doing nothing to capitalise on these. In the towns there had been silence, except for

Amir Begum said: "I saw the face..it was obvious that he had been hanged. But he looked as innocent as a flower."

some sporadic demonstrations. Members of the Central Executive claimed that the people were just waiting for a signal, and then they would rise. But if this was true, they waited in vain. The PPP leadership remained inscrutable.

Only some of Zia ul-Haq's senior aides looked at the situation with satisfaction. "How can anyone believe Bhutto is so popular?" one of them asked. "Where are the demonstrations? It's not Martial Law which is making them keep quiet, because people will brave bullets if they believe in something strongly enough. Remember what happened in Pakistan during the PNA movement in 1977? There were demonstrations all over — mass arrests, people shot. It didn't stop them. They came onto the streets day after day, and then we moved in and toppled Bhutto."

Not all army officers believed this simple analysis : indeed, there is even evidence now that Zia himself doesn't really go along with it, and that he is preparing himself for trouble later in the year.

The PNA movement at least had courageous leadership : the PPP today has none. Martial Law regulations make it an offence punishable by flogging and imprisonment to

When Begum Nusrat and Benazir told Bhutto he would be hanged a few hours later, he looked stunned.

take part in political demonstrations, and without a clear lead from the top, few are willing to expose themselves in what might be a small, futile, individual gesture.

Some members of the PPP Executive are suggesting privately that it was on the instructions of Bhutto himself that no large-scale demonstrations were mounted, but sources close to the former Premier say this is simply not true. The failure was one of the current leadership, and of those ex-Cabinet Ministers, such as Abdul Hafeez Pirzada, who are not in prison at the moment, but who have shied away from laying their freedom on the line in an attempt to save the life of their Party Chairman.

Unflattering comparisons between Pakistan and India have been drawn by the PPP critics. In India, lakhs of people would be out on the streets, courting arrest, if say, Mrs Gandhi were in a death cell, awaiting execution. In Pakistan, it was news when police "apprehended seven PPP women workers for raising slogans outside the premises of the Sind High Court and later taking out a procession."

For Bhutto himself in his stinking death cell, with its uncleaned toilet commode, its one hard wooden chair, and the dirty blankets on the cement

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Bhutto 1928-1979

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, son of Sir Shahnawaz Khan Bhutto.
Born: January 5, 1928.
Education: Graduated with Honours in Political Science from University of California, Berkeley. MA with distinction in Jurisprudence from Christ Church College, Oxford. Bar-at-law from Lincoln's Inn, London.
1952-'53: Leclurer in International Law, University of Southampton.
1953-'58: Teacher of Constitutional Law, Sind Muslim College, Pakistan. Practising Lawyer at West Pakistan High Court, Karachi.
October 25, 1958: Joins Iskander Mirza's Cabinet.
1958-'60: Minister of Commerce, Pakistan.
January 1960-'62: Pakistan Minister of Minority Affairs, National Reconstruction and Minister of Information. In April, 1962, also becomes Minister of Fuel, Power and National Resources and Kashmir Affairs.
1962: Elected Member of National Assembly of Pakistan for Larkana. Becomes deputy leader of the Muslim League.
1962-'65: Minister of Industries and Natural Resources.
1963-'66: Minister of Foreign Affairs.
March 1965: Secretary General of Pakistan Muslim League.
June 1966: Resigns from Government, returns to the legal profession.
September 19, 1967: Forms Pakistan People's Party and becomes its Chairman.
1968: Leads popular movement against President Ayub Khan; arrested in September.
February 1969: Released.
November 28, 1969: Escapes assassination attempt.
March 1970: Escapes another attempt on his life.
December 1970: Elected Member of the National Assembly.
December 20,. 1971: Becomes President and Chief Martial Law Administrator.
April 21, 1972: Lifts Martial Law.
June 4, 1972: Signs Simla Agreement.
August 14, 1973-'77: Becomes Prime Minister.
July 4, 1977: Deposed in coup and imprisoned. Released in the same month, but detained again.
September 3, 1977: Arrested in Karachi for the alleged murder of Ahmad Raza Kasuri. Formally indicted on September 12. Released on bail of Rs. 50,000 on the orders of Mr. Justice A. K. Samdani of Lahore High Court on September 13. Arrested again in Larkana, Sind, on September 17.
October 11, 1977: Trial opens before five judges of the Lahore High Court.
March 18, 1978: Sentenced to death.
February 18, 1979: Supreme Court upholds conviction in 4-3 verdict.
March 24, 1979: Supreme Court rejects review petition but recommends clemency.
April 4, 1979: Hanged to death.

Missions and delegations

1957: Member of Pakistan delegation to the UN General Assembly.
1958: Leader of Pakistan delegation to the UN Conference on Law of the Sea, Geneva.
1959, 1960, 1963, 1965 and 1966: in Pakistan delegation to the UN General Assembly.
April 1964: Afro-Asian Conference, Jakarta.
April 1965: Bandung Conference.
1974: Chairman of Islamic Summit Conference, Lahore.
1960: Mission to India in April (Press Code). USSR in December.
1962-'63: In delegation to India on the Kashmir dispute.
1963: Peking in March. Teheran in May.
1964: Burma in January.
1965: Moscow in January. Foreign Ministers Conference in Algiers, July. Summit Conference in July. Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in London.
1974: Bangladesh.

Decorations and awards

1964: Hilal-i-Pakistan.
1966: Awarded honorary LLD, Sind University.
Foreign decorations: Nishan-i-Hamayun, First Class from Iran. Order of the Republic of Indonesia. Gran Cruz de la Orden Del Libertador General San Martin, Argentine Civil Award.

floor, the last days have heaped new pressures and agonies on him.

ONE of Bhutto's great failings has always been his inability to judge character. He promoted General Zia to Chief of Staff, above the heads of those next in line, because he thought Zia would be "safer". In his administration, Bhutto surrounded himself with people whose loyalty he bought, and who were often no better than thugs, or as one respected Asian magazine recently called them, "scum". The others around were the sycophants, who are always thrown up during the rule of an autocrat, and who pandered to Bhutto's desires to be verbally stroked at all times.

Then there were the weaklings, the family members, the friends of friends who were rewarded with positions beyond their experience or capabilities. A few good men were also there : but the good they did is largely interred with the bones of Bhutto's administration. When Bhutto's life depended on massive public demonstrations of support and direct challenges to the Martial Law authorities, the members of the General Executive have failed to rouse themselves to take personal risks. When his health deteriorated after the Supreme Court rejected the review petition, and the prison authorities confiscated his medicines so that he was virtually unable to eat and vomited much of what he did manage to swallow, the Central Executive sprang into action. It wrote Bhutto a letter : "We beseech you, in the name of Allah and the love that you have for the people of Pakistan, to assuage this concern of the people by partaking of your meals."

Bhutto was not on a hunger strike. He could not eat. His long-standing gum disease, chronic periodontitis had gone untreated, and the prison authorities had confiscated even his bottle of Listerine — the most basic requirement of hygiene in Bhutto's case. The result was that his gums turned black and he began coughing up blood. In the midst of all this, to receive an entreaty from his political colleagues asking in effect that he eat his greens, must have been hard to bear. But worse was to come : incidents which those closest to Bhutto said he viewed as betrayals.

Bhutto had remained resolute that no petitions for mercy should be sent to General Zia from either his family or his Party. He considered that those would amount to an admission of guilt, however they were phrased. He refused to beg. He was prepared to die first.

But around him, the ranks were breaking. Much as he tried to shore up the morale and determination of those outside, by his own courage, and sometimes even humour during prison visits, the wavering grew. The Central Executive Committee decided to send a mercy petition to General Zia, ignoring the instructions of their Chairman, Abdul

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Hafeez Pirzada (the former Finance Minister) who, after an agonised night, finally announced that he too would submit his own personal "representation". Coincidentally, Pirzada was unexpectedly called to see Bhutto in Rawalpindi Gaol, and he arrived there knowing that the Executive had already delivered their petition to Zia, and that he himself would do likewise later in the day. He also knew what Bhutto would say, since he had broached the subject briefly during a visit two days earlier, and Bhutto had "hit the ceiling".

Confronted with the former Prime Minister, locked on the other side of his steel-barred cell door, Pirzada's courage failed, and he did not mention the petitions. He said later that Bhutto would probably find out about them from his guards, or by reading a report in the newspaper.

The following day, Zia got the prize he had been pursuing for weeks — a mercy petition from a member of Bhutto's own family. Mrs Imtiaz Sherbano, his half-sister, who is considerably older than him and who regards herself almost as his mother, was given her allotted 30 minutes in front of the death cell bars, and listened to Bhutto urging her not to plead for his life. She went straight out and did it. "He can order other people around but not me," she said. "I want him alive."

For Bhutto these were bitter blows, but Zia must have been pleased. His plans for the PPP, if general elections go ahead as proposed on November 17, seem to have been well laid. As articulated by senior sources close to him, Zia recognises that the PPP cannot be totally crushed. A ban would probably result in the sprouting of the same Party under a different name, but the electorate would know it was still Bhutto's Party.

In fact, the military believe that the PPP has grown in popularity since the coup in 1977, and that in fair and open elections, it would almost certainly sweep the boards. The question before Zia is how to live with this situation.

His answer has been to purge the PPP — of Bhutto principally, but also of some other senior members who have been disqualified from politics by military tribunals. Observers believe that some disqualifications will be lifted before the elections are held, but Zia clearly hopes that quite a different Party will emerge. He made this clear to Mr Pirzada during private discussions at the Presidential residence, a few hundred yards from the Rawalpindi Gaol, at the beginning of March. There was political life after Bhutto, Zia indicated. Elections needed to be fought and there was still a place for the PPP. Yet as Zia knows, many dangers and difficulties will beset his country, particularly with Bhutto as a martyr.

Bhutto stages a walk-out at the UN over Kashmir

ZIA made a public mention of one of the worst dangers—the first indication that he even acknowledged it — at a military parade in Kabul at the end of March. It was the spectre about which Bhutto had often warned : the possibility of a breakup of Pakistan. "Defence shall be not only against external aggression," Zia told the troops, "but also against internal disruption, as both can endanger the security of the country. God forbid, if internal disruption leads to the breakup of the country, the defence of its borders becomes meaningless. If there is tranquillity and peace within the country, but there is a lapse in vigilance on the frontiers, the future of the country is thrown in jeopardy. Pakistan's armed forces have, therefore, to remain ever-vigilant on both the external and internal fronts."

Many diplomats and political observers believe Pakistan has become a tinderbox, and a spark — perhaps not now, perhaps later in the year — could set off a conflagration. Already there are unsettling signs. In Peshawar recently, customs officers, acting on a tipoff, stopped and searched a bus and found 745 sticks of dynamite hidden in secret cavities. In Bannu, police seized 39 detonators being carried by a passenger bound for Baluchistan.

In Quetta, on the day after the expiry of Bhutto's seven-day clemency period, a bomb shook the Sandeman Library area, and in Gujranwala, a man was injured when a letter bomb went off inside a post box. The Martial Law authorities in Quetta have directed district authorities to "deal with an iron hand" with the activities of troublemakers.

There is also the very real danger that some Baluch and Pakhtoon tribesmen may use the excuse of internal divisions to advance their own separatist cause.

Bhutto, who has long prophesied disaster for Pakistan after his execution, told his lawyer in the death cell : "My heart bleeds — bleeds for Pakistan, for the people, bleeds for what is to come."

If Zia believed that hanging Bhutto would herald a new era of peace and progress in his country, the next few months could give him his answer. To many diplomats and political observers, it seems a gamble with appallingly high stakes. ■

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Bhutto was bad, the Generals are worse

TARIQ ALI, the exiled Pakistani firebrand, talks about the past and the future in an exclusive interview with TARAPADA BASU in London.

Q: What is your first reaction to the hanging of Mr Bhutto?

A: I am horrified, though not surprised. It is a sad day when the generals begin to hang civilian politicians. My sympathies go to the Bhutto family and especially the two women (Mrs Bhutto and Benazir) incarcerated at Sihala 'rest house'. One does not have to agree with their ideas to admire the exemplary courage they have displayed over the last two years. The fact that they are women made it even more difficult.

Q: Why did Zia defy world opinion expressed by politicians and heads of State on the one hand and the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Saudi royal family on the other?

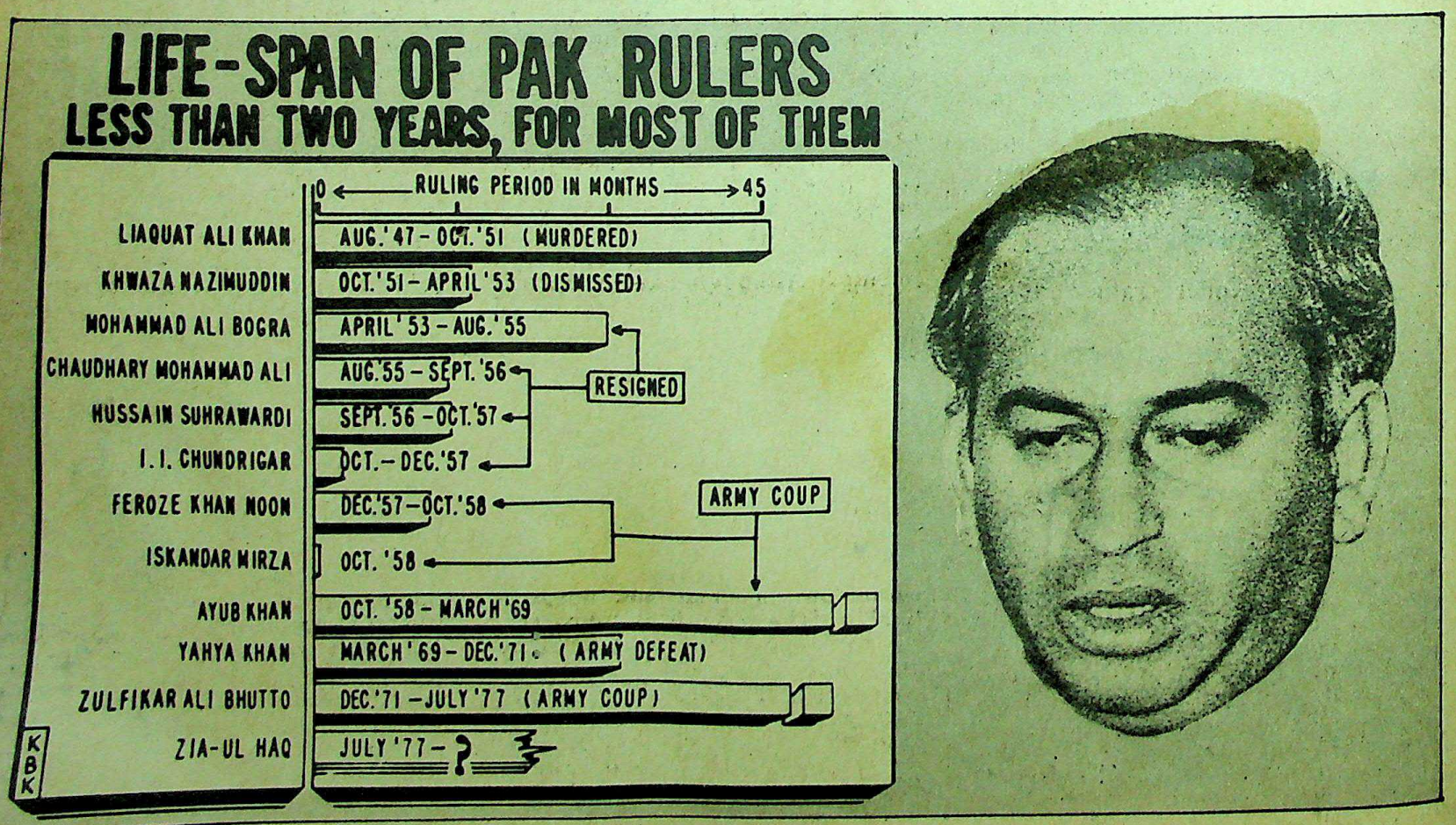
A: I am convinced that if the USA had really wanted to save Bhutto's life they could have done so. After all, they succeeded in saving Mujibur Rehman when he was a Pakistani prisoner, and for the Army Mujib's crime was infinitely more serious, namely 'high treason'. So in my opinion there were no serious objections whatsoever from the USA. Secondly, I think that Zia's reasoning was straightforward and simple: He knew that Bhutto alive would remain a focus for any mass opposition to military rule. Also knowing Bhutto's memory, Zia and his fellow generals were probably motivated by purely subjective reasons as well. Zia is a self-confessed simpleton. Who else would promise British journalists that 'we will hang the blighter'. Well, he has kept his promise. Thirdly, Bhutto was the only Pakistani politician with a mass following that transcended provincialism. As such, it was a foregone conclusion that his People's Party would win any election. Even if Bhutto had been personally disqualified or under house arrest a victorious Pakistan People's Party Government would have depended on him for leadership. That was a risk Zia was not prepared to take. So to cut a long story short, he hanged Bhutto.

Q: Was the murder case against him a total fabrication?

A: Probably not, but everyone admits (including three judges of the Supreme Court) that the prosecution's case was full of holes and there was no solid evidence which revealed Bhutto's complicity in the murder. The murdered man was an old toady of the British Raj. He was the only native employee of the British who agreed to witness the execution of Bhagat Singh! Ordinary people talk about this quite openly in Lahore! In reality the murder charge was a mere pretext to extinguish Bhutto politically and physically. Very few Pakistanis believe otherwise.

Q: You were a staunch opponent of Bhutto when he was in power. In fact he refused to let you enter Pakistan on one occasion. Were you right then and wrong now or vice versa?

A: I was correct then and I am correct now. Bhutto's regime was not the golden age of Pakistani politics as his apologists proclaim. Political opponents were locked up (some were killed), workers were attacked, newspapers were censored, etc. Bhutto's slogan when he won his landslide victory in 1970 had been 'Food,



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clothing and shelter'. When he was in power he was reminded of this slogan by peasants. His reply: "We never said that everyone would get all three at once." He was a cynical but highly intelligent bourgeois politician. But he was brought down by his own mistakes and those of the sycophantic and servile politicians who formed his court. It appeared that he had got away with the election rigging at first. A popular Lahori joke went something like this: 'A special messenger has arrived from Indira Gandhi in Delhi. He carries the following message: You can have Kashmir if you send us your Chief Election Commissioner'. But the election rigging did not work. There was mass anger and Bhutto had to call the army in to help maintain order. From then it was only a question of time before the Army moved in and toppled him. So I was right in my opposition to Bhutto's policies. However, I will never support the imposition of Martial Law, never support the generals against any elected politician. If the Army was serious about allowing justice to be done then it should have allowed a general election to take place with full rights for Bhutto and the PPP. But they were intent on wiping out Bhutto. In that case the choice was obvious. One had to oppose the army and argue for the release of all political prisoners, free elections and lifting of Press censorship.

Q: And Pakistan after Bhutto?

A: Pakistan under the Generals is the worst it has ever been. They are attempting, in league with the obscurantist Jamaat-i-Islami, to transform the country into a confessional monstrosity. Jinnah, who as you know was a deeply secular man, must be turning over in his grave. The big theological debate which is currently preoccupying the men in power concerns amputation. Should a thief have his hand severed at the wrist or should the State be content with merely chopping off the fingers. This unedifying discussion aptly symbolises the clerico-military dictatorship.

The first reaction to Bhutto's hanging has been one of shock, but this will develop, sooner rather than later, into a movement against the generals and those politicians who collaborated with them. What form such a revolt will actually take remains to be seen. However, of one thing I am certain. I don't believe that the anti-military struggle will be fought under the banner of religion. The present regime has discredited religion to a considerable degree. In my opinion the choice confronting Pakistan is not a new one. Either a regime which breaks with the past and carries out a fundamental social transformation i.e. a social revolution or a slow and steady process of disintegration. Don't forget that Bhutto was a Sindhi. Don't forget that the three judges of the Supreme Court in favour of acquittal were all non-Punjabis. Don't forget the turmoil in Iran and Afghanistan. After all, the balance sheet of the Pakisani ruling class, since the country was established in 1947, is not a very positive one. Three military dictatorships, two wars and the loss of Bangladesh, which contained a majority of the country's population. Now to that they add the judicial murder of Bhutto. It is a country on a downward slope. In 1969, I wrote a book entitled *Pakistan : Military rule or people's power?* I think that the same question could be posed anew, though in a slightly different way : Total disintegration or social revolution?

Q: Any comparison with other parts of the subcontinent?

A: Many, but let us restrict them for the purpose of this interview. Just look at the changes that have occurred in the politics of the four subcontinental States. In Pakistan and Bangladesh the two populist leaders, Mujib and Bhutto are dead. Both were replaced by generals, both of whom were called Zia. This last fact is a pure coincidence though the astrologers will have a different estimate. In India and Sri Lanka, however, both the women politicians who ran the countries on roughly similar lines were removed through the ballot box. One can only marvel at the ironies of the historical process. And yet in all four States, despite these upheavals, the condition of the masses has worsened. It is the emancipation of the peasants and the workers that is the essential prerequisite to a just and humane society. I think we have a long, long way to go. ■

'He taught us courage'

BHUTTO's two sons in London, Mir Murtaza and Shahnawaz have been in great distress and grief. The 24-year-old Mir Murtaza said, "The British Government should recall its Ambassador from Pakistan. I cannot even return to Pakistan. One of General Zia's henchmen has said it would give him great pleasure to tear me limb from limb if ever he gets his hands on me. I am very very proud of my father. He taught us courage and, despite torture and the most horrible humiliation, he refused, right up to the scaffold, to crawl to Zia. I dread to think what may happen to Mama and Benazir, my elder sister, who are still in custody in Pakistan. They regard suffering as the price to be paid in the struggle against dictatorship. Although like us Benazir will be grief-stricken, she will keep her head just as we will. We refuse to give in to our anguish. It's a luxury we cannot afford".

As Mr Mir Bhutto spoke, a constant stream of friends and relatives, some weeping, arrived at his house to offer their condolences. His brother, 19-year-old student Shahnawaz Bhutto, said that General Zia had ordered the execution out of "fear and desperation". "The man is a murderer. He fears my father's popularity and he is desperate. Everyone, apart from the generals who have accused my father, knows he is innocent. This charge was brought by madmen. They will suffer. We are a revengeful people."

The hanging of Mr Bhutto was "a warning to all politicians to behave within legal limits", a Pakistani Cabinet Minister said in London. "Nobody likes a hanging," said the Minister of Economic Planning, Professor Khurshid Ahmad. "But Mr Bhutto brought discredit on the whole political arena by his reign of terror. If General Zia spared the life of a person who had occupied a very high political position, it would be licence to politicians in the future," he said. "It is not a day for rejoicing. I feel ashamed that my country produced a talented person who ruled Pakistan like a feudal estate," added Professor Ahmad who is in Britain for an Islamic conference. His remarks were made as police reinforcements were sent to the Pakistan Embassy where a backlash demonstration was expected by London's volatile Pakistani student community who have shown support for Mr Bhutto. The absence of demonstrators initially could be explained by the Islamic tradition of praying for several hours after a leader's death. Professor Ahmad said Mr. Bhutto was visited by nearly all his close friends and relatives in the last week. "No one beat him at any stage," he added, and said reports that he was kept in disgusting conditions were exaggerated. Professor Ahmad's views were published in a London evening newspaper.

T.B.

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The impact

RAJENDRA SAREEN says that the world has not heard the last of Mr Bhutto.

Gen Zia says he has upheld the majesty of law by turning a deaf ear to the pleas for clemency for Mr Z. A. Bhutto. But the law, as the saying goes, is an ass. It is a pity Gen Zia-ul-Haq finally persuaded himself to "let the law take its course." The act is asinine, to say the least. The responsibility is going to be fairly and squarely placed on Gen Zia-ul-Haq. Mr Bhutto has crossed the threshold of life into the world beyond; henceforth he will loom larger than life on the political horizon of Pakistan. The many excesses committed by him against a large number of political opponents will no longer be relevant. The reasons are : first, none of the excesses during his tenure measured up to what has been done to him; second, politics being what it is, even those who would have no truck with him when he was alive, shall have no difficulty in paying homage to his memory in a bid to make common cause with those who had turned pro-Bhutto because of the political uncertainties and anxiety over the intentions of the ruling military junta.

It is unlikely that the world has heard the last of the Bhutto case. The many heads of State who pleaded that Mr Bhutto's life be spared are unlikely to treat the issue as a matter to be thrashed out between the junior functionaries of their respective foreign offices and Pakistani diplomats at comparable levels. The stopping of US economic aid, ostensibly for the reason that Pakistan is pursuing its nuclear programme to attain weapon technology, has in all probability as much to do with the disdain with which President Zia rejected President Carter's personal appeal for clemency. The hanging of Mr Bhutto has certainly not advanced the US commitment to human rights.

The President of the UAE, Sheikh Zaid bin Sultan al Nahyan, a close friend of Mr Bhutto, had been camping for weeks in Pakistan in a bid to persuade President Zia to spare his life. The financial aid from UAE is unlikely to be forthcoming as readily as before. The rebuff implicit in the execution of Mr Bhutto towards King Khaled of Saudi Arabia is a matter of serious significance insofar as after the USA and members of the Aid-Pakistan Consortium, Saudi Arabia has been the biggest source of financial assistance to Pakistan. As a matter of fact Saudi Arabia is the only country that stands between Pakistan and bankruptcy.

The instability and turmoil, which are in the process of developing in Pakistan, are in all likelihood going to last quite some time. The net result of all this will be that Pakistan will cause destabilisation of a very sensitive area where three super powers are fairly active and in considerable conflict with each other. This will further add to the difficult times ahead.

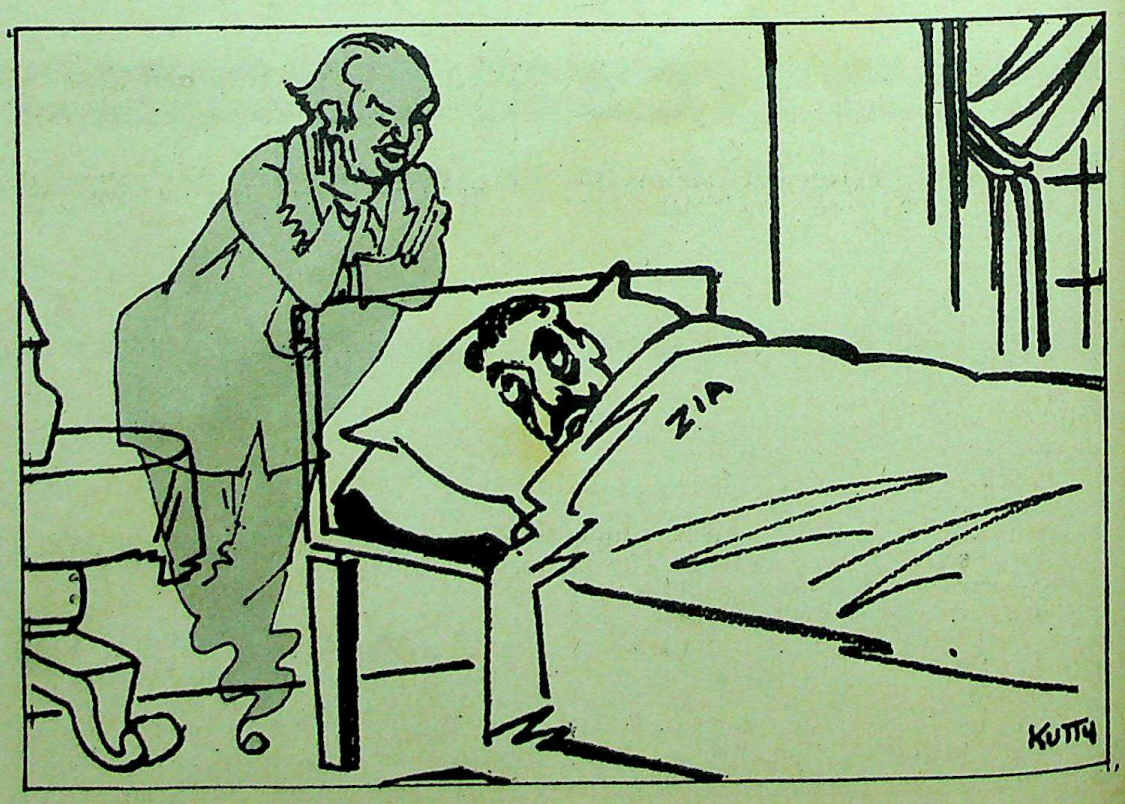
Considering that the major political support for Gen Zia at home emanates from the Jamaat-e-Islami which as an ideology and organisation, is also in existence both in India and Bangladesh, the fact that the violent outburst in Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir has turned against the Jamaat is of significance. The Jamaat has been carrying on a crusade for its peculiar brand of Islamic fundamentalism all over the subcontinent. The Saudis have generously, if not very wisely, underwritten tremendous financial support for this organisation to help it carry forward its mission of propagating fanatical obscurantism. The people of Kashmir have more than ordinary interest in the affairs of Pakistan because there is hardly a family which does not have some member or the other living in that country. The Kashmiri reaction is the closest to what might be the normal reaction in Pakistan itself and how it would seek to express itself but for the draconian measures adopted by the Martial Law regime.

The Muslim community in India and Bangladesh is aghast over what has happened and Pakistan will no longer loom large over their consciousness as an embodiment of Islamic resurgence. Arising out of that, the ruling military junta of Pakistan is bound to suffer in the estimation of the people of the countries of South Asia with the result that under its aegis Pakistan's diplomatic prestige and capacity to win friends and influence people is bound to suffer serious damage. No Government in South Asia will find itself eager to go out of its way for closer relations or undertake fresh initiatives for strengthening of existing arrangements.

It is not without significance that the rigid stand taken by Mr Morarji Desai in treating Bhutto's execution and all that preceded it as purely an internal matter of Pakistan has not won any kudos. On the contrary, the criticism of this position has been ostensibly harsh and adverse. It was totally unnecessary for the Prime Minister to describe the sentiments expressed by the President as his personal views.

In Afghanistan, the leftist Government is bound to make good use of this development to denounce the mullahs and other Islamic activists carrying on insurgency against the Government. The ruthlessness with which the military junta has acted is going to come handy as an adequate justification for the strong measures being taken by the Tarakki regime.

Bangladesh has been cautiously making it clear that any talks of reunification with Pakistan or even some loose ties like a confederation is the surest way of queering the pitch for normal relations between the two countries. President Zia of Bangladesh has been at pains to exphasise the distinct national personality of Bangladesh which draws sustenance from Islam. Bangladeshi nationalism, however, does not even admit the fact of common nationhood during the period of 1947 to 1971. The Bhutto hanging will provide a strong argument for those in Bangladesh who are deeply interested in discounting any talk of common ties with Pakistan. ■



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How Muslim nations treat their leaders

BASHIRUDDIN AHMED, a Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi, talks to OM PRAKASH.

IN the cases of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, a leader was put to death. In Pakistan, Mr Bhutto lost his life through apparently fair and just legal procedures. In Afghanistan, Sardar Daoud was assassinated. So was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Bangladesh.

These political deaths, in quick succession, lead to the impression that assassination is the way of settling political matters in these Muslim countries of this subcontinent. But let us take note of three other aspects of their politics : first in countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan, changeovers have taken place from one leader to another without assassination. In Afghanistan Sardar Daoud took over from the Afghan King when the latter was visiting Europe. He did not kill him. In Pakistan, Mr Liaqat Ali Khan was killed not by a group which wanted to take power from him but a deranged individual acting on his own. After him, all changes of leadership in Pakistan occurred without involving killing. Major General Iskandar Mirza was pushed out of office by Gen. Ayub Khan, but not killed. Ayub was replaced in office by Yayha Khan, and this happened virtually at the request of the former. And then there was Yayha Khan who, having lost East Pakistan, also lost his legitimacy to rule Pakistan and turned to Mr Bhutto. In the case of Bangladesh, of course, we are talking of a young nation in which the unfortunate assassination of Sheikh Mujib cannot serve as a basis for any generalisations.

The other thing to notice about these countries is that each one of them is controlled by the Army. Even in Bangladesh, where Gen. Ziaur Rahman is making a bold effort to take his country into a new stage of civilian rule, the Army still remains a major factor. In each of these three countries political leaders were put to death essentially by the Army. Sardar Daoud was killed by elements of the Army which staged a coup against his Government. Sheikh Mujib was assassinated exactly in the same circumstances by a group of soldiers. In Mr Bhutto's case, his death came through the law courts but only because the generals in control of Pakistan did not want to lose their control over the Government. They knew that if Bhutto lives they cannot hold on to power. So even his death is political murder committed by the Army.

The important question really about these countries is the question of why they have not been able to evolve civilian institutions. As we noticed earlier, Bangladesh is now moving in that direction, but the answer to this question is difficult. Obviously, there are any number of factors involved, ranging all the way from levels of economic development and social diversity, to traditions of struggle and movement. But let us note that military rule is not confined only to Islamic countries; military rule is in fact the norm rather than the exception whether one considers Africa, Latin America or even Asia. A majority of regimes, particularly in Africa and Latin America, are either directly military in character or backed by it.

The absence of democratic institutions is primarily a reflection of the inability of developing societies in general to handle the regional, linguistic, and ethnic diversities with which they start as independent nations. These diversities need to be attended in the very early stages of the country's independence, and this can only be done, if a new country has a leadership with vision and understanding of the requirements of nation-building along with legitimacy and popular support. Such leaders generally are those who have led the national movement. In the case of Pakistan, Mr Jinnah died soon after its independence and Mr Liaqat Ali Khan only a few years after that. These two leaders probably could have handled the problem of forging a nation out of the peoples of different provinces making up Pakistan. With their departure, the process of nation-building received a setback.

Nation-building requires adjustment and accommodation, that is, a great degree of give and take which can only be engaged in within the framework of an open and democratic society, and by leaders who have some measure of popular support. Military regimes are inherently incapable of doing this. Their emphasis on orderly conduct of national affairs reflects an inability to understand and appreciate the requirements of bargaining and adjustment involved in creating a national community. It is often their impatience with what Mr Bhutto calls, in his last testament, the chaos and confusion of the democratic political process, which results in military takeovers. The initial discipline and order that results from establishment of military regimes invariably leads to a recrudescence of social tensions — because nations can no longer be forged in today's world, with its flow of communication and widely shared democratic values, through force. No wonder then that Bangladesh emerged when the military was in power in Pakistan.

Once the leadership fails in the initial stages to create a national community, the country remains divided. Every economic or social crisis virtually takes the form of an acute polarisation and division of public opinion and social forces. This is what has been happening in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. And when the divisions in the country are so marked, peaceful resolution of differences becomes difficult. Assassinations of political leaders have always occurred in such

God's will

AS soon as the news of Mr Bhutto's execution reached New Delhi, the External Affairs Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee told his aides in the South Block to prepare a statement which he wanted to read out in Parliament. He went to the Lok Sabha armed with the statement and sat next to the Prime Minister, Mr Morarji Desai, in order to get his green signal. But before the External Affairs Minister could speak to the PM, the Opposition members were on their feet, demanding that the House make an obituary reference. At this juncture Mr Vajpayee sought Mr Desai's permission to read out the statement, which had been mildly worded, but the PM said no.

Mr Vajpayee was seen trying to convince Mr Desai, but the latter was adamant. Infuriated, Mr Vajpayee left the House in a huff. The Union Petroleum and Chemicals Minister, Mr Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna, met Mr Vajpayee when he was on his way out, and unwittingly enquired whether he was going to make a statement on the execution. This annoyed Mr Vajpayee further and he gave vent to his anger. Both the Cabinet Ministers felt strongly on the subject and were of the opinion that a mild statement on the occasion would not have done any harm. But who could reason out with Mr Desai, who claims to have a direct hotline with the Creator?

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contexts, irrespective of the religious complexes of the country. Even in United States you see instances of this happening. At one of the gravest moments of political crisis, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. The second period of crisis which occurred in the USA was in the 20's and the 30's, and this period witnessed the attempt on President F. D. Roosevelt's life in Chicago.

There are other instances too that one can cite from the recent history of other non-Islamic, countries. There probably are cultural reasons for explaining the use of violence in public life. Each culture, of course, has its own concept of politics and its traditions of managing public affairs. However, these are plural enough in each culture to permit varieties of political behaviour. This is also true of the Islamic traditions, though the dominant fact of Islamic culture seems to be a close link between politics and day to day life. This may well change in the future. But as long as this link remains, there will be, given the social and economic conditions of the Islamic countries of the sub-continent and perhaps other Islamic countries, a tendency to settle political differences through violence. ■

PR man

RUSSY Karanjia, who interviewed Mr Bhutto at the height of his glory following the cessation of East Pakistan, remembers Bhutto as "the most extraordinary, vital political person I had ever met. Just as he filled the room with his personality, so I was told he filled every nook and corner of Pakistan with his charismatic and egregious personality.

"His death will create a vacuum both in the Opposition and the Establishment which will be hard to fill. It is really difficult to believe that such a vital being filled with all that is good and all that is wicked should be snuffed out like a candle flame. It's also a pity that he should have suffered so many minor inhumanities and brutalities that left him almost derelict. But that the spirit and courage he showed did not yield till the last is a moral to the rest of us on how to meet the challenges of life and overcome them.

"Bhutto was a tremendous public relations man. No one could beat him at the game. I had abused him as a 'bastard' and he was obviously hurt about it and recalled it during the interview I had with him. But he handled it and dismissed it so gracefully that I couldn't but feel for him. All his life he had a tremendous sense of history and in all his actions and oratory he seemed to be writing chapters of this history. During the five hours I spent with him over two sessions, I could feel he was using me to further his historical image as he wanted it. The oddest thing happened on the day I was leaving Rawalpindi. He phoned me and told me to tell Indira Gandhi not to bother about his speeches. They were meant for domestic consumption. He explained what a difficult task he had undertaken to rebuild a broken and defeated Pakistan. All his talk of a 1000-year *Jehad* was so much bullshit. He He never meant it. It was for internal consumption. He was fundamentally for peace and some kind of loose alliance between India, Pakistan and China.

"Mr Bhutto was a man of tremendous contradictions. Take Kashmir for instance. In one breath he told me that he admired Indira Gandhi for exploiting the Bangladesh situation to break Pakistan. He would have done the same thing had he been in her place. In fact when India had a confrontation with China he had advised Ayub Khan to march into Kashmir and take it over. He described Ayub as a poltroon for not doing so. At the same time he asked me to convey to Indira Gandhi that she should settle with Abdullah as he was threatening to come to Pakistan and that would involve him (Bhutto) in a situation he did not want. "Kashmir is your baby so please settle it and relieve me of a confrontation between Srinagar and Delhi' he pleaded.

"Bhutto was basically for peace and goodwill, the rest was demagogy for internal consumption." believes Mr Karanjia. As he says, it's the tragedy, of leaders like Indira and Bhutto, that they become victims of their own demagogy.

"Bhutto was brilliant and perhaps this made him cynical about values if he had any. He was for instance the author of the Pakistan-China alliance. If one gave him an opening, whether in a conversation or in diplomacy, he would exploit it to the fullest. He got this chance after we broke off relations with China and he succeeded in tilting the balance of power against us in the subcontinent.

"Perhaps it is a little known fact that he had the highest admiration for Krishna Menon and to an extent Nehru, although he considered Nehru a weakling. He insisted on all his foreign diplomats possessing the complete writings and speeches of Krishna Menon and Nehru and he even examined them like a teacher on what they had read. It was a tribute paid by brilliance to genius. His high intellectual standards made him amoral. He perhaps had no values except to get the best of every development for himself and his country. I don't think he thought in terms of one without the other.

"I didn't know the Bhutto of the Bombay days. I thought he was a bit of a social snob but one thing I do remember was that he was always surrounded by the most beautiful women whether in Bombay or Geneva where I once met him."

OLGA TELLIS

Dapper and humorous

NARGIS reacted rather angrily to the news of the hanging of Mr Bhutto. "It is one of the worst kinds of political murder one has heard of in recent times. It is something which could not have taken place in the civilised world, particularly when the whole world spoke against it. It was a great shock when we heard the news on the radio."

Nargis knew Bhutto during his school years in Bombay. "I was not very close to him, but I was a close friend of the family. His cousins, Sikander and Imdar, were close friends of ours and through them we knew Zulfi. Later when I joined films. I was thrown together with them, because his elder cousin was married to a film actress. Of course they belonged to my mother's generation. They came to our house and we went out to movies and picnics together. Zulfi was enamoured by the film world and he and his cousins always accompanied me to my shooting sessions. I did not know Zulfi the politician. I knew him as a student. He was like any other normal student, full of beans, fun and laughter. He always struck me by his elegant dress and he had this air of aristocracy about him. But he never showed off his wealth. He was never ill-behaved. He was humorous and never stayed aloof."

"Perhaps his hatred for India," said Nargis, "stemmed from the fact that he was uprooted from the place where he spent his formative years. When the whole family left for Pakistan he too went away. I know he said Indians are dirty dogs and somehow I cannot associate this phrase with the Zulfi I knew. He was probably embittered by the fact that he lost his citizenship and his property here. After all he grew up in India."

"In fact when we first heard of him as a politician it made no impact on me. The Bhutto family is a very big family. It was the late K. Asif who reminded me that he was the boy who accompanied me to the shooting of *Mughul-e-Azam*. 'He's become a politician now,' Asif said. It was only then that I realised it was the same person. Later on I followed his career and being a nationalist I was shocked at his attitude towards India."

Nargis shuddered as she said : "It leaves one thinking about what he must have gone through. Not even allowed to embrace and kiss his Nusrat and Benazir. I admire him because he never asked for clemency."

OLGA TELLIS

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Headless media

AIR and Doordarshan chiefs' retirement leaves a real void

ALL India Radio and Doordarshan are (at the time of writing) without their top executives. This situation has come to pass because the respective directors-general of the two organisations, Mr P. C. Chatterji and Mr P. V. Krishnamoorthy, retired on March 31. And coincidentally the seniormost officers on the second rung — the deputy directors-general (DDG) — Mr S. C. Parasher and Mr Iqbal Malik, respectively, also attained superannuation on the same day. A fifth DDG, Mr M. S. Gopal (of AIR) also retired on March 31. Thus five of the seniormost officers in AIR and TV retired together leaving the departments literally headless.

Normally, when there is a vacancy at the top in any Government department, a Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) consisting of a representative each from the concerned Ministry and the UPSC meets and makes the selection. The DPC's choice is then referred, via the Ministry, to a Cabinet sub-committee (known as the Appointments Committee) comprising the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, and the concerned Minister (in this case the Information and Broadcasting Minister). In normal circumstances the Appointments Committee okays the DPC recommendation and the appointment is made. In the present case although the Ministry was aware for at least a year, if not more, that the posts of DGs in Akashvani and the fledgling Doordarshan (having independent existence since April 1, 1976) would fall vacant on April 1 this year, it did nothing to name the new incumbents. No DPC was convened and all kinds of rumours — the sort which is the staple of Delhi's bureaucracy — were afloat till almost the last day.

On March 30, it was announced that Mr S. K. Sehgal, Secretary, Information and Broadcasting, will for the present hold additional charge of the two organisations. This is the first time in the history of AIR that the Secretary of the Ministry has been asked to officiate as the DG as well. The announcement has come amid speculation as to whether the Government would appoint a 'generalist' — an IAS officer — or a 'specialist' — a professional programme staff man from the department. This speculation as well as the controversy whether a 'generalist' or a 'specialist' would fit the bill better takes place on every occasion when a new DG is to be appointed. A third dimension is usually added by the Minister who wonders if he should bring in a total outsider to head the organisation. This time was no exception. Among the names mentioned were those of Mr P. L. Deshpande, the Marathi novelist, Mr Chanchal Sarkar, the Director of the Press Institute of India, (both of whom had been members of the Verghese Committee on autonomy for AIR and Doordarshan), Mr Hafeez Noorani and Mr E. Alkazi, the former Director of the National School of Drama. Mr Sarkar had once before unsuccessfully tried to bag the prestigious appointment — in 1971 when the DG's post was advertised by the UPSC and none of those who had applied was selected. It was after this fiasco that in 1972 an IAS officer, Mr S. K. Mukherjee, was brought in as DG. It is to his credit that before he left Mr Mukherjee recommended that the post should go to a professional.

It is in fact rumoured that the Minister, Mr L. K. Advani, had made up his mind to induct an outsider just as the Prime Minister had brought in his biographer, Mr G. S. Bhargava, a journalist, as the Principal Information Officer. But in the face of the recent parliamentary storm over the AIR blacklist of 17 names who were not to be given programmes for their alleged co-operation with the Emergency regime, Mr Advani did not immediately make an announcement of his choice, but will do so once the storm clears, according to informed sources. This theory fits in well with the fact that the Government made an ad hoc arrangement at the eleventh hour.

A communal colour to the situation has also been added. *Blitz* in its column called "Tommorrow's News Today" (March 31 1979) has asserted, though not exactly in so many words, that seniority was being given the go by in appointing the new DG, AIR because the seniormost DDG, Mr U. L. Baruah, is a Muslim. It was the first time in more than 30 years that the Government had the chance to appoint a Muslim as DG, AIR and Mr Baruah has an excellent record and a good two years to go before he retires, but Mr Advani gave the specious argument that the Ministry does not want to promote any DDG before the implementation of the Verghese Committee's recommendation to have a common head for AIR and TV — under Ak[illegible]

L. K. Advani: indecisive?

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— who would be appointed by an autonomous Board of Governors.

This argument does not hold water because the Verghese Committee also recommended a common Chief Engineer for both AIR and TV. And this did not prevent the Ministry from promoting the seniormost engineer when the Chief Engineer, AIR retired recently. Why this discrimination in favour of the engineering staff, ask AIR's programme officers. In fact, the Programme Staff Association (PSA) feels that the Minister is most unfavourably biased against the regular programme staff As it is, there is a tremendous imbalence between the programme staff and the engineering staff in AIR. As against 590 sanctioned Class I engineering posts there are only 197 Class I programme posts. One wonders if in the Government's eyes the medium counts more than the message. In a letter to Mr Advani on August 18, 1978 the PSA said: "...It hurts us to say that while you had the time for formal and informal meetings with recognised, unrecognised splinter groups of various categories, you could not spare even a few minutes in full one year for our association... during our service we have had chances to work under eight different Ministers but the treatment given to us during the last 17 months is totally unprecedented."

BUT what of the man whose departure has given rise to this controversy? Mr P. C. Chatterji, who took over in June, 1974 is generally regarded as one of the finest DGs that AIR has had so far. It was under his leadership that AIR won many laurels in international competitions for radio programmes and to crown it all he became the President of the Asian Broadcasting Union in 1977. (This prestigious position came India's way after many years and is now lost.) Mr Chatterji in the course of his career has fought and won many skirmishes with Governments both at the Centre and in the States including a major battle with the Communist-dominated United Front Government in West Bengal in the late Sixties when as the Station Director in Calcutta he had turned away a Minister determined to broadcast a vitriolic script. This famous incident was the *raison d'etre* of the now famed 'code' for broadcasters. Mr Chatterji is also well-known in the academic and intellectual circles of Delhi and Calcutta for his many scholarly writings and speeches on aesthetics and philosophy. It is also to Mr Chatterji's credit that despite all their efforts the new regime after the Emergency could hold nothing against him and he stayed on. Almost incredible if you consider how many heads rolled after March, 1977.

When the Government had a precedent of granting extensions, Mr Chatterji should have been offered one. But he did not even seek one. When asked why, he replied: "I am sick and tired and fed up. You know when I was a Station Director (and away from Delhi) I had some independence but in Delhi I stopped taking decisions concerning anything beyond my immediate family." He was obviously alluding to the all-powerful Ministry which breathes down the neck of every officer stalling any imaginative and innovative move. Mr Chatterji is happy that he is able to go back to the world of philosophy but is it true, as some say, that Mr Advani is equally happy that he was able to get rid of a person with an independent reputation with whom he never quite got along.

VIVEK SENGUPTA, Delhi

Diabetes–the main culprit

JP showed remarkable endurance

MR Jayaprakash Narayan's fight to live with the aid of a powerful armoury of antibiotics and medical technology from March 19 onwards is perhaps his last great battle against bad health that dogged his footsteps viciously ever since he was jailed during the Emergency in Delhi and Haryana. JP and his closest friends like his secretary, Mr Thomas Abraham, and his PA, Jagdishbabu, perhaps alone know what a living hell life was for JP. At Bombay's Jaslok Hospital on the night of March 20, the unassuming Sarvodaya worker Mohanji said JP murmured: *Ough, bahut takleef hai—aur saha nahin jataa* (Oh, it's so painful, it's unbearable). Many a time he told Abraham: "life is useless, what's the use of such a life, tied to a machine?" The nights were long, lonely and sleepless. He suffered from insomnia . His attendant, the young Gulab, had to massage him through to relieve him from the frustrating restlessness that results from sleeplessness. He did *yoga* for some time to overcome insmonia but he couldn't do it consistently. He would say "Now I should go. My life is over."

Dr Jeffery Marston, the specialist in ischemic colitis who flew in from London to examine JP, put it in a nutshell when he said JP suffered from all the major illnesses—diabetes, coronary heart disease, renal failure, ischemic colitis and a damaged liver.

Bhola Chatterjee

JP : frail but indomitable

What's is JP's medical history? It is impossible at this stage to get anything official because the relationship between a doctor and patient is sacred and doctors attending on JP value this sacred relationship with JP. "Go and ask JP, if I can talk" says Dr K. R. Mani, the chief nephrologist, knowing very well that trying to get to JP in the intensive care unit is like going to the moon.

As one tried to probe one got answers like don't you know Lord Moran who was treating Winston Churchill was prosecuted for writing a book on him. It's better not to talk about it, says another doctor. "You know Dr Lohia died 15 years ago but today they are digging up his case papers to find out what went wrong". Or better still, "don't you know that the medical secrets of great men are one of the best kept secrets?" It is said that had the late Dr Jal Patel who was treating Mr Mohamed Ali Jinnah disclosed that Jinnah had not very long to live as he was being consumed by TB, partition may never have taken place.

However, JP has cheated death on at least two occasions. Since Holi JP had diarrhoea. Many in Bihar suffer from diarrhoea thanks to the water and insanitary conditions there. JP had been taking entrevioform, a course prescribed for 30 days. In fact he had a permanent complaint of diarrhoea and constipation. Before this he was keeping reasonably well. They had cut down his dialysis by half an hour and he had put on 4.5 kg.

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BLITZ
INDIA'S GREATEST WEEKLY

LGC2204

Principles; not personalities

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His breakfast usually consisted of fermented *mung*, toast, boiled eggs and fruit. For lunch he had fish curds and sweets. He had fads in food that lasted a while. Like for sometime it was chicken. Recently he relished fish. At night he never ate anything, and he had given up tea and coffee.

On Friday the 16th he had his breakfast and lunch as usual. He was put on dialysis which started around 12.25 in the afternoon. At 8 pm. he suddenly vomited profusely and had a motion with blood. It was diagnosed as diarrhoea and he was given chlorostrep.

On Saturday he passed large quantities of blood. He didn't want to leave Patna. Mr Abraham phoned Dr Mani in Bombay around midnight. Dr Mani asked them to bring him to Bombay but they said he was in no condition to be moved. They asked him to come to Patna. Dr Mani reached Patna at 9 am on Sunday. Had he reached 20 minutes later, JP would have literally bled to death. They did not give him blood transfusion as his haemoglobin was very low and Dr Mani decided immediately to put him on dialysis and give blood transfusion. JP was in spasms of agonising pain and fainted on two occasions.

JP cheated death again in Bombay on 20th night. Dr Ashwin Mehta, the eminent cardiologist attending on JP, said it happened just after the dialysis was over. Dr Mehta had gone to the 16th floor to invite the two doctors attending on JP from Patna for dinner. They were getting ready so he went up to the 19th floor intensive care unit to see a new admission when JP's faithful attendant Gulab rushed in crying and screaming that JP was dead. "Actually he had a cardiac arrest" Dr Mehta said. "I gave him a manual massage and his heart sprang to life. This condition is usually to be treated within two to three minutes on the onset of a cardiac arrest. So the chances of survival are few, because a doctor is never always on hand. The circumstances were extremely fortuitous. There are two ways of treating cardiac arrest condition either a cardiac massage or a machine to give an electric counter shock of 200 watts which makes the heart spring to life."

"JP's heart is not the world's greatest heart," says Dr Mehta, "but it is reasonably stable for some one who has been on dialysis since 1975. He is probably the oldest in the world to have dialysis at that age and is pulling on unexpectedly long with so many complications."

JP suffered the first heart attack in Bombay in 1972 when he was addressing a Press conference at the Ritz Hotel. Dr Mehta was summoned immediately and has been treating JP's heart disease since then.

JP's diabetes is the organial killer and all his ills are a logical consequence of this complaint. Very simply put, diabetes leads to or aggravates the process of atheroscelrosis which is the hardening and narrowing of the arteries. The blood supply to various organs is jeopardised. It leads to narrowing of blood vessels going to the limbs. Therefore cerebral circulation and incidence of stroke, coronary and kidney disease are higher in diabetic patients.

The latest attack JP suffered was ischemic colitis. It is a condition where the blood vessels in the large gut or large intestine are narrowed and the area does not get blood. This part consequently gets damaged, eroded, and bleeding starts from the raw surface. It is also part of the diabetic syndrome.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

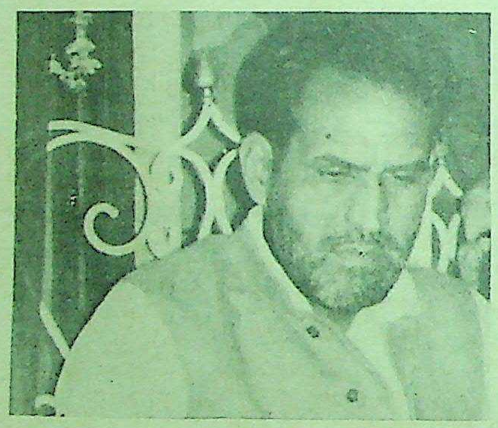
DELHI DIARY

FLYING SECRETARY

THE Labour Secretary, Mr Raghupat, attached to Mr Ravindra Verma, is fond of flying out of India. During the Port Trust strike in Bombay he was on a foreign assignment. Nowadays he is preparing for his 4th Geneva visit during the last six or seven months. Although the budget session of Parliament is in progress it seems he has no interest in the Labour Ministry. According to sources close to him, he is about to retire at the end of this year. These sources also claim that the main purpose behind these numerous foreign visits is to get a good UN assignment, possibly with the Geneva-based ILO. It is also claimed that his staff car is permanently with his son who is an IFS probationer.

DISCIPLINED FARCE

THE ruling Party had not till recently gone to the extent of expressing dissidence against its own Government in such a flagrant manner as did the Raj Mangal Pandey-led dissidents in UP Assembly the other day. Voting against the Government on a money bill and then sticking to the Party is unheard of but that is what many dissident MLAs did



in UP Assembly last month. Even some Jana Sangh leaders at the Centre did not approve of the act but the Janata Party President, Mr Chandrashekhar, who is supposedly keeping the Party together, gave the 20-odd MLAs the go-ahead and duly 18 Chandrashekhar-backed MLAs voted against the Banarsi Das Government. When a prominent Jana Sangh functionary told Mr Chandrashekhar of the implications of the move, the Party President was furious : "Tumhe ladna bhi nahin aatta. Rajnarain jaise aadmi se kya sharafaat say ldo gay" (You don't even know how to fight. Would you fight Raj Narain with grace and dignity). The Jana Sangh leader too had to fall in line. After all, the Party President was the one to save them from any disciplinary action.

SMUGGLED OUT

ON February 16 the Bombay Customs nabbed a top executive of a leading transport company as he was going through the green channel at Santa Cruz Airport. The businessman yielded a goldmine of incriminating evidence : foreign exchange salted away in a number of banks all over the continent, investments in various foreign blue chips and, above all, a detailed balance sheet of the proposed steel mill the transporter intended to set up in the USA. Custom officials interrogated him for ten hours. Legally they could have arrested him and that is what they were going to do when a phone call from Delhi from somebody high up in the Finance Ministry to the Customs Collector of Bombay swung open the door to freedom and respectability for the detainee. The businessman was close to the former Haryana Chief Minister, Mr Bansi Lal, till Mrs Gandhi was thrown out. During Janata rule he found his way into the camp of Bansi Lal's successors. No wonder it worked. The last has not yet been heard on the case because the Customs, during those ten hours, duly recorded some of the incriminating evidence in their inventories.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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Paying the price

JUSTICE demands that if All India Radio is bent on punishing an announcer and a transmission executive for allowing coverage of the mistaken report about Jayaprakash Narayan, the Prime Minister too should pay a price for formally passing on the information to the Speaker who then made the official Lok Sabha announcement.

But what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander. In India more than anywhere else, there is one law for the powerful and another for the humble. While, at the time of writing, the erring announcer and transmission executive are both waiting in limbo (having been suspended) for charge sheets, Mr Morarji Desai, having—so we are told—deeply examined the matter within himself, solemnly assures us that his resignation would be "a greater and more grievous blunder".

Two thoughts are implicit in that statement. First, the Prime Minister recognises no judge higher than his own presumably infallible and impeccable conscience. Secondly, the conviction of his indispensability comes through loud and clear. Not that there is anything new in this double standard. Everyone knows that while civil servants are nowadays forced to retire at a hoary 58, being thought to be too decrepit for efficiency, Mr Desai is no more than a sprightly youngster at 83 and easily able to manage the complex challenges of governance. His Home Minister, who rigidly enforces Mr Desai's implacable decision to refuse bureaucrats extensions, is a mere 75, having himself retired from the ICS nearly two decades ago.

Observation of Mr L.K. Advani's actions over the last two years suggests an unshakable belief in a Congress (I) conspiracy to subvert AIR and Doordarshan. We have known of tapes being tampered with by station directors so that listeners are spared the insult of having to hear Mrs Gandhi's name. Her ubiquitous followers have been blamed for arson in studios. Other minor employees have been penalised, allegedly for giving publicity to her policies. We are left to conclude that while the Prime Minister made a genuine error in announcing Mr Narayan's death, the two radio employees gleefully broadcast news that they knew to be false because of their political commitment.

Anyone who knows how highly a job is prized in our society, and the inevitability of swift reprisal from Akashvani's political masters, will instantly dismiss the notion as fantastic. They will see the threatened action for what it is: inoffensive heads are rolling because the Government needs scapegoats.

NO less objectionable are Mr Advani's views on broadcasters and programme content. He sought not long ago to prove impartiality on radio and T.V. by claiming that the Janata gets only 45 per cent of the total time given to political Parties in the main news bulletins. Since the remaining 55 per cent is shared by four national Parties, to say nothing of regional organisations like the DMK and AIADMK, Janata's quota is hardly negligible. But as former working journalist on the *Organiser*, the Minister must surely also know that wordage often matters less than the slant, timing and context.

An admirable instance of the subtlety of official propaganda was provided by television's Republic Day coverage of the Gonda project initiated (for those who seek further confirmation of Mr Advani's ideological perspectives) by the Deendayal Institute. After the obligatory opening tribute to Mr Sanjeeva Reddy, who inaugurated the scheme, the 15-minute film plunged into an audio-visual eulogy of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. By connecting the President of India with the RSS, the feature bestowed respectability on the latter; it projected the Sangh as a constructive force; and its flattering shots of Mr Balasaheb Deoras sought to elevate him to the status of a national leader.

In the record, however, Doordarshan probably allots these 15 minutes of clever and persuasive RSS propaganda under the heading of "development" or even publicity for the President.

Little wonder then that Mr Madhu Limaye complains of radio and television being subverted to promote the RSS. His charge is substantiated by the publicity given to another Deendayal Institute enterprise, a book called *Gandhi, Lohia,* and *Deendayal* that was released by Mr Chandrashekhar; and by the regular appearances on official media of journalists on the *Organiser* and *Panchjanya*. He might have added that there is food for misgiving in the inspired attempt to rewrite history from a narrowly chauvinistic point of view, in Government patronage for the Hindi news agency Hindustan Samachar which now boasts the Rajmata of Gwalior as Chairman, in the recent dismissal of journalists who favour a more secular approach, and in the prize jobs that have been found for former employees of *Motherland*.

With Mr Advani at the reins, the RSS is stepping high. Political realists may not be surprised at these tokens of gratitude to the victors of the Khandwa by-election, but those with some concern for progress, social enlightenment and harmonious coexistence of India's religious minorities cannot but be alarmed at such growing evidence of the Janata Party's commitment to retrograde concepts.

THE matter of exclusion from Akashvani and Doordarshan programme becomes curioser and curioser. The 17 persons who are clearly banned include two MPs, a distinguished scholar on China, an eminent Hindi writer, the Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University who is also a nominated member of the National Integration Council, as well as journalists from the *Hindustan Times, New Wave, Secular Democracy, Navjivan, Tej, Hindustan, Patriot* and *National Herald*.

This too in the name of restoring freedom of expression and on the eve of revamping the two institutions into autonomous corporations in further fulfilment of that pious ideal. "Ideology is irrelevant to the media" says Mr Advani while admitting that supporters of Mrs Gandhi's 20-point programme, and of her son's five points, must be excluded.

But let the Minister himself sum up his guiding principles: "I still maintain there is no black list, but the vociferous advocates of the Emergency are not to be invited for programmes for some time". If that enunciation of policy is not at once crystal clear to readers, it is only because they do not share the commitment of Mr Advani who also boasts: "I am proud of my association with the RSS and no amount of calumny will make me disown it". ■

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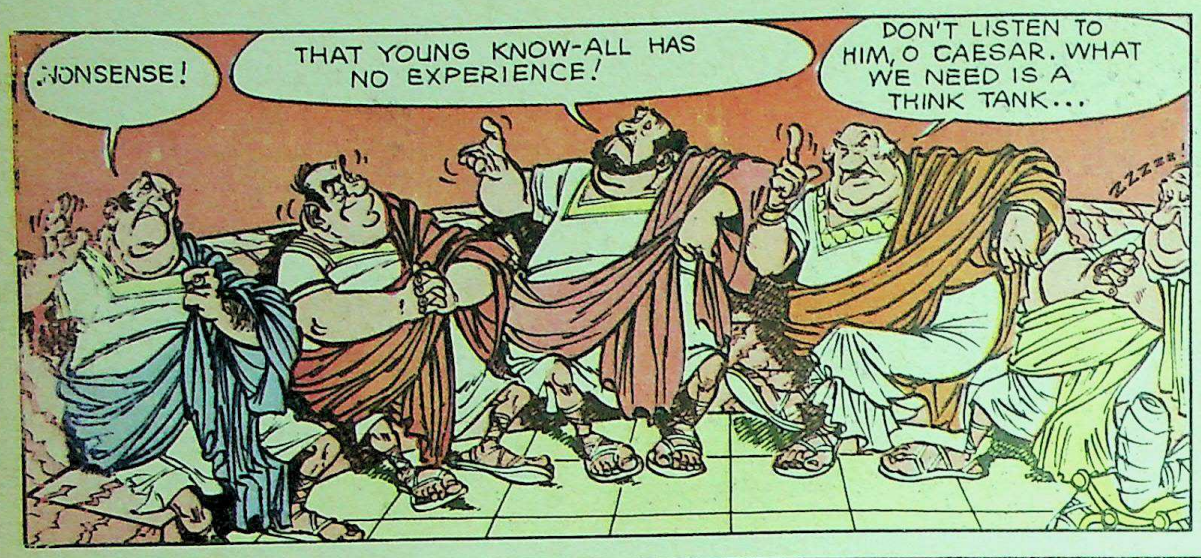

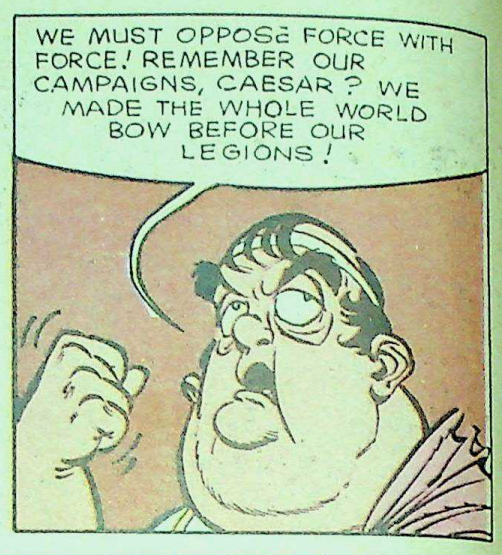

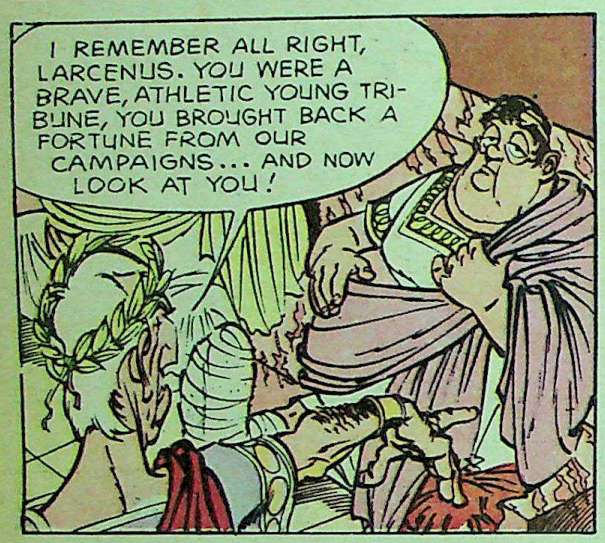

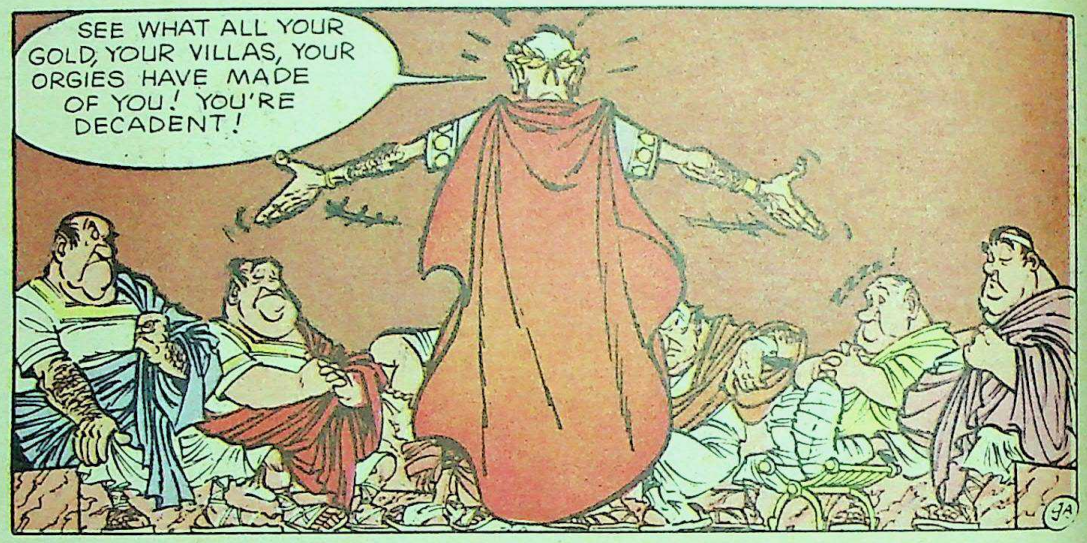

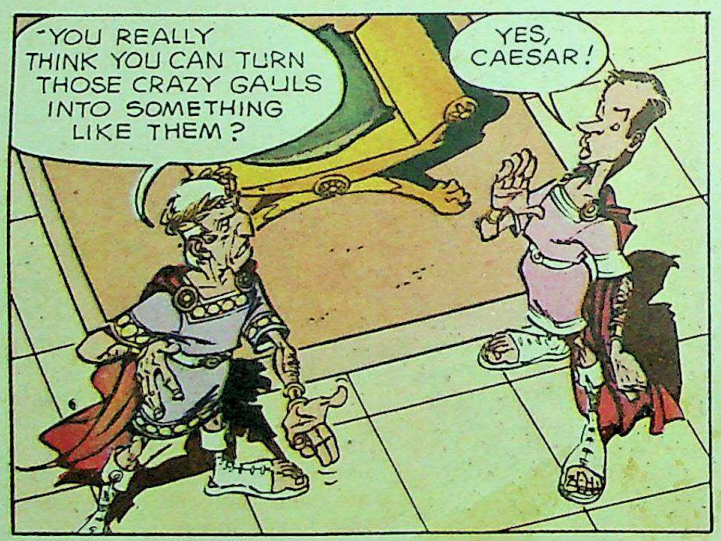

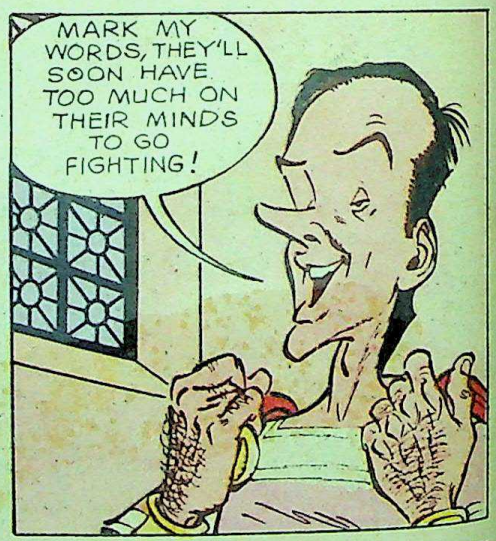

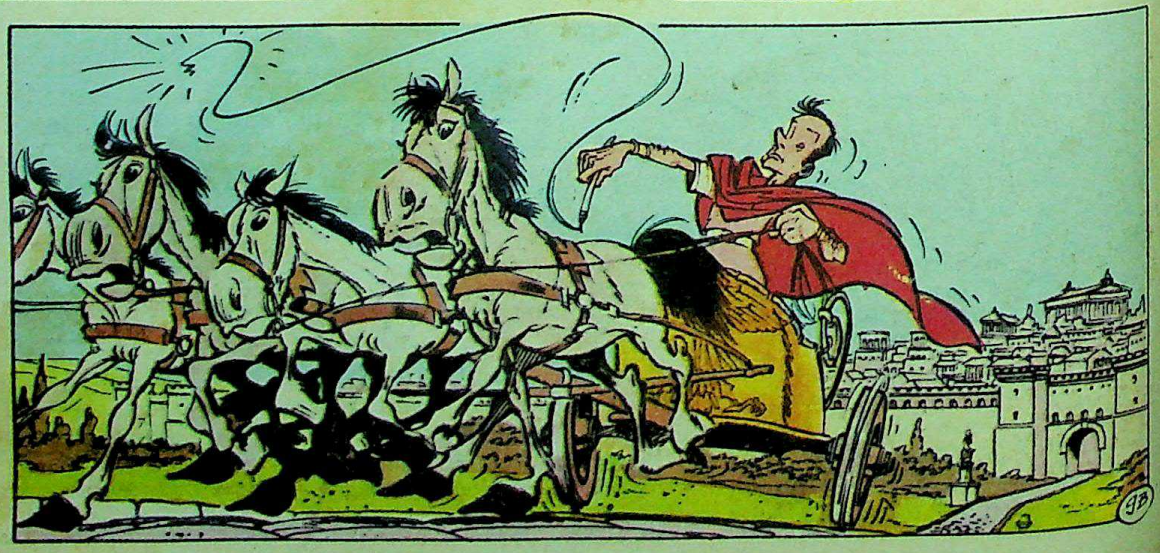

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Bindiya: one more by the head-count

Tapas Roy

THINGS don't seem to be quite perfect between young *Rishi* and *Tina* With Chintu, of course, this is a normal affair — not getting along with his female co-stars, I mean. But there seems to be a contradiction somewhere: he is very keen on getting young actresses to work with him, yet while shooting, he creates an uneasy atmosphere around them. Of course, he is a total professional while shooting is on. But in the intervening period between the shots, this man shows his ugly side. And Tina is going through such a phase with him. Not that this is bothering her—she gets over such problems faster than most other stars. She is not like Neetu, Ranjeeta Bhavna, etc.

DID YOU notice how *Hema* has taken a backseat among this year's award winners? She is featured nowhere. Is this an indication of her fading popularity or that her involvement with *Dharam* is growing stronger? She probably has enough hassles to keep herself busy in her free time, rather than do her homework on her films. Is it any wonder her films don't do as well as they used to? The same thing happened to super star *Rajesh Khanna*, when he got too busy with personal problems to attend to his career. Domesticity and its allied problems cause professional disruption. That's why they say a married star is less successful than his/her single counterpart. Unless, of course, they happen to be *Amitabh Bachhan*.

IN SPITE of having exclusive hairdressers ready and waiting on them, most female stars prefer to go to hairdressing saloons. Like *Rekha*, *Neetu*, and now, of all the people, *Bindiya*. Doesn't she know that *Hema Malini* never visits public hairdressing parlours? Since she is supposed to be imitating this super star, judging by her superior airs, this is one thing which gives her away. Anyway, the fact remains that she goes unrecognised when she visits this particular saloon which is frequented by Rekha, Shabana, Zarina and Asha Sachdev.

DABOO KAPOOR has achieved what he wanted to for a long time —an award nomination for his acting in *Kasme Vaade*. This is second to his other achievement of having lost a tremendous amount of weight. Though he has put on record that 1978 has been the worst year for him and that such a year should never come back, he has actually never had it so good. Though 1979 promises to be a better year with him launching his next film and also acting in millionaire Jethawani's film, he says he wants something new for '79: which means he wants another baby.

ANOTHER star who has made it big, through a very small film is *Amjad Khan*. The film, *Dada*, is such a hit that many producers have signed him up for the lead role for similar films. This is more than a test for him. He alone was responsible for the success of *Dada* with no other big stars or credits to help him. Will his first attempt at directing a film prove to be a success too?

FAROOQUE SHAIKH is slowly and steadily climbing up the ladder of success, just like *Smita Patil* has. Incidentally, both of them had begun their careers as TV artistes. The recent release *Gaman* is supposed to be a refreshing film notable for its music and the performance of Smita and most of all, Farooque. The pleasant-faced actor has no airs at all, which just saves him from being considered a potential super star. That he dates *Shabana Azmi* quite often is of course not enough scandal to put him on the list of well-known people. Something tells me he will soon join the ranks, though!

AMITABH, it seems, has made quite a name for himself growling and grunting and gunning his way through movies. Now there's going to be a change — he is going to dance his way through—in the tradition of Travolta. He was always a good dancer, especially since his early days with *Jaya* looking on fondly as he tried out his impromptu steps.

Hema: on the downward slide

Tapas Roy

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KHAAS BAAT

IN *Sigappu Rojakkal*, she played the Brahmin girl who seduces a young boy when her pious parents are at the temple. Since then *Sumangali* has been flooded with similar roles and one understands she has rejected most of them. Maybe she expects roles in which she'll have to seduce men of ripe age. Or does she want to play a nun of immaculate conception?

NANDITA BOSE, the Bengali actress, who has worked in about 30 South Indian films, has acted in only two Tamil films till now. It seems the Tamil producers are a bit reluctant to touch her, because they are interested only in artistes whose voices need not be dubbed. This is Nandita Bose's version. But then Seema's voice is invariably dubbed, one hears, and so is the case with Sarada, the Telugu girl who made it big in Malayalam films. And since multi-lingual films are the craze today, you find that many people dub their voices. There are actresses like Roja Ramani, Kanchana and Padmapriya who are more popular in Kannada films in spite of the fact that they hardly know the language. And Mamta, the Telugu girl is a big name in Malayalam films, ever since she bared herself in a soft-porno film, *A Night in the Rest House*.

So, Nandita, there must be some reason why Tamil producers are a bit wary of you. But why worry, the Kerala producers just love you. And anyway, you say you are not keen on too many acting assignments.

RAJESH KHANNA seems to have made a positive impression on the Madras producers when he worked in producer Balaji's *Amar Deep*. Soon after its completion, he was signed by three well-known Madras banners. One of these films is a remake of a popular Tamil hit, *Sigappu Rojakkal*, starring Kamalahasan and Sridevi. It was directed by Bharatiraja. The Hindi version will have the same director and, will be starring Rajesh, Tina and Amjad Khan. Kamalahasan portrayed a misogynist in *Sigappu Rojakkal* who slaughters his women after laying them. Now, let's see how Rajesh is going to perform. One hopes he won't repeat his performance from *Ittefaq* where he had to pretend to be a psychopath.

RADHIKA, who played the blushing village maiden in *Kizhakke Pogum Rail* appears in modern clothes, in *Nikkum Ilamai*. And though she has the appearance of a flirt, the whole town is after her. But surprise : she's "pure at heart" whereas her cousin, who's draped in conventional, conservative sarees has a wandering mind and fancies all kinds of men. Meera has played the role of the cousin rather well even though the credit titles are hogged by Radhika.

STAR-CRAZY audiences who turn up for the felicitation programmes often get annoyed when the stars attending the function refuse to speak, or say just a few inspired words. Few years ago, *Leena Chandavarkar*, who hails from Dharwar, was heckled and booed by a Kannada crowd in Bombay when she declared that she couldn't speak the language, at a function organised by a Kannada association! Leena wanted to speak only in Hindi or in English, but the irate crowd told her to leave the auditorium.

A couple of weeks ago, the new Telugu box-office success, *Subashini*, just said, "Thank you" and sat down. The function was organised to felicitate the unit of *Shivaranjani*, a Telugu hit film which has done excellent business in Bangalore, too. The audience listened, rather restlessly, to the meandering speeches of the director and some technicians. But all the time they were expecting some words, may be even some anecdotes from Subhashini. Maybe Subhashini is just shy of big crowds. She refused to say anything beyond a short sentence ... of course, she was not offensive at all. But the audience was not in a tolerant mood.

THERE'S a sudden spurt in Oriya films. Following the super success of the mythological film Sati Anusuya in which Roja Ramani played the title role, the Oriya producers have started descending on Madras. For one thing, they look around for not-so-expensive heroines. And then there are the streamlined Madras studios. Currently, four such films are being made in Madras ...and all of them are mythological. At least in Orissa, the road to the box-office is paved with mythology.

GIRISH KARNAD'S Ondanondu Kaladalli was a slick entertaining film, but it was not entertaining enough for the masses : it was not a box-office success. Girish says he made the film because "new-wave" Kannada films like *Samskara*, *Chomana Dudi* and *Kaadu* were similar, so he wanted to make something light and entertaining. But Girish is not really worried about the fact that *Ondanondu Kaladalli* was not a success. He has persuaded the the producer to think of launching another film with himself as the director. It'll be a small budget film.

Now that he is acting in some films in Bombay, won't he spending too much time there? No, says Girish. The kind of directors he's working for, Basu Chatterjee included, are fastidious and fast. His work in *Ratnadeep*, in which he's paired with Hema Malini, is almost over and for *Man Pasand*, in which he has an important role to play, his shooting schedule may last only another fortnight.

PIOUSJI

Subha

Sumangali : reversing roles

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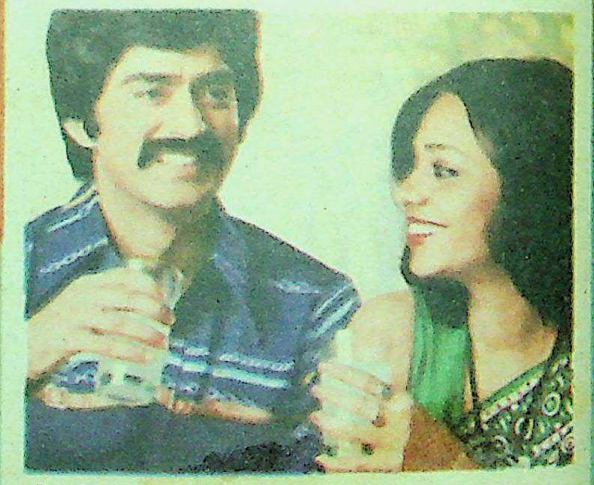
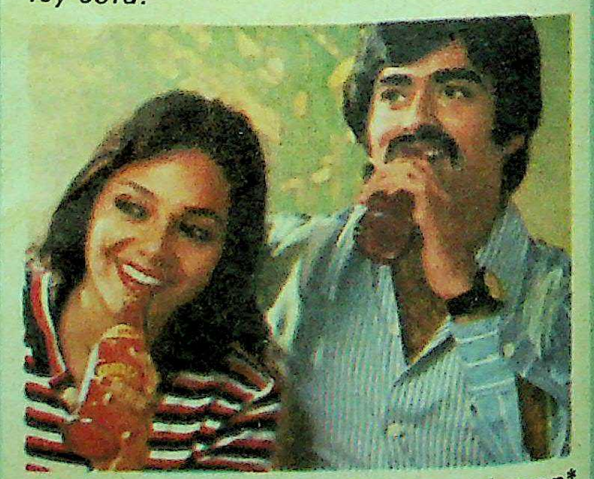
It's time for an extra twist of taste

A time to taste – *lemon** **and** *lime* like it's never been. More tangy,* **more** *punchy, more everything.*

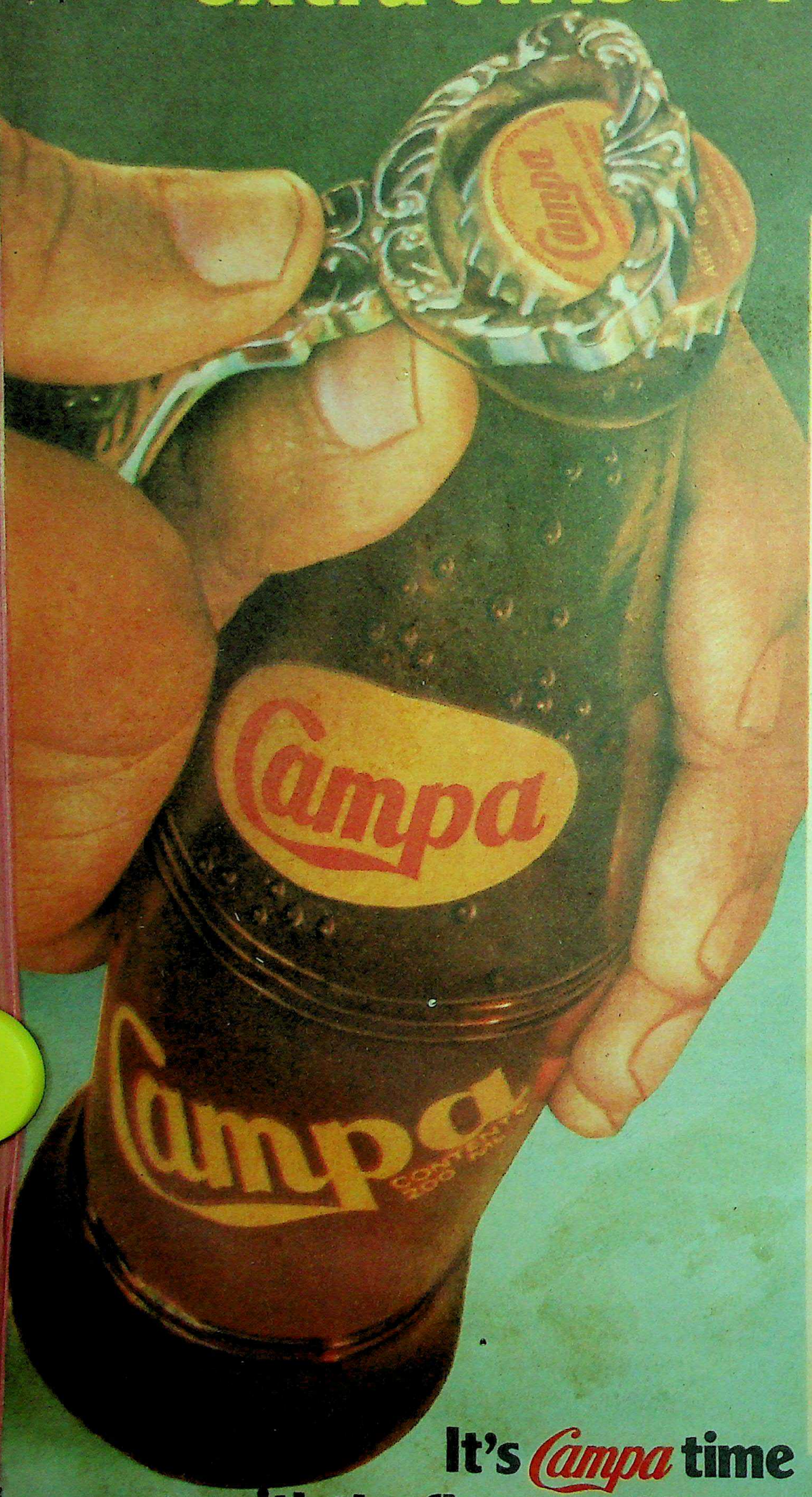


A time to 'freshen' – *with tongue–tingling lemon** **and** *lime.** **Fresh** *and icy cold.*



A time to switch to Campa – *lemon** **and** *lime* Any time from nine to nine – or before and after. Today – or now.*

*Artificial flavour



It's *Campa* time with the flavour of lemon* and lime*

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The Pravda scoop

While the Indian newsmen made do with Press Information Bureau handouts, Anna Karenina and Yuri Zhivago, two young enterprising reporters from PRAVDA, the paper exclusively devoted to sensationalism, grilled their Prime Minister Alexei Nikolayevich Kosygin on his mystery mission to India.

Anna: Alexei baby, did you have to go all that way to smear colour on the cheeks of Indian girls? Aren't the Kolkhoznik wenches good enough?

Kosygin: Holi is a heroic third world festival.

Anna: All the same, an Associated Press report says you didn't splash water. Is that true?

Kosygin blanches, and refuses to answer.

Zhivago: Okay, if you won't tell us why, we take it that the Soviet Government has plenty to hide. Well, let's put it this way: did you also, concurrently so to speak, go shopping for rice?

Kosygin grows even paler, sweats, then steadies himself with a vodka.

Anna: Alexei baby, do you think your Government will fall if you answer?

Kosygin: My Government is stable. But I desire to say just this: one does shop around a bit at festival time.

Zhivago: You'd done crisis shopping for rice in India. Do we conclude the Agrograd policy is being reversed?

Kosygin: This is the Chinese canard. No policy of the Revolution is being abandoned or reversed.

Anna: Then why didn't you buy the rice from the kolkhozes?

Kosygin: I repeat: we stand by the Great October Revolution, which runs short of wheat once in a way. So we buy a little bit of the stuff from a neighbouring revolution, the Green Revolution. It's all between revolutions.

Zhivago: Factual error, Alexei old boy. The Green Revolution is coarse wheat, not rice.

Kosygin: All grains are allies.

Anna: But, baby, Lenin said wheat kept the proletariat in trim while rice made them sluggish.

Kosygin: Lenin said that communism was the electrification of the countryside, that it was the spread of washing machines and colour TV. It's we who will interpret Lenin, not you.

Anna: Boo!

Zhivago: Boo!

Kosygin reels, then stabilizes himself with another vodka.

Kosygin: Lenin meant that a dole of rice to a revolutionary people occupying another revolutionary people will do the former a world of good.

Anna: Did the Chinese knock out the Vietnamese rice centres, their military-vegetable complex?

Zhivago: Like we wanted to knock out the Chinese nuclear installations at Lop Nor, and the Americans wouldn't let us?

Kosygin guzzles a large vodka.

Kosygin (haltingly): The heroic Vietnamese people grow their own rice.

Anna: But would you, baby, or would you not send them this rice?

Kosygin: We might. Just to create a South-East Asian buffer stock to stop Chinese expansionism.

Zhivago: After parting with the rice for a song, the Indians let you call the Chinese robbers and assassins. And that, when you were on Indian soil.

Anna: Did you break into their South Block, wire the place and snoop on Jagat Mehta, with a view to pressurising the Indian Government to have a foreign policy different from Atal Behari Vajpayee's?

Kosygin: We don't break in. We insist on being invited. The real leaders of the Kampuchean people invited us. Since we couldn't go, we sent the Vietnamese. So too the Czechs. They sent us word, "drop in", and we paradropped our troops. They again sent word, "roll in", and we sent a goodwill mission of tanks. We've given the Indians tanks, too, but not the tank crews. Not yet.

Zhivago: But dear Nikolayevich, it's rumoured the CPI invited you to break in.

Anna: That you're giving the Indian workers the slogan: 'from Gandhi to Gandhi to Gandhi.' Who's the ally of the October Revolution: the boy or his mom?

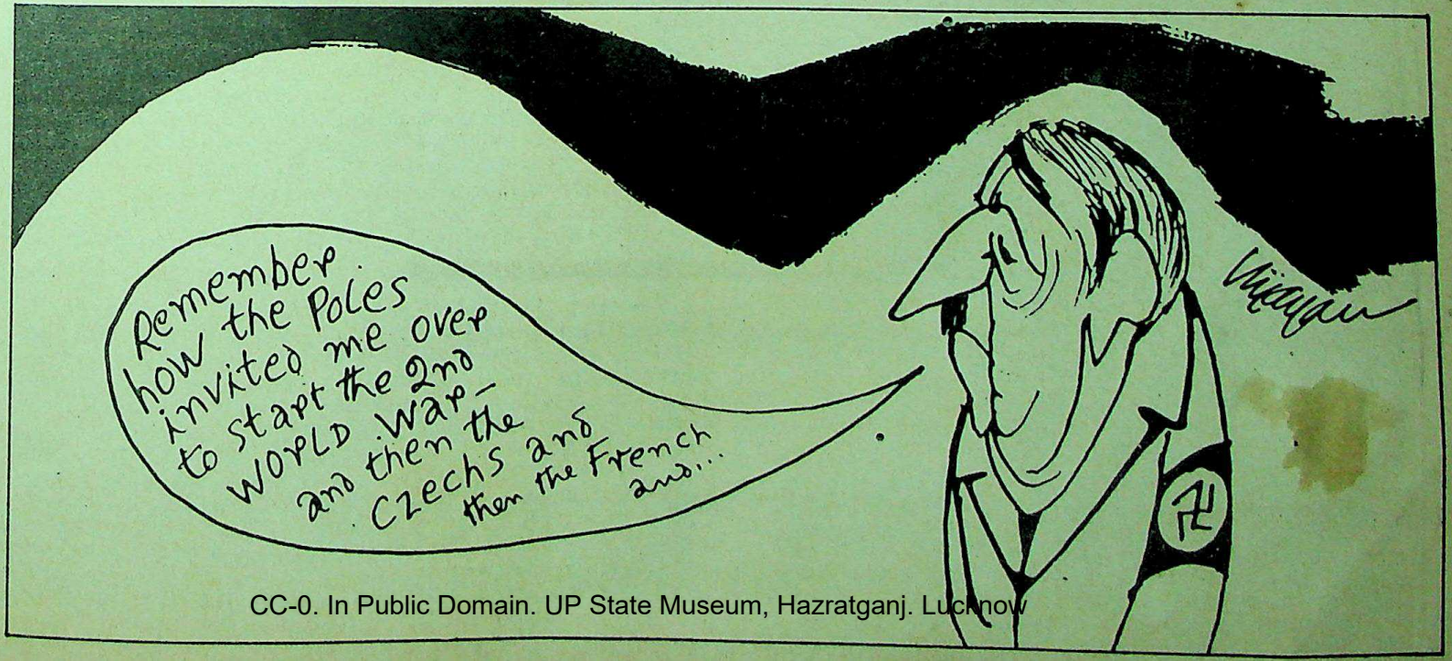
Kosygin puns delicately.

Kosygin: Mom's the word.

Anna and Zhivago: Boo!

Moscow is thick with the most sordid rumours. These say that Kosygin is trying to put new life into the Indo-Soviet Treaty, using unfair and illegal means. The managers of **Pravda** *declared meanwhile that they would stand by their reporters. It wouldn't matter to them whether the Government stayed or fell.*

By O.V. VIJAYAN



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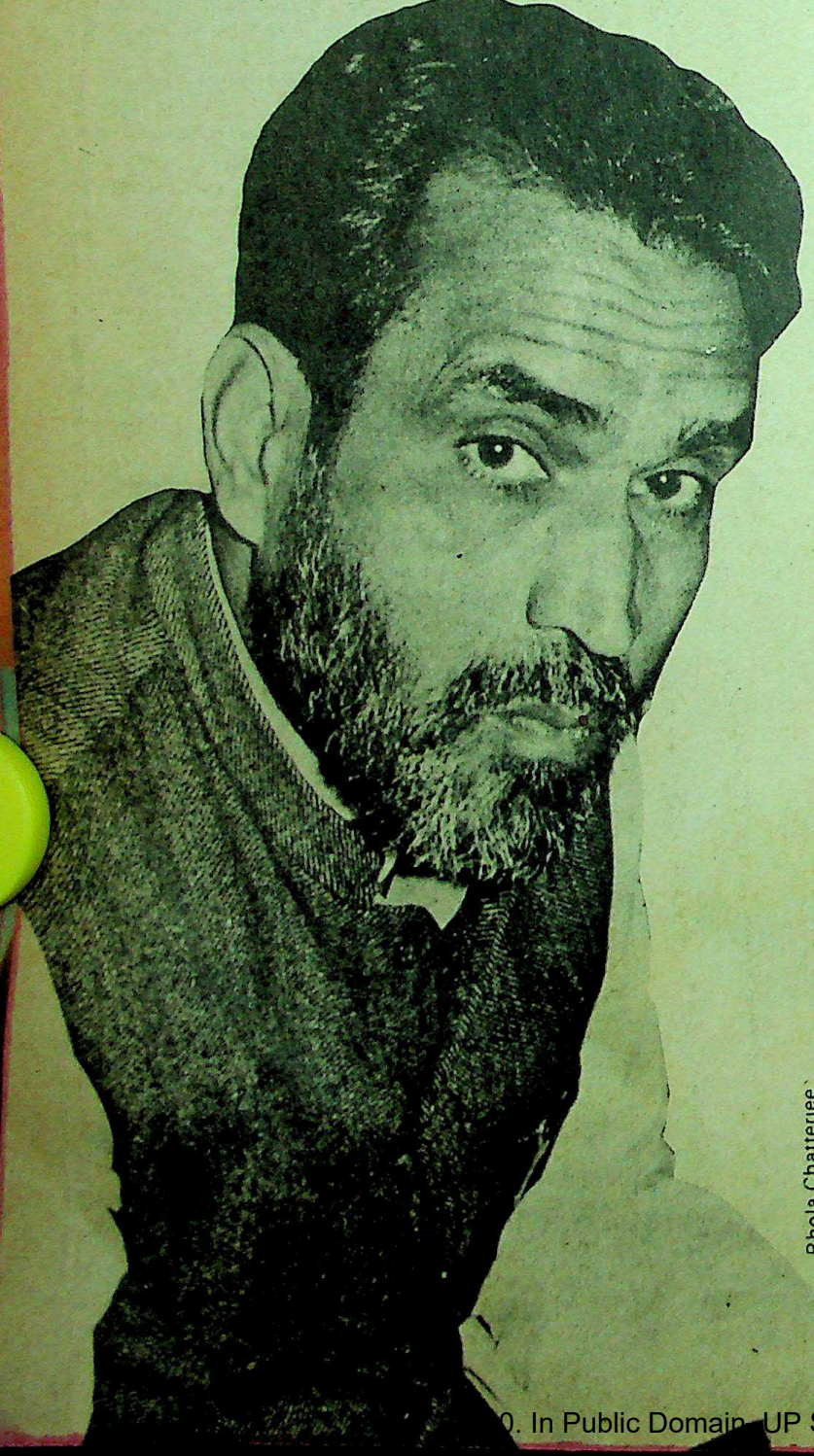
'I run the Janata, not RSS'

Janata Party chief CHANDRASHEKHAR tells BHOLA CHATTERJI

Q: *An impression seems to have gained currency that you have become soft on the RSS. There is a lot of controversy about the role of the RSS in politics; and it is said that at the time of the recent communal conflict in Aligarh you had kind of given the RSS a relatively clean bill of health. What do you have to say about that?*

A: It is true that an impression has been created all round that I am trying to be soft on the RSS. But the fact is, I am not dealing with the RSS ideology at the moment, I am dealing with a situation wherein I have been given the responsibility to run a political Party which was formed in January 1977. Or, if I may say so, which actually came into existence in May 1977. But it contested the elections after the Emergency in peculiar circumstances where many friends who belonged to the RSS also joined this Party. All of us were conscious of this fact. If you ask me about the ideological stand of the RSS, or for that reason of any organisation or any section of our society which wants to bring religion in any way in the economic and social affairs of mankind, I am against it. But my problem is that I cannot make it a point to single out individuals in order to help some political game. When the RSS joined the Janata Party, its character was the same. If I may say so, it has by force of circumstances been compelled to change a little. I do not say that it has changed basically, but in order to have a working alliance with other groups in the Janata Party it has tried to accommodate the sentiments, aspirations and the wishes of other sections of the Janata Party. Some of my friends say that it was the RSS which was trying to foment communal trouble in order to achieve its goal. The RSS as an organisation, even for its presumed narrow sectarian interests, would never like to have communal disturbances in the country. And at that time I made it quite clear to many of my friends, who doubted the motivation of the RSS, that in two or three States friends who earlier belonged to the RSS were running the administration and, comparatively, they had done much better on the question of communal tension in those States. So it would not have been proper for me as Party President to blame all the men who belonged to the RSS in the past.



Bhola Chatterjee

But I want to make it quite clear that this issue of communalism cannot be tackled by bringing certain individuals into the Government or elbowing some others out of it. It requires a complete overhaul of our policy orientation and we will have to understand the implications of religious fanaticism and how it works. I have been of the view, and I still hold the view, that the Marxist analysis in this regard is quite correct. Religion as an instrument of communion between man and God, whatever God may be, is a thing which can be well understood. Every individual, every citizen, should have the right to the freedom of establishing communion with the Almighty. But as soon as religion enters into the domain of social and economic affairs of man its implications could not be anything but dangerous. It applies to all the religions. It is true of the majority community's religion; it is also true of the minority communities' religions. If you draw the logical conclusion of this argument I do not think it would be very agreeable even to the minority communities. I do not know whether the numerically largest minority community would consider the desirability of having a fresh look at the Muslim personal law. This is my point of view regarding the RSS.

My difficulty is that I am neither running the RSS nor waging a crusade against the RSS; I am running the Janata Party. And you know, if we have a distinct goal to achieve we can do it through cohesive and enlightened functioning. And this can be done only by pursuing certain well-defined policies and programmes which would eliminate the role of religion in social and economic life of the people. Unfortunately, some men do not seem to be interested in pursuing the policies and programmes, but they want to hurl accusations against each other. I don't know how I can be a party to this. I well understand that if it offers a chance of gaining a certain popularity this attitude may cause some injury to my popularity. But one has to take, at times, unpleasant decisions if one

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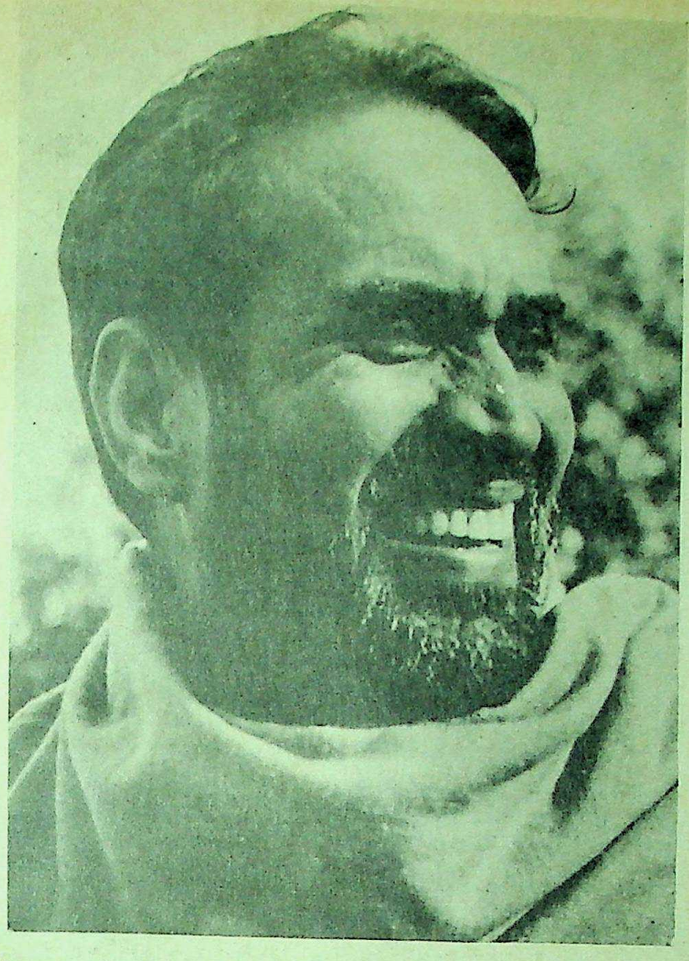

Vijendra Tyagi

has to discharge certain public responsibilities. If some people are satisfied by making such accusations I do not bother about it. As I understand it, communalism can be fought only by solving the problems of the minorities, by creating a society where the more privileged people are not allowed to enjoy the major share of the fruits of development. The problem is that one forgets the historical process that operated in the last three or four decades in this country. This is an elitist society where only a small segment of the people gets the benefits of the socio-economic development. This is true whether the reference is to the Hindus, Muslims or the Christians.

Unfortunately, in India the elite section of the Muslim community went to Pakistan at the time of partition and only the poorer sections remained. The elitist, be he a Hindu or a Muslim, gets the fruits of development in this country. But the major portion of the Muslim population which in the pre-partition days were exploited and downtrodden, are feeling the pangs of misery more, and one cannot ignore this fact. You know, whenever job opportunities occur in our society, they do not as a matter of course go to the men of merit. For these jobs, approaches are made, recommendations are made, and that not by ordinary people but by those who have a say in society today. Those Muslim friends who had a say in the pre-partition society were not here, as a result other Muslims suffered. It is the duty of all those who are running the administrative machinery to make special efforts to accommodate the minorities in various services and give them more opportunities for their economic development, so that they could also join the voyage of national reconstruction. That is the one thing which should be done. But, unfortunately, attempts are being made to tackle the problem by narrow sectarian political manoeuvrings to which I cannot be a party.

Q: India is a secular State, certainly. But then it is one thing to have a secular Constitution, and quite another to work it. People belonging to the various minority communities seem to have a feeling that the Constitution is something less than real in their everyday life. Take one instance out of many. The minorities constitute nearly 20 per cent of India's total population, but there is no proportional reflection of this in various spheres of national life. What do you say?

A: I have already said that this is the situation that obtains in the country. But it is not true only in the case of the religious minorities, it is true in regard to all oppressed and exploited sections of society. Let me first answer the question about the Constitution. It has not talked only about secularism; it has promised many amenities to the people. If you remember, the Constitution said that a decade after it became effective there would be no illiterate person in the counry, that no Indian child would be without education. It is no only the minorities or the oppressed classes but even the children of the higher castes and other sections have also been denied the right to education. Many good ideas were put in the Constitution but they still remain unrealised. This is very unfortunate. Take the case of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For them there was a definite reservation made in the Constitution. But in spite of the constitutional provisions and all the emphasis on them by the people in the Government—Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Sastri, Indira Gandhi, and now Morarji Desai— the situation is far from encouraging. Everyone of these leaders started by swearing to the commitments to the oppressed and exploited people—the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. But, inspite of the specifice Constitutional provisions for their employment in the services, their quota is not filled even today.

That explains the situation. It is not religious bigotry, but the economic and social disparity which comes in the way. I can well understand, and I very much respect, the sentiments of the minorities. But if this problem is sought to be explained in a manner which gives it the colour more of a communal issue than anything else, then I am afraid it will defy solution. This problem should be seen in its right perspective. The unfortunate thing is that even the religious minorities, who are the most exploited sections of society, instead of joining hands with the oppressed and the exploited people, want to segregate themselves. And this is the game that is being played by certain politicians. If a solution to the problem is to be found out, the attempt should be to make joint endeavours by all who stand for an egalitarian society, for the rightful claims of all the oppressed and exploited sections of society. Because of historical reasons the minorities might have suffered more and they have suffered more in certain areas. But I do not think this is mainly a religious question; perhaps it is partly so, religion has a minor role to play.

It should be recalled in this connexion that in certain sectors the minorities were the dominant factor in our economic life. Most of the artisans in our rural and urban areas were from the minority community. Whether the *jari* work of Varanasi, brassware of Moradabad or muslin in Dacca—these cottage or village industries were predominantly handled by the minority community. During

We will have to understand the implications of religious fanaticism and how it works .... The Marxist analysis in this regard is quite correct.

As soon as religion enters into the domain of social and economic affairs of man, its implications could not be anything but dangerous.

Communalism can be fought only by solving the problems of minorities, by creating a society where the more privileged people are not allowed to enjoy the major share of the fruits of development.

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The elitist, be he a Hindu or Muslim, gets the fruits of development in our country.

British rule, these industries were destroyed—the Britishers not only made us politically dependent, they also destroyed our infrastructure of development. After Independence we did very little to revive these industries. The result was that most of the minority community people who were engaged in these occupations gradually went out of employment. Even as late as in 1947 many of these industries were in operation, but because of our mad race for modernisation these industries were not given proper attention. It is now essential that these industries should be given proper attention not only to provide jobs to these people, not only to give them a respectable position in society where they could add to the wealth of the nation as well as earn their livelihood, but also to make the Indian economy more viable. If these problems are tackled on an economic basis, giving special emphasis to the minorities, then we might find a solution to them. Without creating any bitterness, we could thus give more opportunities to the minorities, particularly their oppressed sections, to contribute to the national growth and also to regain their social respectability.

Q: *Some of your colleagues in the Janata Party, particularly some of those with a Socialist past, seem to view the RSS issue as the most serious problem that confronts the country at the moment. What do you say to that?*

A: I have nothing to say about that. That is their understanding of the problem. The interesting thing is that some of them say that they are ready to join hands with the Congress in order to tackle the problem. I asked one of the leaders with a Congress past, who belongs to my Party, the Janata Party : how come that for a long thirty years when there was no RSS member in the Cabinet, whether at the Centre or in the States except in 1967 when some State Governments had a few Jana Sangh members as Ministers, that communalism did not die in the country? The problem has to be tackled on the basis of a clear-cut policy and programme. I do not think that the RSS or any other group in the Janata Party will be able to influence its collective thinking. If (anti-RSS) friends try to put forward some constructive programmes which could be implemented, they would be more able to combat these forces than by creating embarrassing situations for the Party as well as for themselves. From my point of view, this will not help them to go far; this is just a slogan which can at best be used against certain individuals in the Government or outside. This is not going to solve the problem of communalism, which is a more deep-rooted malady, a malady that can be traced to obscurantist ideas, traditional values, superstitious beliefs and, particularly, the economic problem. I feel some of my friends try to use this as a political slogan in order to create a problem in the Party. Perhaps they might be thinking that they are serving the Party and society by so doing. If the RSS is trying to influence the Party in an undesirable direction they should pinpoint that and I think it would then be possible to mobilise the whole Party, including many friends in the (former) Jana Sangh who would never be a party to obsurantist, outdated, obsolete ideas. Instead of doing that they are, unfortunately, just using a slogan which is not going to make any difference in the working of the Janata Party or in the present social situation.

Q: *How do you explain the conduct of some of your Party leaders who attended the recent RSS rally at the Ramlila Ground in New Delhi?*

A: If you want my personal views in the matter, I have made it quite clear that I would not like those who hold responsible position in the Government to go in half-shirts and 'knickers' with a lathi in hand to take part in such parades. It does not create a good impression. But there is nothing objectionable in that because if thousands of citizens could attend the rally they (the Party leaders) could also do so. I shall not ask any individual to put a social boycott on his friends because he happens to be in the Government. It is something that should be avoided in our politics. Unfortunately, those who become Ministers begin to claim that they are superior to others. This is a very dangerous tendency. For instance, today I am Janata Party President and you are my old friend. Suppose I begin to feel shy of sitting with you or going somewhere with you, how would you feel? Suppose some RSS people are there who happen to be associates or friends of the leaders; if somebody asks them not to associate or dine or attend any function with (their old RSS friends) it would be against human dignity. If a Minister attends the function of Balasahab Deoras, I shall not take objection to it. But if Balasaheb Deoras says something which is against the State policy or the Janata Party policy, on that count he will have to make himself clear. Those friends who are taking objection to these things had better point out where Balasaheb Deoras has made a statement that runs counter to the ideas or stand of the Janata Party. But, instead of doing that, if one advocates the nineteenth century idea of social boycott and all that, I do not agree with it. In a parliamentary democracy you would have to converse with all types of people and I do not think much exception could be taken to this.

Q: *What is your attitude towards the Muslim League, or the Jamaat in Uttar Pradesh, or certain other organisations which are openly communal?*

A: My attitude is the same towards all such organisations. They must be tested on the criteria which I have already indicated to you. You had better put this question to the people who are taking serious exception to the RSS and trying to collaborate with all these organisations. It is unfortunate that some people imagine that they can discourage majority communalism by encouraging minority communalism. It is not correct and it is creating a difficult situation in the country. They are not the friends of the minorities who want to foment unnecessary hysteria among the minorities and

Unfortunately some people imagine that they can discourage majority communalism by encouraging minority communalism.

unnecessarily provoke a section of the majority community to go on an undesirable path. Religious fanaticism, whether in the minority or in the majority community, is equally bad, and you should not discriminate against the one or in favour of the other. It is true that the majority community's religious bigotry may do more harm to society. But, in principle, in ideology and theory, both are equally harmful.

Q: *You would agree that the intra-Party conflict in the Janata Party is not a figment of anyone's imagination. Do you think that this might have an extra-territorial source of inspiration?*

A: If is very difficult for me to comment on this. But one fact should always be kept in mind—the Super Powers always try to intervene in the internal politics of the developing countries and India is no exception to it . It is known by all of us, and there is nothing new in it. For the last three decades this has been the case. One should always keep in mind that Super Powers may try to create a situation of instability in this country, because a stable India is always an eyesore to them. A non-aligned, independent, sovereign, stable and economically viable India is considered to be a competitor by the Super Powers. It is an unfortunate phenomenon, but it is a fact of history. There may be some forces that are trying to (destabilise the country) but I do not think that the Indian people are going to tolerate this type of interference. So, we should not give too much credence or too much importance to this talk of interference by the Super Powers. They might be desirous of interfering, they might be desirous of playing some role, but their role is not going to be the determining factor in the future of this country. I do not give much importance to this type of talk. If it is there it would be exposed and the people who might be trying to be instruments of Super Powers will not cut ■

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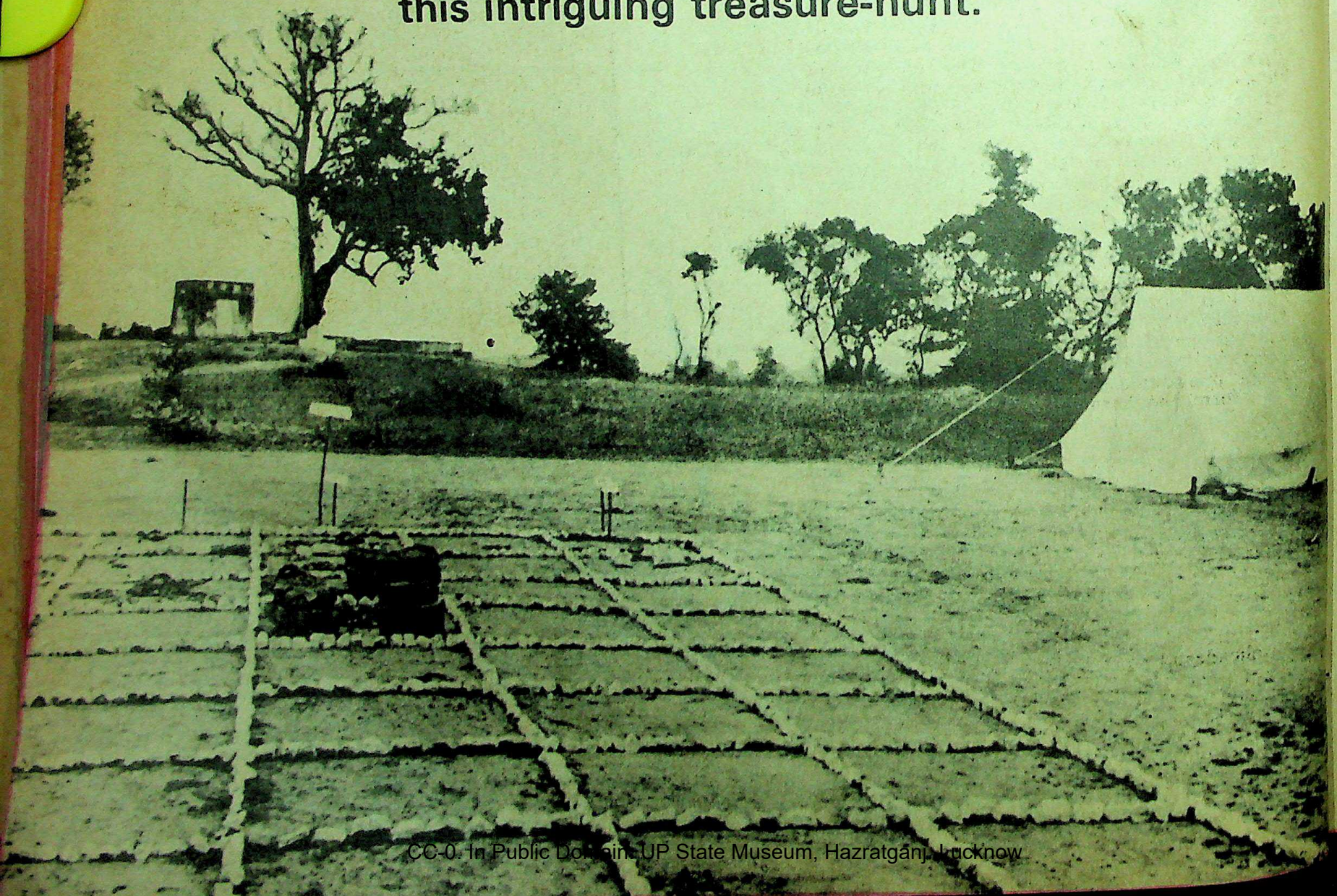
The Hidden Treasure of Oudh

An Income Tax raid on a Lucknow tailor's shop, a man's nagging superstitious and religious beliefs and some material gleaned from history books about the Sultanate of Oudh have led to a search for a fabulous treasure that may be buried somewhere in Lucknow or Faizabad. TANIA SHAH followed the trail of this intriguing treasure-hunt.



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A STONE's throw from the temples of Ayodhya, in a mysteriously built grave probably lies a fabulous treasure that once belonged to the Nawabs of Oudh. The grave is situated in an abandoned, overgrown graveyard whose graves go back hundreds of years. And the mystery of the grave in question is that it is built from East to West, whereas Muslim (and Hindu) graves are always built North to South.

On it is engraved a symbol which looks like a key, and on its western side something has been inscribed in Persian. Most of the letters have faded, except the word "madphoon", which means buried. The grave became suspect not only because of its being built in the wrong direction but because the word "madphoon" is the last word of a suspected treasure secret, engraved on a copper plate which was seized from a Lucknow tailor's shop by the UP Income Tax Department.

The treasure hunt, were it not for the involvement of the State Government, would be the stuff of which dreams and fairy tales are made. The copper plate claims that Nawab Shuja-ud-daula discovered a huge treasure buried by Hindu kings and protected by the ancient gods. After sacrifices and prayers, he acquired the treasure which was later buried by one of the Begums of Oudh, around 250 years ago, in a *shikargah* (hunting lodge).

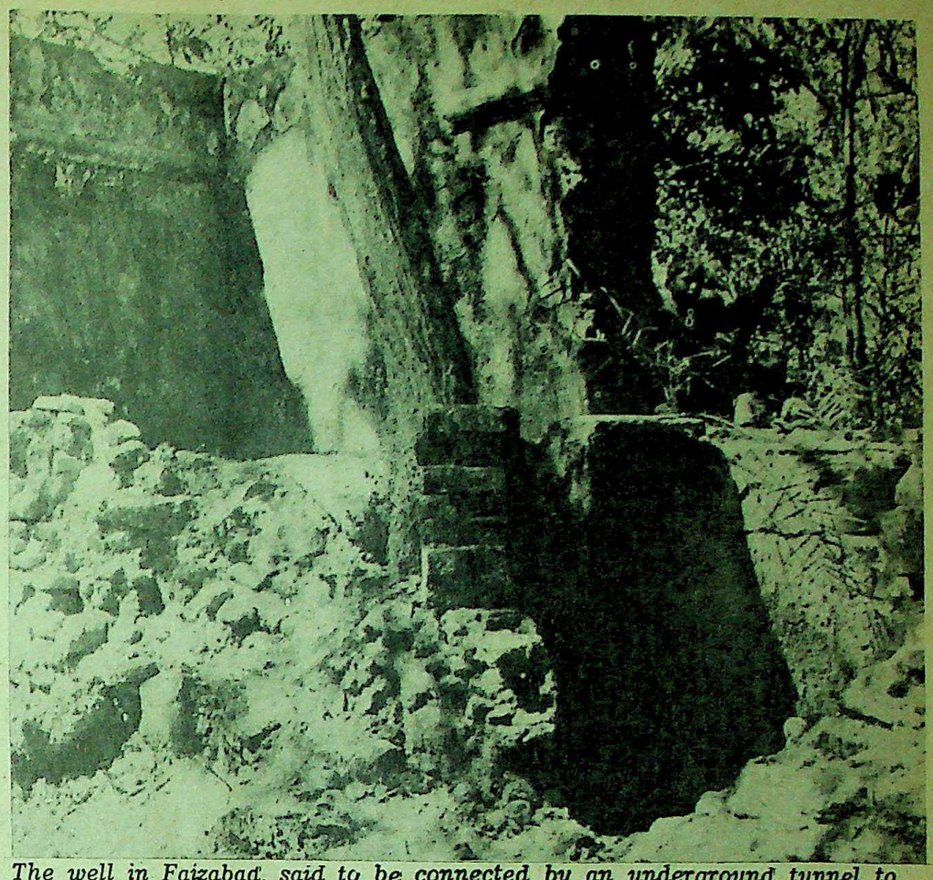
How the treasure hunters got to the East-West grave in Faizabad, is a story which begins with the Income Tax raid in 1976. Yunus Beg, whose family have owned a tailoring shop in Lucknow since the time of Queen Victoria, had an ancestor who was a soldier in Wajid Ali Shah's army. He, it is believed, acquired the copper plate in the chaos that followed the arrest of Wajid Ali Shah. He was later killed by the English and the copper plate, along with some other documents, remained with his family. For generations nobody bothered about it till Yunus came across it some years ago. He took it to someone who could understand Persian and was told that it was the secret to a buried treasure.

Naturally, word got around and some public-spirited citizen decided to inform the Income Tax department, who raided Yunus' shop and seized the plate. They then had it translated and discovered that it was in fact some kind of map but they did not start looking for the treasure and would perhaps never have done so were it not for the enthusiasm of the tailor. He started plaguing the Income Tax Department to find out what was going to be done, till the Income Tax Commissioner, Mr S. K. Lal, told him to go ahead and start looking for possible places where the treasure may be, and if anything were found, he would be entitled to 10 per cent of the treasure under the Treasure Troves Act.

Ten per cent of a treasure that would now probably be worth at least 80 crores, presuming that its value has gone up at least ten times, is incentive enough for anyone. So off Yunus went. His first difficulty was that when the Oudh Nawabs shifted their capital from Faizabad to Lucknow, during the time of Asaf-ud-daula, they renamed the city exactly as if they had moved the whole of Faizabad; so if you have a Khurd Mahal in Faizabad you have one in Lucknow and if you have a *shikargah*, you also have it at both places. In fact, a report made to the Income Tax Department by someone from the Archaeological Survey suggests that Lucknow is more likely to hold the treasure than Faizabad.

Yunus, however, did not find a likely place in Lucknow, so he went to Faizabad where, after walking for days through the streets, he came upon an area called Khurd Mahal. The reference in the plate is to a queen by that name, but there was also a palace, of which only a few walls and arches now remain. People have built houses within its ruined interior and one of the older residents of the area told Yunus (and me when I visited the spot) that some of the junior begums of the Oudh nawabs lived in Khurd Mahal. But they laughed at the mention of a treasure and said that had there been any, they would not be living like paupers.

Undeterred, Yunus persisted with his enquiries and was told of a local legend that a treasure was buried by a begum in a "purab-paschim kabar" (East-West grave) in a *shikargah*. Now he realized he was hot on the trail because the last line of the plate said "dar shikargah madphoon" (buried in a hunting lodge). He found the grave and the well and another legend that the two were connected by an underground tunnel. He informed the authorities, and the hunt began.



The well in Faizabad, said to be connected by an underground tunnel to the mysterious grave.

THE actual digging was started around the end of February. When I visited Faizabad in the middle of March, the treasure-hunters had still not decided whether to dig up the grave itself and were negotiating with the authorities to have the well drained to see if there was anything in it. The question now is whether the hunt should continue and whether they should risk offending local Muslim sentiment and break open the grave. Sceptics (who seemed to be winning) feel that the whole hunt is a wild goose chase and should stop before more money is wasted; romantics feel it cannot do any harm to continue and, of course, Yunus, the tailor, would be distraught if the whole search were called off.

In Lucknow, the first person I met was Mr R. C. Singh, the Director of Archaeology, who smiled sheepishly when I mentioned the Faizabad treasure hunt. "We are archaeologists," he said in an embarrassed voice, "we're not really supposed to be looking for treasure and archaeologically speaking, the site is of no interest. We are just following orders. The Government has given us Rs 10,000 and told us to dig, so we are doing just that. This whole business was started by that tailor, who seems to know some Minister or bigwig in Delhi".

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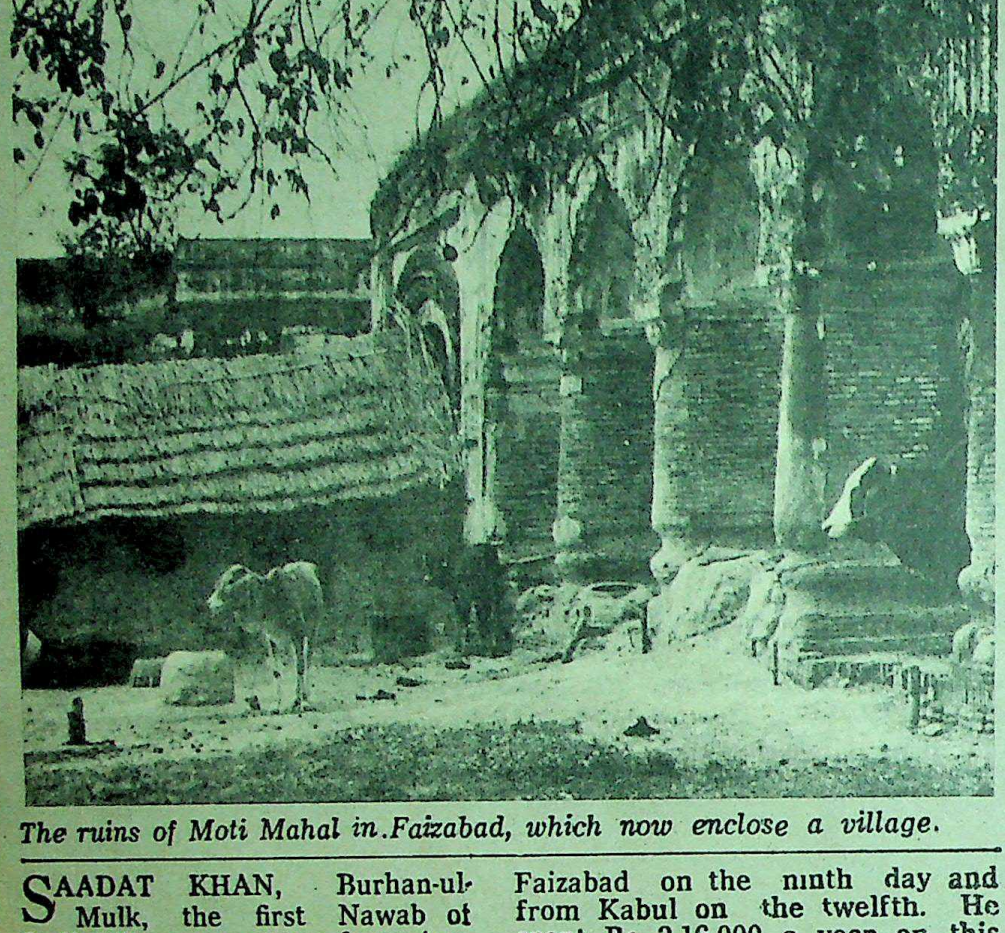
Faizabad's prosperous past



The ruins of Moti Mahal in Faizabad, which now enclose a village.

SAADAT KHAN, Burhan-ul-Mulk, the first Nawab of Oudh (the name comes from Ayodhya) resided mainly in Ayodhya where at Lachhman Ghat, a short distance from the town, he built the Quilla Mubarak as his official residence. Faizabad was not yet founded and he is said to have held court in a tent, pitched in the Keorah forest on the banks of the Ghaghra.

He also constructed a 'bangla' (shooting box) around which he raised a mud wall with a bastion on each corner as in a fort. This enclosure was large enough to house his cavalry, infantry and artillery. The houses he built were of mud, and after his death in the time of Safdarjung, this town came to be called Faizabad. Shuja-ud-daula succeeded him and made Faizabad his capital and started living there in 1765.

During the time of Shuja-ud-daula, Faizabad attained a prosperity which it never saw again. Merchants from Persia, China and Europe regularly visited the city which is said to have had several beautifully laid out gardens. W. C. Macpherson wrote in *Soldiering in India* that in 1733, his new fort and palace were still being constructed and that 40,000 men worked daily on the construction. The walls of the new fort were 60 feet thick.

Shuja-ud-daula had a very efficient intelligence department which employed 18,000 couriers so that news from Poona reached Faizabad on the ninth day and from Kabul on the twelfth. He spent Rs 2,16,000 a year on this service. Shuja-ud-daula died in Faizabad on January 26, 1775 and was succeeded by Asaf-ud-daula who moved his capital to Lucknow seven years after his accession.

Shuja-ud-daula left his mother Nawab Begum and his wife Bahu Begum a treasure estimated then at Rs 2 crores. In the time of Asaf-ud-daula the East India Company began interfering in the affiars of Oudh, and to meet their demands, he took Rs 30 lakhs from his mother and borrowed Rs 26 lakhs. The demands continued and when Asaf-ud-daula really could not afford to pay, Warren Hastings assisted him in forcibly taking the treasure from the Begums.

In the first week of January 1782, a British detachment marched to Faizabad and supported the Nawab's troops. The Begums' too eunuchs were forced to part with the treasure. Later, the spoliation of the Begums of Oudh formed one of the charges in the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

Of Bahu Begum, W. Hoey in his *Memories of Faizabad:* . "No one woman in all the 32 subahs of India can be held up in these days as her rival in either the grandeur of her surroundings or the respect she commands."

From Bahu Begum's death at 86 in 1815 till he annexation of Oudh, the city of Faizabad fell into decay. ■

MS Singh added that they had dug a two-metre trench near the grave and had hit natural soil, meaning there was nothing beyond. They had also dug another trench near a ruined stone terrace, close to the grave, and had found nothing there either. "We intend to examine the well and if we find nothing we will just call it off. In any case, we aren't going to continue beyond March 25."

According to him other such treasure hunts had always ended in failures. He mentioned one at Bhuragarh, near Banda and another one at the Charkhari Fort. He said, as if it were the bane of his existence, that there were some politicians who believed that treasure troves by the dozen could be found with a little digging, but as far as he was concerned, the whole thing was absurd. He had not even seen the copper plate, because, to all intents and purposes, they were looking for archaeological finds and not treasure.

YUNUS BEG's tailoring shop is in a dilapidated backlane in Ameenabad, the old city of Lucknow. It consists of one small, low-ceilinged room with drab, scarred walls and a couple of battered Singers. He was not there when I arrived. His brother, Irshad, said he had gone to a nearby mosque for his afternoon prayers and would be back in half an hour. I asked him if he knew anything about the treasure and he said he was not interested in these things and continued to carefully iron a pair of very flared trousers, sitting on a wooden plank on the floor.

People walked in and out of the shop looking for "masterji" who seemed to have become a celebrity of sorts. They were impressed that a journalist had come all the way from Delhi to see him and said that I was lucky to find him in Lucknow at all, since he now spent most of his time in Faizabad. "Poor old Yunus," said a doctor who had been in Yunus' house at the time of the Income Tax raid, "he has really been working hard to find this treasure. But I'm sure they'll find something in the end, or why should the Government have agreed to look?"

Yunus arrived nearly three hours later. He is a short, dark, nondescript man with a dishevelled and unshaven air. He gave me the impression that he spent most of his time praying or thinking about the treasure. He told me, in surprisingly educated Urdu, that he was illiterate but had acquired a history book, and had someone else read to him the history of the Nawabs of Oudh. He had discovered from the book that Shuja-ud-daula had made Faizabad his capital and that since the treasure was originally his, he had surmised that it would also be buried at Faizabad and this theory had led him to the East-West grave. He added that he had made nearly 40 trips to Faizabad since the copper plate was confiscated in 1976. The

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plate had been handed down to him from his ancestor Sanahullah Beg.

Yunus, a man of religious as well as superstitious faith, said he believed he would find the treasure because a "peer" (holy man) whom he had once visited had predicted that he would one day be a very rich man. When I mentioned that the archaeological people didn't think they were likely to find anything he gazed thoughtfully into space for a few minutes, slowly chewing his *paan*, and said: "Do you believe in spirits?" Slightly taken aback, I said I didn't. He gazed on thoughtfully, continued chewing his *paan*, and said: "We Muslims believe in spirits, and I don't think these spirits will let just anybody find the treasure ...You have to have the right hands, you have to be destined, just as it was destiny that took me to Faizabad and made me find the right place." He then mumbled something about a "baba" who had told him that the treasure lay more in the direction of Ayodhya, but then quickly changed the subject, saying he could not give everything away.

I asked him what he intended to do with the money if it did show up, and he said that he would start off by sending 50,000 widows on *haj* and would then spend some money helping destitutes...Beyond that he had not thought.

Yunus, with help from two lawyers whom he has hired purely in connection with the treasure hunt, seemed to be more than aware of what his rights as chief informant were. He seemed to think he was being fobbed off with a mere 10 per cent when he could rightly claim 33 per cent. He could not explain how he had worked that out but said his lawyers could.

The Assistant Director of the UP State Archives, Mr Rajendra Bahadur, was one of the first people to visit the East-West grave. He went with Yunus and a representative of the Income Tax Department in January 1977 and made a report on the basis of which the hunt began.

He told me: "When we arrived there, I noticed that there was a hole in the side of the grave, so I threw a brick in...the other two were too frightened. Yunus said he was scared of ghosts, and the other man was a believer in Sai Baba... Anyway this brick went straight down and made a hollow sound as it hit the bottom, which made me think there was something strange about the grave, and that it was probably not a grave at all."

According to Mr Bahadur, there must have once been treasure buried there but it was unlikely to be still in the grave. In his report he mentioned that it would be worthwhile starting a hunt on the basis of the clues provided in the copper plate and also because the place where the East-West grave was found did appear to have once been a hunting lodge. History also records that Saadat Khan, the first of the Oudh nawabs, built a *shikargah* near Ayodhya.

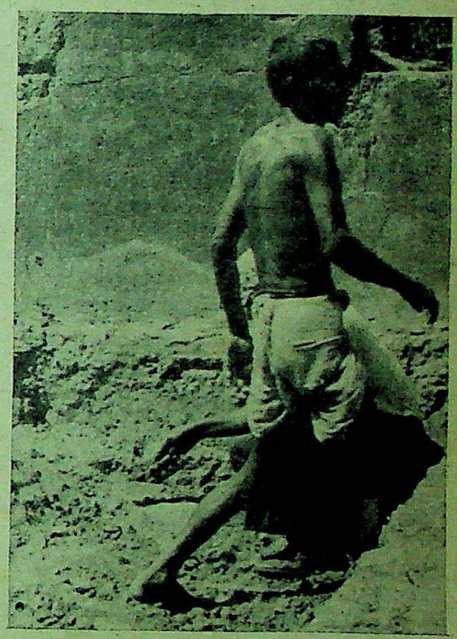
The unusual East-West grave, which is believed to hold the treasure. Its digging was held up for fear of offending Muslim susceptibilities.

The other significant historical backing for the treasure hunt was given by the Income Tax Commissioner, Mr S. K. Lal. He said he had found a historical reference to Khurd Mahal, one of the queens of Ghazi-ud-din Haider, who is supposed to have buried treasure somewhere and not revealed the secret, despite considerable pressure from her stepson Naseeruddin Haider, to anyone except a 'faithful general'. It is possible that in the chaos that followed the arrest of Wajid Ali Shah, the copper plate somehow got into the hands of Yunus' soldier-ancestor.

FAIZABAD is a two-and-a-half-hour train ride from Lucknow. I used the journey to read through the district gazetteer which mentions Saadat Khan's *shikargah* and yet another possibility of a begum having needed to bury treasure. It did not mention her having done so, but said that Shuja-ud-daula's wife Bahu Begum and his mother were left a treasure estimated at Rs 2 crores. His son Asaf-ud-daula was very much in the clutches of the British and Warren Hastings had demanded from him huge sums of money, which he did not have. Hastings then assisted him in going to Faizabad and extorting the money from his mother, Bahu Begum.

The District Information Officer met me at the station and seemed quite surprised that there should be so much sudden interest in the treasure hunt. He himself had never been to the site.

Faizabad is a nondescript, unattractive town that has been built on the ruins of what must have been a really beautiful city. In almost every street there are the remains of Shuja-ud-daula's capital—a graceful arch, a forgotten mosque or a crumbling palace. His own palace,



Digging in progress near Moti Mahal, Faizabad: will something turn up?

Moti Mahal, is now just a few walls and broken arches around a rice field and a small village. West of the former palace, towards Ayodhya, is the *shikargah* that has suddenly attracted so much attention. On the eastern side, separated by several narrow streets and bazaars, is the Khurd Mahal, which was Yunus' first major clue.

The graveyard, or former hunting lodge, is directly behind the Faizabad Industrial Training Institute. The East-West grave is next to a row of 11 stone graves, built in the conventional direction (North-South) and also about 250 years old. The East-West grave is twice the size of the others and on it is engraved a symbol which really does resemble a large, old-fashioned key, the lower point of

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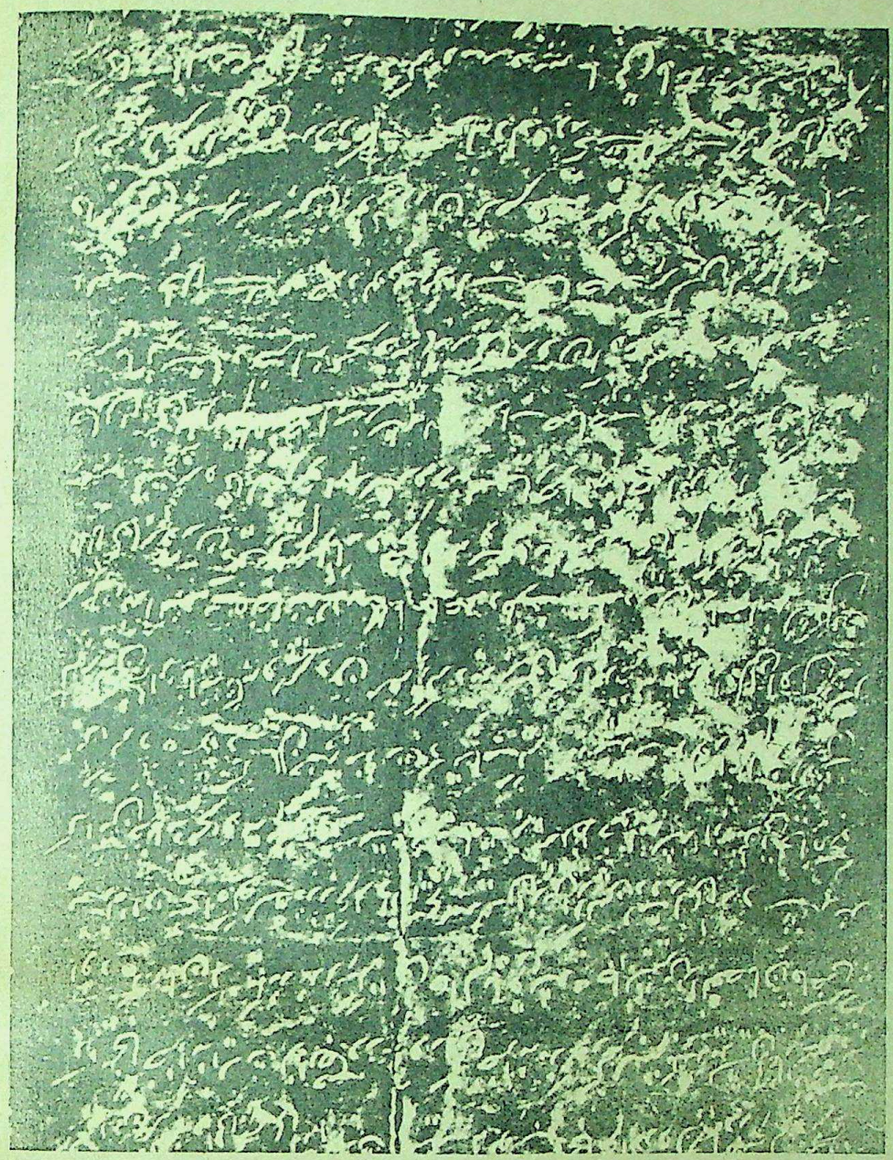
The copper plate



Above : The Persian inscription on the copper plate which was seized from Yunus Beg's shop. Below : The translation of the inscription.

This treasure belongs to the rulers of Kharigarh. When Nawab Shuja-ud-daula conquered this place it became known to him that there existed underground a fabulous and vast treasure. He became determined to have the above said treasure dug out but when his men that had come with him from Oudh tried digging it up, their young and precious lives would be snatched by Death. Fifty goats were sacrificed and his Ministers advised him to be careful since the treasure belonged to Hindus and was probably being guarded by powerful spirits.

A pandit was found and asked what could be done to possess the treasure. The Pandit said that it was in his knowledge that the treasure was being guarded by Narsingh and Bhairavi and that any man who wished to possess would first have to make sacrifices to the gods. He suggested that statues of gold be made and sacrificed to the river Bhagirathi. They should be five 'ser', five 'tolas' and three 'masha' in weight. After this the treasure would belong forever to the man who made the sacrifice. If he refused, however, he would have to face terrible difficulties and lots of people would be killed. The Nawab Sahib made the sacrifice and took the treasure out of the ground. It was worth 24 crore rupees and was in the form of solid gold.

After Nawab Shuja-ud-daula, his descendants used the treasure until finally in the time of Naseeruddin Haider there was about Rs. 8 crores worth remaining. Then Khurd Mahal took it from the King and buried it in a Shikargah.

which points East.

North of the grave, under a peepal tree, is the whitewashed grave of a Sufi saint called Jungi Shaheed, where Yunus prays, when he comes to the site, almost every other day. West of the grave is a field full of wild flowers around a ruined terrace, near which the second trench has been dug and beyond this, in a guava orchard, is an old well which, local people believe, is connected to the grave by an underground tunnel. Not far from the well are two stone structures of the same period, which locals call the baroodkhana or ammunition dump. Around the entire area is a broken wall, which could well have enclosed the hunting lodge.

Mr Rajaram Pal, Exploration and Excavation Officer, the man in charge of the digging, confirmed that the place could well have been a *shikargah*. He also said that in his opinion, the grave was not a real grave and it had been used to conceal treasure, but he felt the treasure had been removed. In the 1.40-metre trench beside the grave he showed me a semicircular mark, about three feet wide, which he said indicated that the grave had been tampered with about fifty years ago. He added that they were not yet sure whether they could dig up the grave without offending local Muslim sentiment, but felt that they would probably have to, if they were to settle the matter once and for all.

He also emphasised that this was supposed to be an archaeological digging operation and not a treasure hunt but that they had found nothing much of archaeological value except a few bricks and some broken pieces of pottery. The bricks are large and could have belonged to a Kushan period temple, around the 2nd century B.C. The pottery pieces could date back to between 400 and 1,000 B.C. but according to Mr Pal, the 19-acre site, acquired by the State Government, was unlikely to yield a cultural sequence that might be of value. Twenty five workers and four professionals have been working at the site since February 25.

The graveyard, despite Yunus' fears, has not so far turned up with any visible ghosts, but one of the trenches did yield a human skull. So digging had to stop.

Local authorities seemed quite excited about the treasure hunt. The city magistrate told me that it was his "personal not official" opinion that something would be found. They also intended to grant the treasure-hunters permission to drain the well in which, if nothing else, they would probably find some dacoit loot, since the area was used by dacoits as a hideout about thirty years ago.

On the day I was leaving Faizabad, one of the diggers claimed to have found two more East-West graves, similar to the one Yunus found, beyond the well and this put the future of the hunt into even more of a balance. The archaeologists wanted to stop: the treasure hunters wanted to continue. ■

Pictures by Tania Shah

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One man against an empire

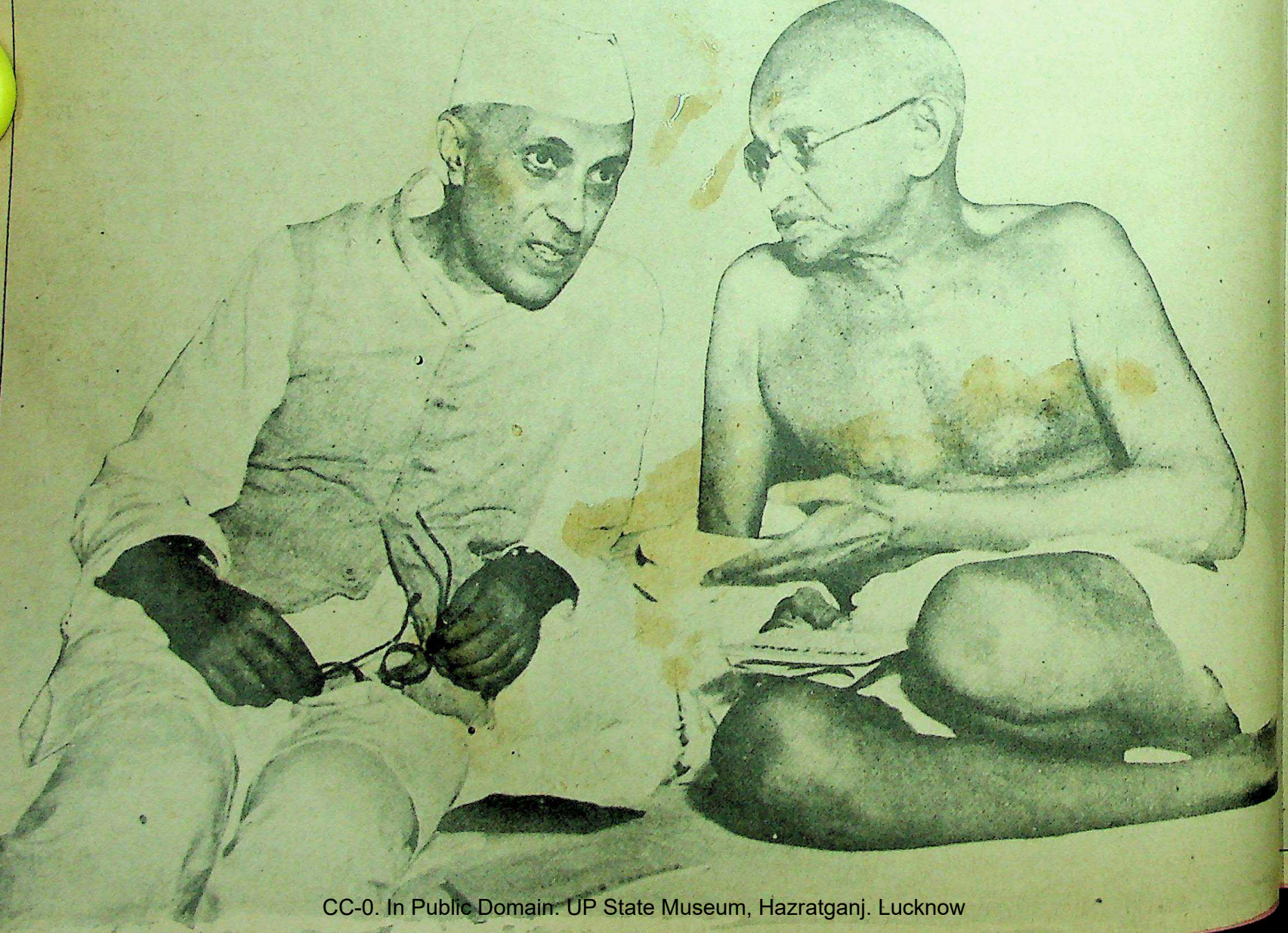
Exclusive extracts from "Farewell the Trumpets" the trilogy by JAMES MORRIS, which explains why the Raj ended. Narrated here is the story of Jallianwalla Bagh and the role that Gandhi played in expelling the Raj.

IN THE MEANTIME, while this frail new empire came fitfully into being, a terrible event occurred in the greatest of the old possessions, India, providing one of those markets in time, like the Indian Mutiny or the Boer War, by which imperial patterns can best be traced. It was the massacre at Amritsar, which was recognized even then as the worst of all stains upon the imperial record.

It happened in a public enclosure, something between a square, a rubbish dump and a garden, called the Jallianwalla Bagh, in the very heart of Amritsar. This was a venerable city of the Punjab, and it contained the holiest shrine of the Sikhs, the Golden Temple, where the splendid major-domos of the faith, sashed and staved, all day long marshalled the pilgrims towards their holy places beside the pool. The city was a brown maze of narrow streets, mud-paved, always crowded, with open-fronted bazaar shops, and toppling merchants' houses, and foetid lanes with open drains. It was a highly-strung and volatile place, like most such sacred sites, and in April 1919 it was in a state of uproar. A wave of nationalist protest had been sweeping India, yet another epilogue to the Great War, and in Amritsar there had been riots and demonstrations, culminating in the deaths of five Englishmen and an assault upon an English woman missionary, riding her bicycle innocently through the town.

Nobody doubted that the British would retaliate, but by now the city was too inflamed to count the risk; though public assemblies had been forbidden, on April 13 some hundreds of people deliberately and defiantly crowded into the Jallianwalla Bagh for a political meeting. It was an ominous scene. The Bagh, surrounded by high walls, was sunk below the level of the surrounding streets, and overlooked on all sides by towering houses, and this gave it rather the feeling of a prison exercise yard, or a place of execution. There were only three entrances: two gates at the southern end, and a narrow passage, hardly wide enough for two men to pass, at the north-west corner.

Near this passage a patriotic orator, clambering on to a pile of rubble, began to read to the crowd a passionate poem of liberty. With every word the tension rose. The



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people swayed, stirred, sighed, and sometimes shouted responses: and the heat was so great, the place so jammed, the emotion of the occasion so high, that one could almost feel the heart of the crowd thumping there, and hear its excited breathing. This was elemental India—"life chained to an imperfect mind", as the poet Rabindranath Tagore described it—uncouth but innocent, too big for itself, furious when excited, docile and endearing when calm. It was a crowd in short, like most Indian crowds, assembled there partly out of conviction, partly in the hope of profit, partly for something to do. It was a dangerous crowd.

Suddenly there was a rumble of heavy automobile engines outside the walls, and people near the entrance passage could see, gleaming in the street outside, the brown steel shape of an armoured car. In a moment the corridor was full of armed men, pushing their way fiercely into the garden, and on to the higher ground behind the speaker. One or two were English officers, some were Baluchis, some were Gurkha riflemen, taut purposeful little mercenaries like tamed wild beasts, with rifles in their hands and *kukris* at their belts. In a matter of moments they were briskly deployed along the top of the garden, and were kneeling with loaded rifles facing the crowd.

The speaker did not at first notice the commotion behind him, but some of the crowd at once made for the gates, or took cover behind a small stone shrine that stood half-way down the garden. When the orator looked over his shoulder, and saw the soldiers kneeling there, he shouted to the crowd not to be alarmed—they would never shoot—they only had blank cartridges. Hardly had he spoken than a command rang out, and the impassive Gurkhas, obedient as machines, began to shoot at point-blank range into the crowd. The panic was frightful. People fought each other to get to the gates. They scrabbled at high walls, they trampled one another down, they rushed this way and that, they tried to hide, to take shelter behind each other, to lie flat on the ground. The Gurkhas were unmoved. Loading in their own time, they aimed especially at the two exits at the bottom of the garden, until the gates were jammed with dead and wounded Indians, and nobody else could escape.

THE shooting went on for about six minutes. When the soldiers withdrew again down the alley, and the armoured cars returned to their barracks with a reverberation of gear changes among the city lanes, 379 people had been killed, and another 1,500 wounded. The Bagh was littered with corpses and wounded men, blood trickled through the dust, and

Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

when dusk fell upon the carnage, and the last survivors had left the square terrified and aghast, women and children crept around the garden searching for their menfolk—turning bodies over, inspecting shattered faces, or simply squatting helplessly among the horror. Later the jackals and pi-dogs arrived: and since a curfew was in force, by ten o'clock there was scarcely a sound in the Jallianwalla Bagh, but the rustling and gnawing of these animals, the moaning of the wounded, and the echoing voices of the British patrols outside, tramping with cocked rifles through the shuttered streets.

This was the tragedy of Amritsar, when Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, CB, felt it his duty to make an object lesson of the demonstrators in the Jallianwalla Bagh. He was obliged to resign his commission, but he had many supporters, for he believed he was forestalling another Indian Mutiny. His superior officers condoned his action: the guardians of the Golden Temple enrolled him into the Brotherhood of Sikhs; the House of Lords passed a motion in his support; the readers of the *Morning Post* subscribed a £25,000 testimonial; in his attitude as in his orders he was only reflecting an innate sense of inadequacy that would presently debilitate the British in India. Still, as Winston Churchill said, it was an episode "without precedent or parallel in the modern history of the British Empire... an extraordinary event, an event which stands in singular and sinister isolation".

This was true: at least since 1858, the British had seldom behaved murderously towards their subjects, except in battle. But then the situation in India in the years after the Great War was itself without precedent or parallel. The truth was dawning on the British rulers of the sub-continent that their dominion, still absolute after so many generations, was foreseeably coming to an end. India was not like any other British possession, not a casual acquisition, or a hazily conceived name in a statistical chart, or a colony settled in by cousins, or even a fashionably recommended investment. India was part of the British truth, the other half of a mirror, "the stern step-mother of our race".

India had long since filtered back to Britain, too. Maharajahs were common figures of London society. Indian cricketers and polo players were popular performers. There had been Indian Members of Parliament, Indian university professors, even an Indian peer—Lord Sinha of Raipur, Privy Councillor and Freeman of the City of London. Monuments of the Indian connection were scattered across Britain, from war memorials to the country houses of *nabobs*, from village wells donated by benevolent Maharajahs to the cemetery, high on the Sussex hills, of the Indian soldiers who had died at their hospital in Brighton during the Great War. India was more than Empire. In an illogical way it was, to the British and to many Indians too, a part of England, a distant part that only a minority knew, but so interwoven with English destinies that the association seemed indivisible.

There was profit in it, even now. India was one of the most valuable fields of British investment—in 1914 some £800 million of capital was invested there. Rubber, coffee, indigo, tea, coal, jute, railways — all these Indian industries were very profitable to British financiers: jute mills in the 1920s were said to be making an annual profit of 90 per cent. India provided a sizable army for the imperial defence (paid for out of Indian revenues), not to speak of the prestige and authority which accrued from the mastery of this vast possession in the east, and generations of Englishmen had benefited directly from the Indian link.

BUT the relationship went much deeper. Most men entering the Indian services now had some family connection with the country, and families like the Rivett-Carnacs, the Maynes, the Ogilvies, the Birdwoods, the Lawrences or the Cottons felt themselves to be almost of dual nationality, so old were their links with India. The Anglo-Indians had long since idealized their purposes in the east, and evolved folk-myths of their own. They looked at the affairs of the sub-continent with a vision peculiar to themselves, part paternal, part loving, part contemptuous. They were selective in their affections. The simpler and more martial the Indian the better, and

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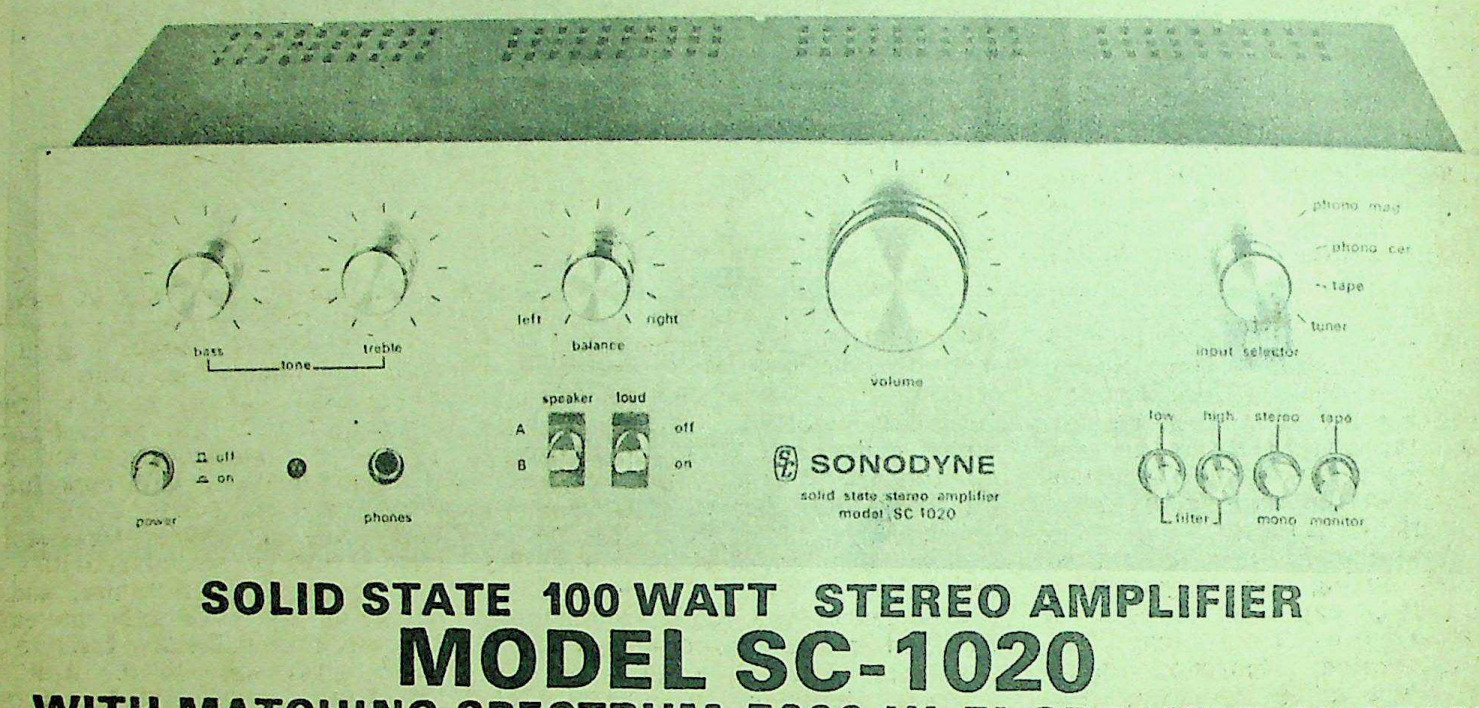

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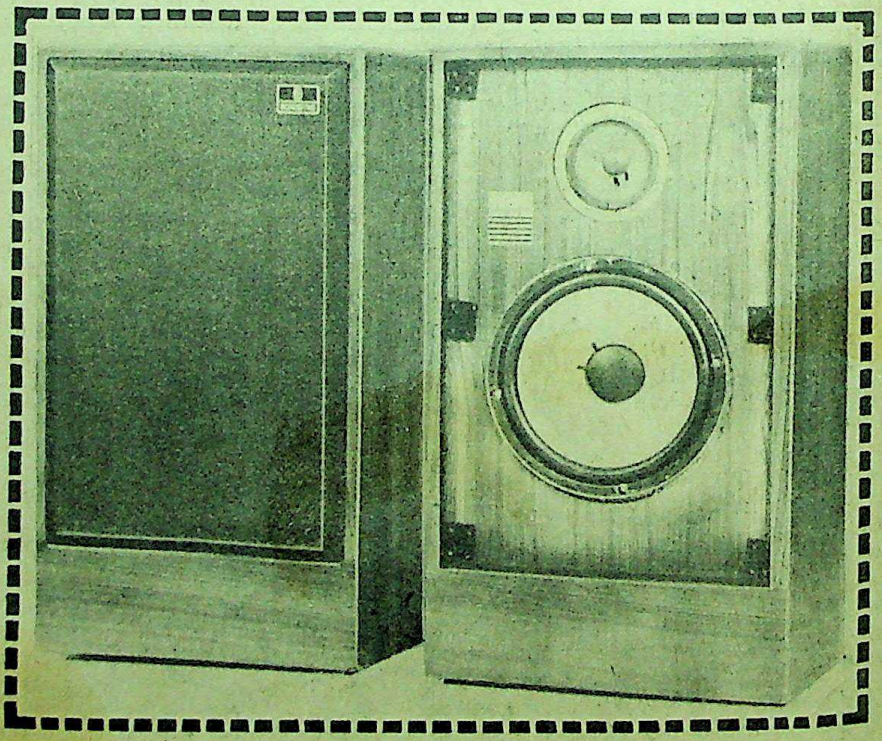

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the more rural the countryside. Many of them went through life in a profound condition of love-hate, detesting the filth, disease and corruption of India as a whole, passionately devoted to their own chosen aspects of it. Nobody pleased an Anglo-Indian more than an upright Rajasthani soldier of the old school : nobody repelled him more absolutely than some young law graduate of Bengal, with his progressive ideas and his never quite perfect English. In fact the British were still strangers in the land, for their knowledge of Indian culture was seldom profound, even after generations in the country, and they saw the great sub-continent only through their own experiences. The Indian totality was as baffling to them as to anyone else—"I felt", wrote one more than usually frank British District Officer, describing his relationship with his subjects, "like a man wandering about with a dim lantern in the dark."

Field Marshall Wavell greets Lord Mountbatten on his arrival in India.

By the 1920s the ancient association was changing. The British were losing interest in their Empire, and there was a falling-off of recruitment for the Indian services. The Indians were restive and disillusioned, and joined the nationalist movement in their hundreds of thousands. A million Indians had served the British during the Great War, and everybody expected concessions of independence in return. The moderates wanted Dominion status, like the white settler colonies, the extremists wanted to be quit of the Empire altogether. They were angry and disappointed when all the British conceded was the system called dyarchy, which certainly gave Indians a far greater share in government, but was a long way from liberty. The British genuinely thought dyarchy a great step forward — "the war had compelled England", wrote Lionel Curtis of it, "to recognize that the principles for which she was fighting... must be extended to Asia and Africa." The Indians thought it a miserable reward for their loyalty, or alternatively an inadequate concession to their demands.

So a sense of impending change came over India, in the years after the Great War, not unlike the rumours and superstitions that had swept through the country before the Indian Mutiny. "The people are restless", reported a percipient Deputy Commissioner to his superiors in 1918, "and discontented and ripe for the revolution" : and in that very year the revolution had begun. The Rowlatt Acts, giving the British Government almost unlimited powers against Indian subversives, were its spark. Mahatma Gandhi was its prophet.

We last saw Gandhi toiling down the slopes of Spion Kop as a humble and loyal stretcher-bearer, but since then he had become a celebrity. The son of a palace official in the minuscule Gujarati princedom of Porbandar, on the shore of the Arabian Sea, he had been trained as a lawyer in London, and had briefly Anglicized himself, dressing in high white collar and dark suit, cultivating the art of small talk, even learning the violin, before gravitating to South Africa as legal adviser to an Indian firm in Durban. There he had taken to politics, by way of the grievances of the Indian community, and had become well known as a champion of Indian rights and self-respect. Returning to India in 1914, he plunged at once into the furious world of nationalism, arguing first for Indian Home Rule, later for complete independence, and reverted to his Indian origins. Now he dressed altogether Indian style, professed a frugal vegetarianism, and year by year prepared himself for the vatic role he was to play in the struggle for Indian liberty.

Nobody then, nobody later, knew quite what to make of Gandhi — Mahatma Gandhi, Gandhi the Pure Soul, Gandhi of the round disarming spectacles and the toothless smile. He shared with T.E. Lawrence the quality of enigma, so that he seemed to one man a saint, to another a hypocrite, and sometimes seemed to exchange the roles from one day to the next. A very small man, 5 foot 4 inches, and slight to the point of emaciation, he had vivid black eyes, spoke very pure English with a vestigial South African accent, and enthralled nearly everyone with his suggestion of almost unearthly wisdom. "The unknown looked out at us through his eyes", said the most wordly of his disciples, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Lloyd George reported that when Gandhi visited him at his home in Surrey, an unknown black cat bounded through the window to settle on Gandhi's lap—it left when the Mahatma left, and was never seen again.

Gandhi was sweet-natured, but sly. He was astute, calculating and self-conscious in others. Like Lawrence again, he well understood the value of publicity. Like many another Indian guru, he veiled his shrewdness in platitudes and truisms, and sometimes cheapened it with opportunism. There was something sterile about him. Not only did he foreswear, in middle life, all sexual activities, but he had no eye for nature, and his equipoise was essentially uncreative. His repeated political fasts to the death never were to the death, as the British wryly noted, and there was to him an irritating element of crankiness and faddism, not to mention sanctimony—"I cannot free myself from that subtlest of temptations", he once wrote in all solemnity, "the desire to serve." "The saint has left our shores", General Smuts wrote when Gandhi left South Africa for the last time, "I sincerely hope for ever" : yet Smuts fell beneath his charm too, for even at his most contumacious Gandhi remained a being of consummate serenity and appeal—"like a good night's sleep", is how one contemporary described the effect of his presence.

THOUGH Gandhi came to command a universal audience, he was specifically a man of his time, place and opportunity. His time was the first half of the twentieth century, the century of disillusionment; his place was an India still primitive and illiterate, but given new cohesion by modern communications and political ideas; his opportunity was the waning confidence of a generally kindly, certainly not sadistic Empire. "We all feel", Lord Minto the Viceroy had written in 1907, "that we are mere sojourners in the land, that we are only camping, and on the march". Gandhi's time had come.

He was an Anglophile. "Hardly ever have I known anybody", he wrote of himself in his youth, "to cherish such loyalty as I did to the British Constitution...I vied with Englishmen in loyalty to the throne."

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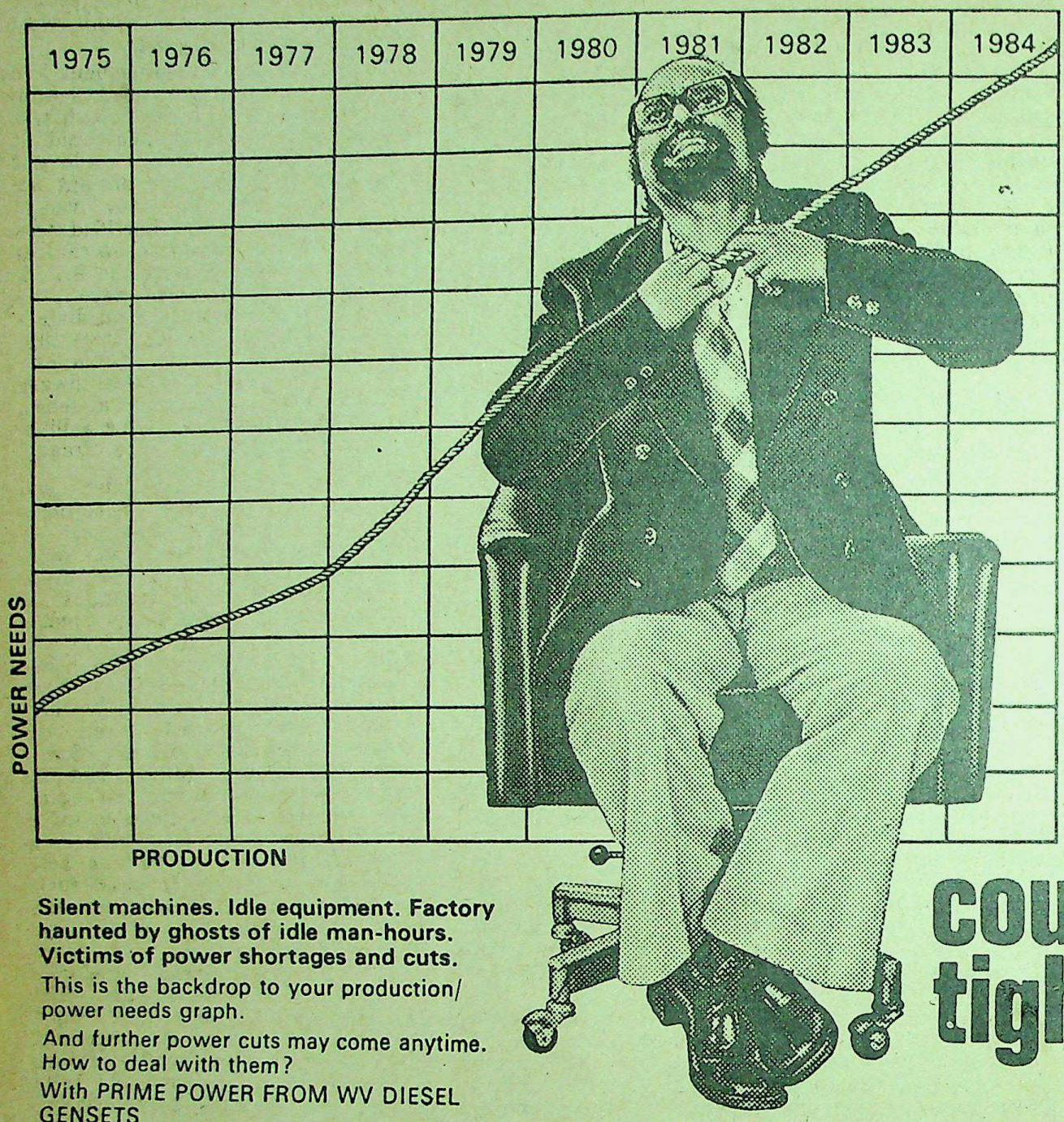

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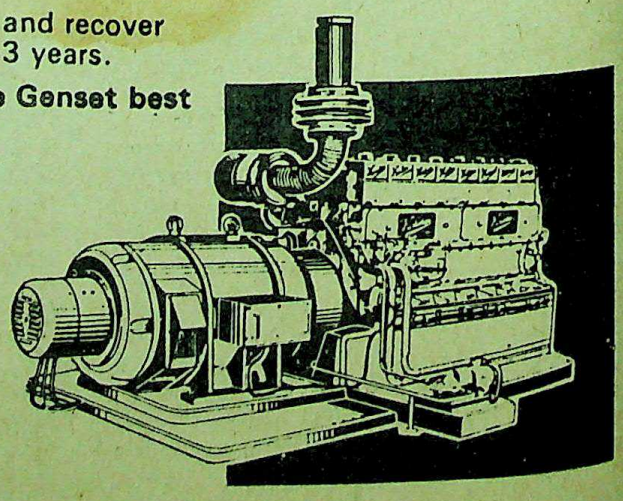

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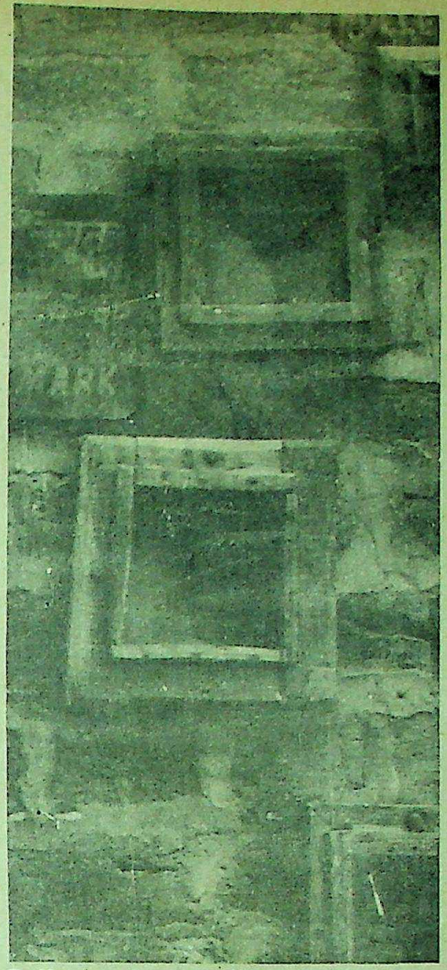
He was decorated for his courage in the Boer War, and for years continued to declare his devotion, if not to the British Empire, at least to the British: "The Emperorship must go, but I should love to be an equal partner with Britain, sharing her joys and sorrows." In many ways indeed his ideas were those, orientally tempered, of an English gentleman, and he often Anglicized Indian philosophical techniques. One of his favourite poems was Kipling's *If*, one of his favourite hymns was Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light*. Even politically, he was often attuned to the public school spirit. "True democracy", he once wrote, "is not inconsistent with a few persons representing the spirit, the hope and the aspirations of those whom they claim to represent"—Lord Milner's views exactly.

Over the years his ideas of national independence became fused with thoughts about human dignity, raising the struggle for Indian emancipation to a level beyond the vision of the Easter Rising heroes, or the groping patriots of Nyasaland. For Gandhi Indian nationhood was only an aspect of human fulfilment, applicable to all, and it was lucky for him that the British in India were, by and large, tolerant and sympathetic rulers, so that he was able to work out his moralities on a political stage, without being shot on the spot.

Gandhi's revolutionary formula was a conglomeration of foibles, dogmas and contradictions—political ambition, social theory, religious precept, racial pride, personal intuition. He rationalized it all into a single metaphysic, and called it *satyagraha*—truth-force. If imperialism was essentially a glorification of force, *satyagraha* was just the opposite—it postulated, Gandhi said, "the conquest of an adversary by suffering in one's own person". It was indiscriminate in application. By its means Gandhi pulled together all the separate threads of Indian discontent, social, economic, political, historical, and wove them into a radical movement of incalculable power. *Satyagraha* was the means: the end was *swaraj*, independence, which was as much a personal as a national condition. India could not be herself while aliens ruled her, and Indians could not be altogether themselves.

To the Indian masses Gandhi became semi-divine. They believed him capable of miraculous feats, flying or vanishing, and at the peak of his powers his hold over their emotions was absolute. Women of all ranks became passionate nationalists; an army of children, the Monkey Army, became the couriers and scavengers of the movement, like the Fianna Boys in Ireland. The people did not understand him, though, and he did not always understand them. He was repeatedly warned, by friends as by enemies, that *satyagraha*, hazily grasped by a vast illiterate populace, would inevitably lead to violence; nevertheless, when the Rowlatt Acts were announced, he launched a nation-wide protest against them.



Bullet marks of Jallianwala Bagh

The result was savagery all over India. Everywhere the mob came out in Gandhi's name, breaking windows in Calcutta, destroying offices in Bombay, molesting the missionary in Amritsar.

The British seriously thought they might have a second Mutiny on their hands, and responded with massive troop movements, arrests, curfews and prohibitions. "I have made a Himalayan miscalculation", Gandhi said, surveying the bloodshed and misery that swept across the country: and in Amritsar General Dyer gave the order to fire.

Gandhi recognized that force as such could not expel the Raj. British firepower was still overwhelming in India, and there were many more Dyers ready to obey their inherited instincts of command. Other revolutionary methods were needed. Most Indian rebels appealed to the past—Gandhi looked to the future. "He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths", wrote Nehru. Until Gandhi, Nehru said, fear was dominant in India—fear of the army, of the police, of prison, of unemployment, of starvation, of usury, of landlords and agents. Fear kept things as they were, and allowed the British to retain control. Gandhi changed all that. He deliberately made use of India's disadvantages, her poverty and backwardness, to reinforce his own methods, and so very soon became master of the Indian political scene. The Indian National Congress closed its ranks behind him, and the constitutionalists who wished to progress more sedately towards more limited goals were left impotent and discredited.

Though his own misjudgement had caused it, Amritsar convinced Gandhi that compromise with the British was now impossible—sinful, he said at the time. General Dyer could not have guessed it, but his prompt action in the Bagh that day was a signal of retreat. So horrified was the world by the massacre, so shaken and even remorseful were the British themselves, so infuriated were the Indians, that *swaraj* immediately assumed a new force, and from that movement until the end of the Empire, the true initiative was always with the Indians. In a moral sense, thanks to the sacrifice in the Jallianwalla Bagh, they were free already.

IT was to prove a muddled and ambiguous progress. Sometimes the impetus seemed to wane, and the British thought the worst was over. Sometimes Gandhi withdrew from politics, devoting his energies to more eccentric causes—his movement for the spinning of cloth, for instance, which, with its preposterous cameos of plump financiers and bony politicians sitting ungainly at their spinning-wheels, struck even the devoted Nehru as ludicrous. Sometimes non-violence failed, and the Indian masses burst into riot again. They were convulsive times in India, not because anything solid was achieved, but perhaps because both sides were beginning to sense their own strengths and weaknesses—the Indians riding the tide of history, but weakened by their own feuds and rivalries, the British gradually relinquishing the will to rule. The balance was changing, and if people did not always realize it consciously, unknowingly they responded, British and Indians alike. Once in the 1920s Gandhi was arrested, to be charged with subversion, and the puzzled, almost pained sensitivity of the presiding magistrate, Robert Broomfield, exactly reflects the bewilderment of the time. The case was heard in the Circuit House at Ahmedabad, in Gandhi's own province of Gujarat. This was not a court-room, but a house used by visiting judges and officials, and was chosen because it stood on the outskirts of the city, away from the mob and close to the British cantonment. The court was simply a room, and though European policemen guarded the door, and a clutch of British officials sat in the front seats, and Sir Thomas Strangman the Advocate-General had come especially from Bombay to conduct the prosecution, still the atmosphere was informal. There was no dock or witness-box. Most of the spectators wore the white homespun of the patriotic movement, and when Gandhi entered the room, wearing only a loin-cloth himself, they stood to their feet in his honour.

To be continued

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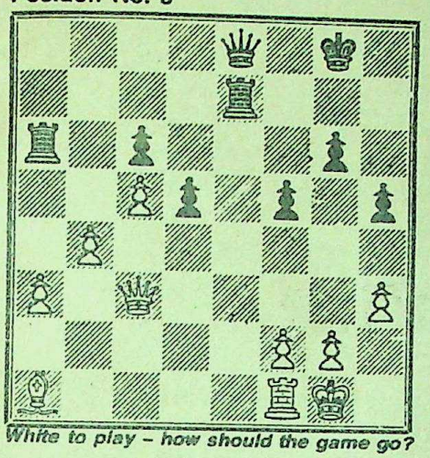
chess

Position No. 3



White to play – how should the game go?

Continuation of Position No. 1

This was a position that occurred in a game, Schulman-Sandler, played at Baldonnaix last year: r5k1; 5ppp; 3R1P2; 2Q5; 1pP1p3; 1q6; 5P1P; 6K1.

White won by **1.** Q—QR5, R—KB1; **2.** Q—KN5, resigns, since mate is inevitable after 2. . , P—N3; 3. Q—R6.

The pendulum motion of the Queen is a neat blending of two basic themes: (1) mate on the back rank and (2) mate with Q and pawn on N7.

Chapter of errors

When we win what we think is a good game of chess, we cherish the fond illusion that it is comparatively free from errors, at least as far as we are concerned. In actual practice the occasions on which such games are flawless are as rare as the phoenix.

I used to believe that the great masters, at any rate, played games that were faultless; but after watching the world championship match this year between Karpov and Korchnoi in the Philippines I came to the conclusion that they were just as fallible as the rest of us. Neither grandmaster nor international master seem to be able to escape from this blight of blunders. As for ordinary national masters, consider the following bright game that was played in an international tournament at Leipzig this year. Both the players concerned are classed as national masters, the winner from East Germany and the loser from Cuba.

White, T. Casper. Black, L. Bueno.
Sicilian Defence.

1. P—K4, P—QB4; **2.** N—QB3, N—QB3; **3.** P—KN3, P—KN3; **4.** B—N2, B—N2; **5.** P—Q3, P—Q3; **6.** N—R3, P—K4; **7.** P—B4, KN—K2; **8.** O—O, O—O; wrongly allowing the enemy BP to advance; correct was 8. . , P x P.

9. P—B5, P—B3; a disagreeable necessity; White gets an overwhelming attack after
9. . , P x P; 10. P x P, B x P; 11. R x B, N x R; 12.B—K4.

10. P—KN4. This obvious move is nevertheless not the best move which was simply 10. P x P.

10. . . , P—KN4. Nor, as will be seen, is this the best. Correct was 10. . , N—Q5; to which White intended replying 11. N—K2.

11. N x P, P x N; **12.** B x P, P—KR3; **13.** B—K3, N—Q5; **14.** P—KR4, P—Q4; realising that passive defence will not do against the threatened pawn advance Black decides to counter-attack. But his attack is practically still-born.

15. Q—Q2, N(Q5) x KBP. A rather better chance was 15. . , N x QBP; 16. Q x N, P—Q5; 17. P—N5, P x P; 18. P x P, P x B; 19. P—B6, B—K3; when, however, White still has an advantage after 20. P x B.

16. KP x N, Q—Q3; **17.** P—B6! the start of a fine final combination.

17. . , R x P; **18.** R x R. B x R; **19.** Q—B2, P—Q5; if 19. . , P—N3; 20. R—KB1.

20. N—K4, P x B; **21.** Q—B3, Q—K3; **22.** N x B ch, K—R1; **23.** R—KB1, P—K5; **24.** Q x P(K3), N—N1; **25.** P x P, Q—K4; **26.** N x N, K x N; **27.** Q x RP, B x P; **28.** R—B6, B—R4; **29.** R—B5, Q—Q5 ch; **30.** K—R2, resigns.

HARRY GOLOMBEK

bridge

IN **Problem 1** of the Christmas Competition North-South were vulnerable and the bidding was:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♠	No	2 ♣	2 ♦
2 ♥	No	2NT	3 ♦
?			

South held: ♠ A Q 7 4 2
♥ K Q 10 6 5
♦ 4
♣ K 3

If you were marking a bidding competition, how many points out of 5 would you award to (a) Pass, (b) Double, (c) 3♥, (d) 3NT?

You are not minimum, and to pass is a bit feeble. Partner may not have a sound double and the most likely result is that you will defend against Three Diamonds, one or two down.

You can probably beat Three Diamonds, but East has heard the bidding and you cannot expect a big penalty; however, it is better to double than to pass.

Three Hearts would not be a mistake exactly, but partner will take it as competitive and may well have nothing more to say.

The King of partner's suit is a significant card, and I think you should try for the vulnerable game. If East had passed, you would have bid 3NT without hesitation.

The unlisted bid of Four Hearts, proposed by some competitors, is poor: partner might be quite weak in both majors.

My marking is: 3NT – 5; Double – 3; Three Hearts – 2; Pass – 2.

In **Problem 2** the score was game all and the bidding went:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	No	1 ♠	No
2 ♦	No	2 ♥	No
?			

South held: ♠ 4
♥ A Q 7 4 2
♦ K 9 7 4 3
♣ A Q

How many points out of 5 would you award to (a) Pass, (b) 2NT, (c) 3D, (d) 3H?

You must recognise here that partner has responded at the One level and given simple preference: he may be quite weak, with little in the red suits. The doubleton A Q in the unbid suit is not particularly good for no-trumps, and any advance would be unwise.

My marking: Pass – 5; 2NT – 2; Three Hearts – 1; Three Diamonds (more encouraging than the others) – 0.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

Because the postal services in the Ottoman Empire before the First World War were so slow and inefficient, several European Powers opened their own post offices, usually attached to consulates, where tourists and traders could post their mail. France had nearly 40 such offices, including four in Egypt. Those in Cairo and Suez operated only for a brief period in the mid-nineteenth century but the Alexandria and Port Said offices, opened in 1830 and 1867 respectively, did not close until 1931. At first they used ordinary French stamps but they were later provided with special stamps in designs similar to those of contemporary French definitives. This 2-centimes Alexandria stamp is one of a long series issued in 1902.

C.W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. Who won the 1977 Nobel Prize for Literature ?
2. What would a group of bears be called ?
3. What is the meaning of "absit omen"?
4. What was Mjollnir in Norse mythology ?
5. Which English queen was known as "Bloody Mary"?
6. What is the origin of the name of the state of Pennsylvania in the USA ?
7. What is Op Art ?
8. Who directed the film "One flew over the cuckoo's nest"?
9. What is P. G. Wodehouse's full name ?
10. On which day did the ship Titanic sink ?

ANSWERS

1. Vicente Aleixandre, a Spanish surrealist poet.
2. Sleuth of bears.
3. It means "Hope this is no bad luck".
4. It is the magic hammer of Thor.
5. She was Mary I who ruled from 1553-1558.
6. It means "Penn's Woodland" and named in honour of Admiral Sir William Penn.
7. It is the 1960s art movement known as Optical Painting.
8. Milos Forman.
9. Pelham Grenville Wodehouse.
10. On April 15, 1912.

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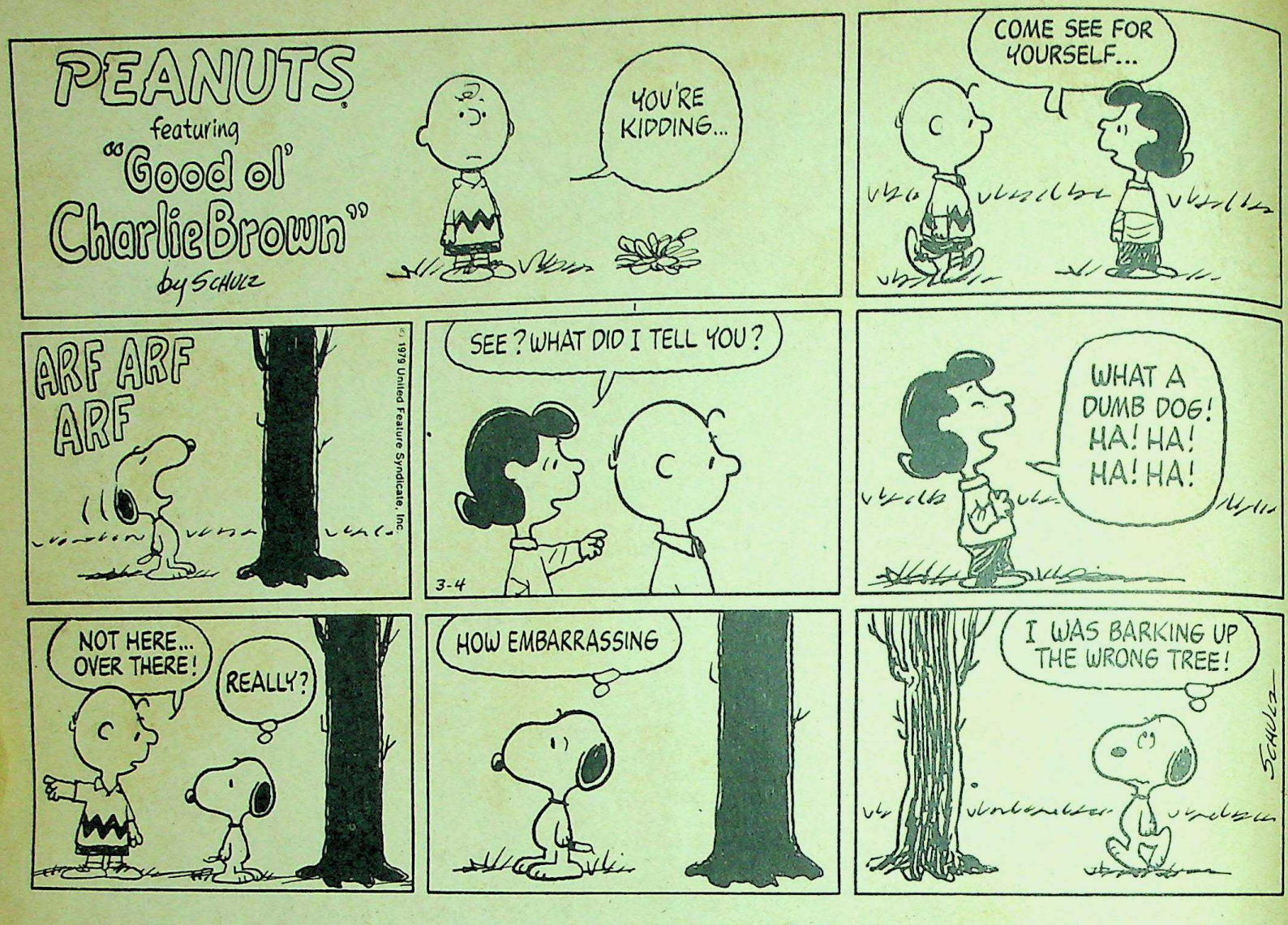

X-raying the mummy

This 2,000-year-old Ancient Egyptian mummy of the last Century BC of the Egyptian priest Anch-Hapi was X-rayed at the municipal hospital in Hildesheim, near Hanover, Federal Republic of Germany. Dr Arne Eggebrecht (r), curator of the town's Romer-Pelizaus Museum, ordered the layer-by-layer X-ray to learn more about the priest's age and cause of death. Radiologists and archaeologists are convinced Anch-Hapi was the father of Nesmin, whose mummy is on exhibit in Liverpool, England, and further discovries are awaited.

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Beginning April 15

This week the Sun is in Aries, Jupiter alone is in Cancer, Saturn and Rahu are in Leo, Uranus is in Libra and Neptune is in Scorpio. Venus and Kethu are in Aquarius and Mars and Mercury are in Pisces. The Moon will be moving through Sagittarius and Capricorn from Scorpio.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Be careful in the first part of the week since there are chances of loss through trickery and deception in business deals. Your initiative in your job will win the respect of your employers. Although, this week will be financially gainful, do not lend, borrow or stand guarantor. Avoid doubtful love adventures. A lot of social activity in the weekend is in the offing. Some of you will gain a renewed interest in the arts and the occult. **Good dates:** 18, 19 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Your affairs make great headway in the early part of the week. Later, an elderly female relative will cause anxiety as regards health. However, there is nothing to worry about. This week, on the whole, promises to be a happy and successful one in which you will gain popularity and fortune. Stellar influences bring unforgettable events of a happy nature into your life. **Good dates:** 15, 17, 20 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable direction:** West.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Do not be despondent if you have domestic worries. However, the present condition will not continue for long. Happier and better financial conditions are forecast. Be tactful in your dealings with elders and those in authority. Act on your own intuitions since these will pay in the long run. Be careful while signing legal documents. Intellectual expansion is in the offing. **Good dates:** 16, 17, 19 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) This week there is danger of great financial losses. So, avoid all types of speculation. The period is not favourable for dealings in property matters. Do not fritter away your financial gains on unimportant things. Intellectual activities are forecast. An elderly female relative will help you. **Good dates:** 19, 20 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) You are suffering from fits of depression. Try your best to overcome them, be relaxed and try to be in cheerful company. Be careful in your correspondence with friends and business partners. Take the advice of elders and those in authority. Attend to your vocation. Take care of your own health and that of elder family members. **Good dates:** 17, 19 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 9 and 11. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Utilise the favourable stellar portents now in progress. There will be some annoyance because of difference of opinion with those in authority. Secret matters progress well. The weekend will be noticeable for social activities. Do not squander money on doubtful love adventures, unnecessary luxuries and worthless friends. Take the advice of elders. **Good dates:** 15, 16, 18 and 19. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) This is an auspicious week. Business ventures will be successful. You will gain through strangers and travel. Guard against quarrels and accidents, and curb impetuosity. Avoid straining yourself. A short journey is indicated and gains will be enjoyed. Your health will be good. Avoid gambling of all kinds. **Good dates:** 15, 16, 20 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 6. **Favourable direction:** North and East.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) This week promises to be good as regards domestic and business matters. Do not be carried away by your emotions. Avoid extravagance. Romance is in the offing but beware of deception. Take care of your own health and that of elderly women in the family. Promotions are in the offing in the latter part of the week. Act on the advice of elders. **Good dates:** 17, 19 and 20. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Care should be exercised in business; some amount of financial success is in the offing. You will be praised by your friends and relatives. New friendships as well as revival of old associations are forecast. A love affair and possible marriage is presaged. Avoid physical strain. **Good dates:** 16, 18 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) This is going to be an important and exciting week for you. Unexpected good fortune is forecast. Despite some annoyance, beneficial changes are in the offing. Elders retard progress and may cause concern. Marriage and courtship are in the offing. Take care of your own health as well as that of elderly relatives. **Good dates:** 15, 16, 17 and 20. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 10. **Favourable direction:** West.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) You will enjoy success and happiness this week. However, take care of your health; eat regularly. Peruse all correspondence. An unexpected journey will be followed by financial benefits. Do not make hasty changes as regards your profession. Secret matters of the heart progress well. A marriage in the family is forecast. **Good dates:** 16, 17 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 8. **Favourable direction:** West.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) You will realise your ambitions. Happiness and financial success is forecast this week. However, watch expenditure. Intellectual and business expansion is in the offing. Go ahead with your plans. Domestic matters progress well. Young people and children help you. A short journey is in the offing. **Good dates:** 15, 16, 17 and 19. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.

M. B. RAMAN

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VARIETY

this india

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

MARCH 1979 will open a new chapter for India's defence forces with three service chiefs drawn from three religions. General Malhotra, Air Marshal Latif and Admiral Pereira are the Indian military's Amar, Akbar, Antony in that same order —*Imprint* (Jagdish C. Madan, New Delhi)

BANGALORE: A *jukta* (horse cart) ouraced a BTS bus in an 'unofficial race' conducted by the District Citizens' Association. The *jutka* which left the Malleswaram Bus Terminus along with a bus operating on Route no. 14, reached the destination, Banasnankari, 23 minutes before the bus. The *jutka* which took a straight route stopped at three traffic signal points while the bus which plied along its regular circuitous route stopped at five traffic signal points. Besides the bus skipped 10 of its 37 scheduled stops and made five 'unauthorised stops'—*Deccan Herald* (Arasu, Bangalore)

AMRITSAR : The greed for more dowry landed the mother-in-law, husband and two sisters-in-law of a young woman in the police lock-up after they had allegedly tried to burn her to death. Fortunately the young woman's life was saved. Twenty-year-old Rita told the police in the emergency ward of the local hospital that her two sisters-in-law, Kanchan and Sushma, had dragged her by the hair into the courtyard of her house where her mother-in-law drenched her with kerosene. Her husband then set her alight... Rita was married to Om Parkash two and a half years ago. During the first six months after marriage, she was sent thrice to her parents' house to get money. She returned with cheques for Rs. 6,000, Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 3,000, respectively. After that her in-laws turned her out... The murder attempt followed her refusal (to fetch more money from her father)—*Hindustan Times* (Swarup K. Das, Ranchi)

NEW DELHI: A man in Pune went to buy meat worth Rs. 2. The butcher asked him if he had a bus ticket. The puzzled man asked the butcher why he was inquiring about the bus ticket. The butcher said that the prices have gone up so high that you can wrap up meat worth Rs. 2 in a bus ticket. So it was wrapped in the bus ticket. By the time the man reached home, the meat had fallen through the punch hole a conductor makes in tickets. Thus the man returned empty handed. The Rajya Sabha heard this story from a Congress (I) member during the discussion on the general Budget in support of his contention that prices had shot up—*The Indian Nation* (Sushil Sinha, Hazaribagh)

NEW DELHI : Mr E. R. Krishnan, AIADMK member of the Rajya Sabha became the unlucky 13: he got a reply in Punjabi to his question in Tamil. Chairman B. D. Jatti called the names of 12 members to raise questions, but all of them were absent. The 13th member, Mr Krishnan, was called to ask him questions... When he asked the question in Tamil, Mr Jatti requested him to speak in English. Mr Krishnan replied to him in Tamil, which Mr Jatti said he could understand, but not Agriculture Minister S. S. Barnala. However, amid peals of laughter, Mr Barnala replied to Mr Krishnan's questions in Punjabi — *The Mail* (H. Abdul Haleem, Madras)

india abroad

LONDON : A former adviser to the Shah of Iran, the Indian-born millionaire, Sir Shapoor Reporter, is negotiating with the Foreign Office in a bid to get a visa for the Shah to settle in Britain. The whereabouts of Sir Shapoor who is one of the 16 former advisers to the Shah wanted by the new Teheran regime, had not been known since the fall of the Imperial Government .... Sir Shapoor has been in constant touch with the Foreign Office where Britain's former Ambassador to Teheran, Sir Anthony Parsons, was now deputy to the permanent Under-Secretary—*Statesman*

WASHINGTON : A 44-year-old Indian-born woman pleaded guilty to charges of trying to bribe a US Agriculture Department official to help her obtain credit guarantees to finance rice exports to Nigeria. Thankam Mathews, a Washington commodity broker, pleaded guilty in a US District Court to charges that between December 1 and December 6, 1978, she made "repeated offers of $ 5,000 to $ 10,000 per month for a year to Mr Lawrence T. McElvain, an official of the Department's office of General Sales Manager", the Department said. "In return for the money Mr McElvain was to assist Mathews in obtaining US Government credit guarantees worth more than $ 50 million towards financing rice export sales to Nigeria." Thankam Mathews will be sentenced on April 25. The charges carry a minimum penalty of two years' imprisonment and a fine of $ 10,000—*Hindu*

without comment

IF I were the President (of Pakistan), I would have respected the recommendation of the Supreme Court . .. I would have granted mercy—Z. A. Bhutto on the rejection of the death sentence by the Supreme Court

IF I accepted it (the demand for resignation) I would be guilty of a greater and more grievous blunder—Prime Minister Morarji Desai on the Opposition's demand for his resignation because of his wrong announcement in Parliament on JP

IT is politics—Janata Party President Chandrashekhar commenting on the anti-RSS campaign by some Janata members

THOSE who signed the Janata Party pledge and also talk of Hindu rashtra are dishonest people—Janata MP Madhu Limaye

IF Janata follows correct politics, even some of the Congress (I) may extend their cooperation to us—Janata President Chandrashekhar

WE support Leninism, and Leninism is incomplete without Stalinism—CPI (M) leader Pramode Dasgupta

TODAY there is a sullen anger, a despair in our party. We do not know what to do—a prominent Congress (I) leader

humour in real life

AT A small tea party to celebrate the engagement of a senior and aged clerk of our office, the manager was heard remarking: "At last, a wandering soul will now rest in peace"—Sunil Narayan, Bareilly

SIGN seen at the back of a big way truck—"Use deeper at night" —Johar Sahdia, Sibsagar

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

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a word or two

BEFORE entering into a competition or combat, you should plan ahead. And when all your moves have been successfully demolished by a powerful adversary you can save the day for yourself by using something which you *have up your sleeve*. It might be some evidence, argument, trick or stratagem that you might keep in readiness to surprise your opponent with.

This might be one of the few expressions which has come down to us from the world of fashion. It can be traced back to the clothes worn in the fifteenth century in Britain. In those days a gentleman's garment had no pockets at all, unlike his modern counterparts. A man usually wore a belt and essential things like a sword and a pouch were hung from it. It was indeed the genius of a dress-designer of yesteryear which discovered that if the sleeves could be made fuller between the elbow and wrist then they could also serve as a receptacle to keep away those thingummies of

a gentleman's day-to-day use. This fashion of pillow-case like sleeves acquired grotesque proportions in later days, thanks to fashion-conscious young men and even women (although they did not keep anything up their sleeves apart from the occasional handkerchief), when the sleeves sometimes scraped the ground. From after the ascent of Henry VIII sleeves slowly lost out to trousers with mundane pockets, whatever you had up your sleeves was purely figurative.

WORDSPINNER

Illustrations/Ahi Bhusan Malik

stranger, as we were telling you, than fiction

FEW people have stopped to wonder how the lustrous pearls of a necklace, or the familiar pearl buttons, could grow beneath the waters of an ocean or a muddy river bottom. The 'factories' in which these gems are made are the bodies of three altogether different types of mollusc. The mantles of these three types, just like every other mollusc, secrete a fluid substance that hardens to form the animal's shell as well as provide a smooth lining for the inside of the shell. In a few species however, the fluid is pearly and lustrous in quality, and it is this lustrous secretion—called nacre—that forms the raw material for jewel pearls.

The history of the pearl is a long one. It is mentioned in the literatures of ancient India and China. The Egyptians were perhaps the first people to adorn themselves with the rare and valuable jewel pearl. They believed that a god had discovered pearls off the coast of India about 4000 years ago. Egyptian women are known to have worn pearls from about 1500 B.C.

An unblemished pearl is one of the most ancient symbols of perfection. Pearls were so highly esteemed in classical Rome that only persons of a specified rank were permitted to wear them. Pliny the Elder writes of pearls as "the richest merchandise of all, and the most sovereign commodity in the whole world". Trade in pearls was conducted by a special corporation whose members were known as "margaritarii."

History tells us that the pearls for which Britain was supposedly famous spurred Caesar to cross the Channel and conquer Britain. He returned with a highly coveted breastplate adorned with pearls, which he dedicated to the Roman Temple of Victory. However, Britain remained especially proud of her pearls. Much later, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, in an attempt to impress a visiting Spanish ambassador, Sir Thomas Gresham, the wealthy merchant, drank a toast in wine to the Queen in which he had dissolved a famous pearl worth £ 15,000.

Pearls are noted for their size, beauty and historical associations. They, are ranked among the famous jewels of the world. La Reinedes Perles, a 27.3 carat oriental pearl, was among the crown jewels of France. It was stolen in 1792, while La Regente, an oval pearl weighing 34 carats, was once owned by the French imperial court. The most perfect pearl is known to be the Pellegrina, in Moscow's Zosima Museum. It is 28 carat, globular in shape and is of unusual beauty.

For centuries men were constantly lured into great danger in a never-ending quest for this highly coveted and extremely valuable jewel. And all the while they searched in vain trying to unravel the elusive secret of how certain shells produce valuable pearls while others do not. Many legends thus grew up about the origin of pearls. One curious notion

was that pearls were formed by raindrops falling into the gaping valves of the pearl shell.

Legends finally lost their force when Professor Louis Boutan of France made the discovery that pearls formed when a bit of foreign matter became lodged within the shell of a mollusc. If the animal was unable to dislodge the irritant, it would for greater comfort, coat it with the same gland secretion with which it lined its shell. These become the smooth, round, non-irritating object we know as a pearl.

When Columbus landed on the American coast in 1492, he discovered naked Red Indians wearing strings of beautiful pearls. He traded miscellaneous trinkets for them, and started the New World's first pearl rush. Then came the Spaniards who did not bother to trade for them. De Soto's men simply robbed the natives of their pearls.

The Red Indians soon learned to keep the source of their pearls a secret from the white men. By the time the English arrived, they could not find a single Indian who had ever heard of a pearl. The mystery kept deepening. Not until 1857 did an English shoemaker, David Howell, find a valuable pearl in a New Jersey river mussel. This started the pearl rush in the United States. The origins of one comparatively recent strike sounds like a movie version about the California gold rush days. In 1956, two clam diggers found a bed of mussels in the Tennessee river. Prying one of them open, they discovered a perfectly formed pearl. A heated argument erupted among the partners as to who would claim it. Both went for their guns, shot at each other at the same time and both fell dead.

The thick pearl-like layers of the river clam were found to be good material for buttons, buckles, and many kinds of ornaments. In 1893, J. F. Boepple, a former button manufacturer in Austria, migrated to Muscatine, Iowa (USA). He went wading in the Mississippi river and accidentally cut his foot on a clam. Upon examining the clam he discovered that the shell was perfect material for buttons. A new US button making industry was born. The business steadily grew until Muscatine became the pearl button capital of the world.

RAJIB NARAYAN SANYAL

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The plight of undertrials

The chaos in India's judicial system is evident from the fact that there are anything between 96,000 and 1.7 million people languishing in our prisons, waiting for trials, most of them in connection with petty offences. KAPILA HINGORANI, who is a Supreme Court lawyer and ardent fighter for human rights, is presently engaged in a spirited campaign for the speedy execution of undertrials' cases. RAKA SINHA and SHIV S. NAYAR ask her who is to blame, and what can be done to solve the problem.

Q: What prompted you to take up the cases of undertrial prisoners?

A: I was moved by K. M. Rustomji's (member of the National Police Commission) articles on the pathetic plight of undertrials in various jails. It's incredible that something like this can happen in our country.

Q: If justice delayed is justice denied, don't you think a large number of undertrials (estimated at between 96,000 and 1.7 million) are denied justice because of Government apathy and the Judiciary's indifference?

A: I agree. If a person is not tried for a long time it is very likely that evidence against him as well as in his favour is not going to be cogent or just. If the undertrial is in jail, the situation is worse as he cannot even prepare his defence. In many cases he is poor and can't afford a lawyer. There is an urgent need to give such people legal aid on an organised, national basis. The legal aid should be administered through the Bar and provided by the Government. While the State will have a public prosecutor why should the poor be deprived of a lawyer, whom they need most? Or else they will be fighting an unequal battle. This is a violation of equality. To a large extent the fault is of the judicial system and its administration. Many times the remands are ordered mechanically, perhaps due to pressure of work in courts, or just indifference. It's really a tragedy of routine. All of us get so bogged down in the routine and lose our sensitivity.

Q: Under criminal law no undertrial can be kept in prison for more than 60 days. Doesn't this imply that the Judiciary is turning a blind eye to illegal detention and abuse of power by the police?

A: Normally, no one can be kept in jail for the purpose of investigation for more than 60 days, and 90 days for a major offence. It's surprising that in spite of this provision, many of the undertrials had not been released on bail for so long. When you speak of illegal detention it refers to women in jail who are kept under protective custody. This is illegal detention. There are children in jail, I understand. A child under seven years cannot be charged with any offence. A child under 12, unless of mature mind, cannot commit any offence. Their detention is illegal and it is difficult to comprehend why these cases are overlooked.

Q: An accused who can afford a lawyer can get away on anticipatory bail while a poor man caught for petty thieving cannot think of being let off even on a personal bond. Doesn't this indicate that the judicial system, even after 30 years of Independence, favours the rich?

A: Bail provisions as administered today work to the disadvantage of the poor. The rich buy their freedom while the poor cannot. The Supreme Court has now directed the release of undertrials on personal bonds. The consideration for granting bail should not merely be based on sureties. Various other factors like, for instance, the accused's family ties should be taken notice of. The purpose of taking a bond, after all, is to see that the accused appears at the trial.

Q: There is a suggestion to appoint young lawyers as Honorary Magistrates who can dispose of quickly cases pending before courts. What do you think about this?

A: I'm against honorary magistrates and lay people sitting as judges. Young, competent and qualified people should be attracted to the judiciary by improving service conditions. The pay and service conditions of magistrates and session judges are not at all adequate and good. It is most unfortunate that he Government is not paying attention to this problem. For the expeditious disposal of cases, there could be separate courts for very minor, major and very serious offences. Simple and summary procedures can be easily prescribed for very minor offences. Arrests need not be made for many of the offences.

Q: How can the undertrials be helped?

A: Many undertrials rotting in prisons are too poor to have a lawyer. They should be provided lawyers at state expense. The urgent need is to get the prisoners released on bail. The right to a speedy trial is a Fundamental Right, and so should be the right to counsel.

Q: What is your suggestion for improving the judicial system?

A: Besides improving the service conditions of judicial officers to attract more competent people; more courts should be established. There have to be changes in law and procedure. But most important of all is the approach to administration of justice. ■

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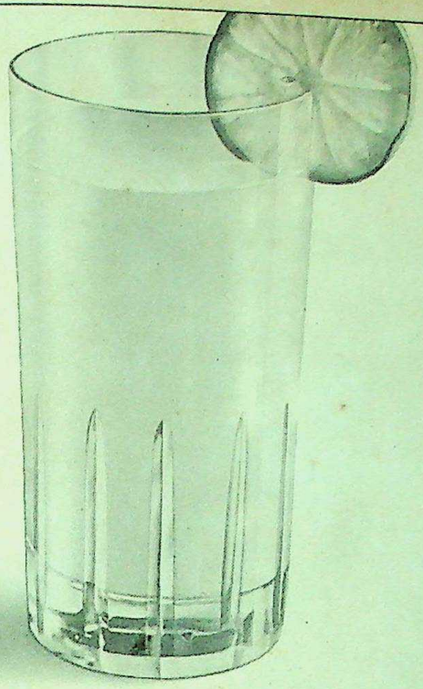
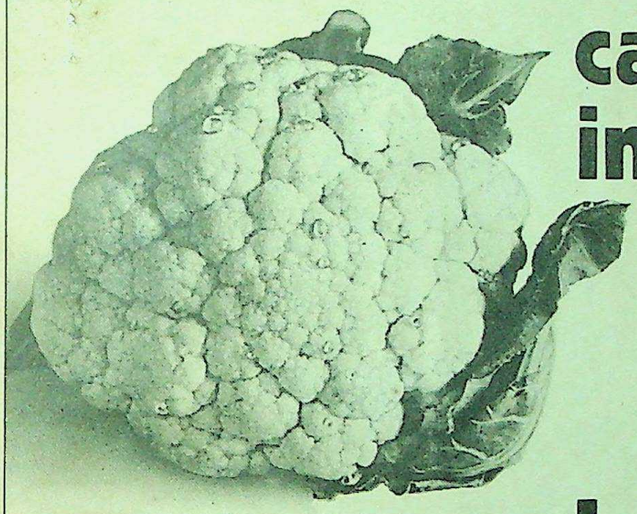


Leonard chills lemonade in London



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Leonard keeps Bina smiling in Bombay

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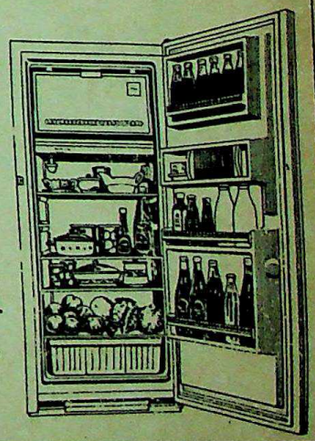

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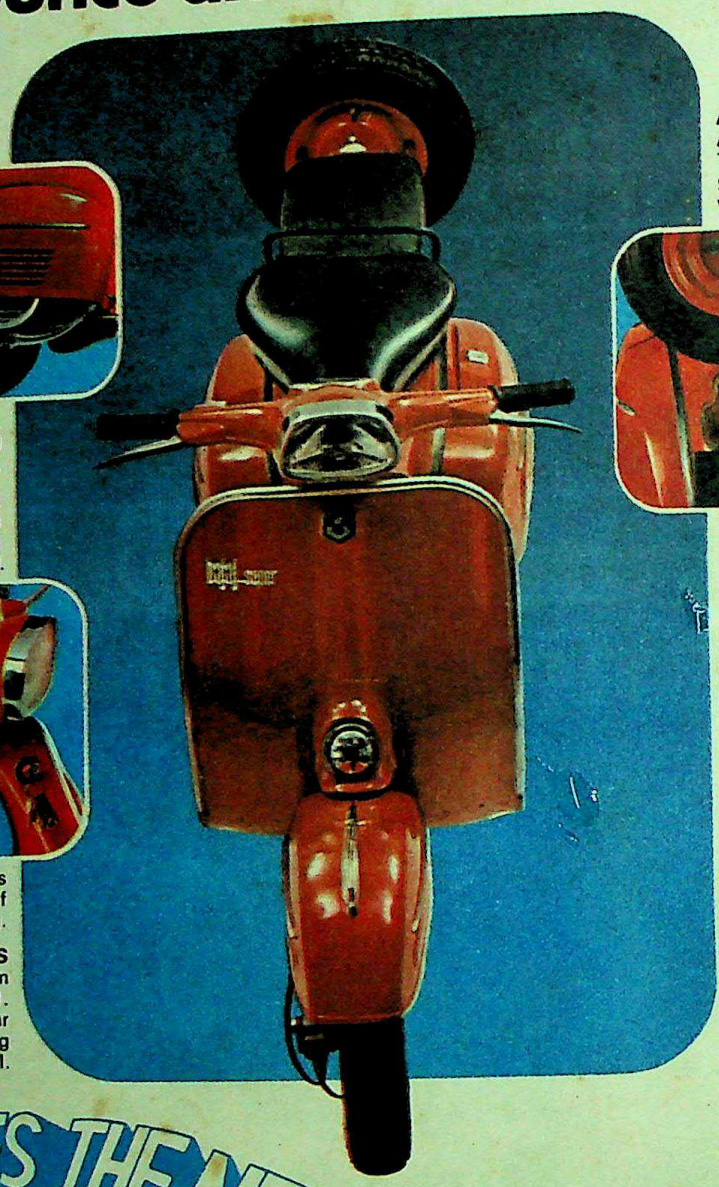
The makers of the finest scooters in the world announce another fine scooter



In 1960, the Bajaj 150 hit the road, and became India's largest selling scooter.

In 1972, the Bajaj Chetak was launched. It went on to become a favourite the world over.

Now, the news is the Bajaj Super. With distinct improvements and innovations.

SHEERLINE SHAPE
Strangely enough, by making the Bajaj Super more 'chunky' it looks far more streamlined.

Its sheerline shape reflects the latest in styling.

The handlebars and headlamp are also squared up. In the Bajaj Chetak style.

And the Bajaj Super's frame is the same sturdy, integrated, electrically welded unit which has proved itself over many years of rugged driving.

FOUR GEARS
Which give you ratios from 13.35:1 all the way up to 4.73:1. The result is smoother gear changing and a noticeable saving in fuel.

A LITTLE FASTER, A LITTLE FURTHER
The Bajaj Super has been rated at 90 kmph on the test bench. With an improved compression ratio, we have squeezed out a little more mileage; upto 46 km per litre under standard conditions.

DELIVERIES HAVE BEGUN
After decades of unmatched performance, the Bajaj 150 makes way for the Bajaj Super, which will be going out to all those on the waiting list for a Bajaj 150 scooter.

It certainly is a long waiting list. But now you're waiting for the new, improved version of the best scooter in the world.

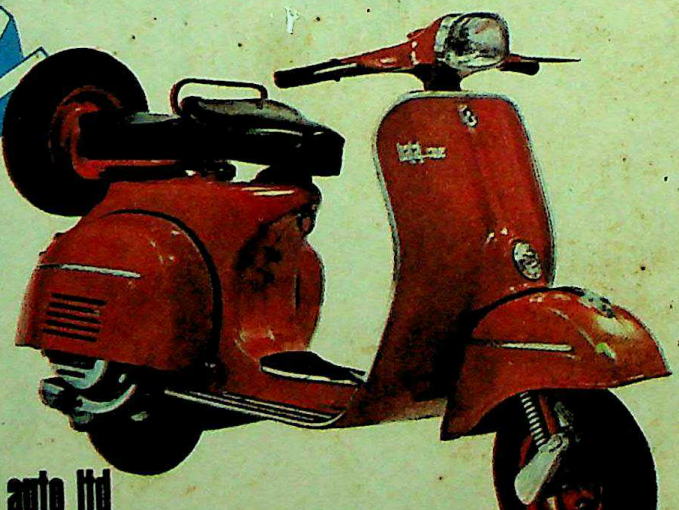
THE BAJAJ 150 LIVES ON
Without doubt, the '150' has been the most wanted scooter in India for many years; you can still see fifteen- and twenty-year old models on the road.

To all those people who believe that 'old is gold', the good news is, that the '150' will live on as the 'Priya', made by Maharashtra Scooters Ltd.

THE BAJAJ CHETAK REMAINS A 'PRIORITY' ITEM
The Bajaj Chetak will continue to be available to those who can pay in foreign currencies.

HERE COMES THE NEW

bajaj-super



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politician, Bhutto dug his grave by his thirst for power. But how long will Zia, presently in the saddle, survive?
Delhi *Alka*

■ The fuse has been lit. Pakistan might blow up into small fragments.
Allahabad *Abhay Singh*

■ Cutting across communal feelings, the execution has dismayed, disgusted and shocked everyone.
Meerut *A. C. Maheshwari*

■ Zia has erased from the public memory all the shortcomings of Bhutto by executing him. Even Indians have forgotten the threat of "a thousand year war" and are grieving over his hanging.
Lucknow *I. P. Ram*

JP Betrayed

Your Cover Story "A Leader Betrayed" (INDIA TODAY, April 1–15) was apt, and a timely exposure of the Janata Party's power-drunk and ungrateful leaders.
Allahabad *A. K. Jaiswal*

■ It is a tragic story of a selfless person who tried to do much for India and its people, only to be betrayed in return. The reason: Jayaprakash Narayan was, and is too honest to be a politician.
Bokerstr *Subhash Likhite*
W. Germany

■ The cover picture of JP was marvellous and a nice gesture to the patron-saint of our nation.
Hyderabad *R. V. Divakar*

Jayaprakash Narayan—ideals betrayed

■ How arrogant and ungrateful can the prime minister be. For Morarji Desai, JP did not rank high enough to warrant an immediate visit to Jaslok Hospital, nor did his 'death' warrant a declaration of national mourning.
New Delhi *Joseph Chacko*

■ A wayward son often disappoints his father but does not kill him. But the Janata Party has stooped low enough to commit patricide.
New Delhi *K. S. Raman*

■ By his strong will JP has survived, but how long would he be able to bear the moral blows inflicted by his own creation—the Janata Party.
Baroda *A. C. Shukul*

■ It is beyond comprehension that even the Intelligence Bureau could blunder and declare JP 'dead'.
Tehri-Garhwal *Shiv Kumar Dhyani*

Mature Decision

The article "Bear Hugs And Bruises" (INDIA TODAY, April 1–15) was interesting and sensible. China had once tried to disrupt India's friendship with Russia by suggesting that Moscow was using the Indo-Soviet Treaty to control and exploit India. The Indian Government has, however, displayed statesmanship and maturity in ignoring such innuendoes and widening the areas of co-operation with the Soviet Union in various fields.
Cochin *Mohan Murti*

The New Yorker

The special feature "An American In India" (INDIA TODAY, April 1–15) provided a good psychological study of Ellin Pollachek. A human mind becomes insensitive, frustrated and conditioned when the capacity for openness and imagination deserts an individual. And these cannot be regained even by such a radical treatment as a trip to India.

Pollachek can go anywhere and see nothing new. But the contents of her beauty box could go on changing under the cocktail shaking.
Norway *Torben Huss*

■ Do not believe that Pollachek's view is emblematic of westerners' opinion about India. How can one, whose values in life are confined to five-star hotel rooms and sex, appreciate other cultures? I am not a frustrated New Yorker and so I have, like most westerners, great respect for Indians.
Denmark *Lina Bjirrigaard*

■ As an American (and, I might add, a New Yorker) who has been studying and living in India for the past year, I was grossly offended by Pollachek. She gives the false impression that Americans visiting India are concerned only with hot and cold running water, western-style commodes, and the rates of trinkets and taxis; in short that they are as empty-headed and oblivious to the great country around them as Pollachek.
Waltair *Steven Ghitelman*

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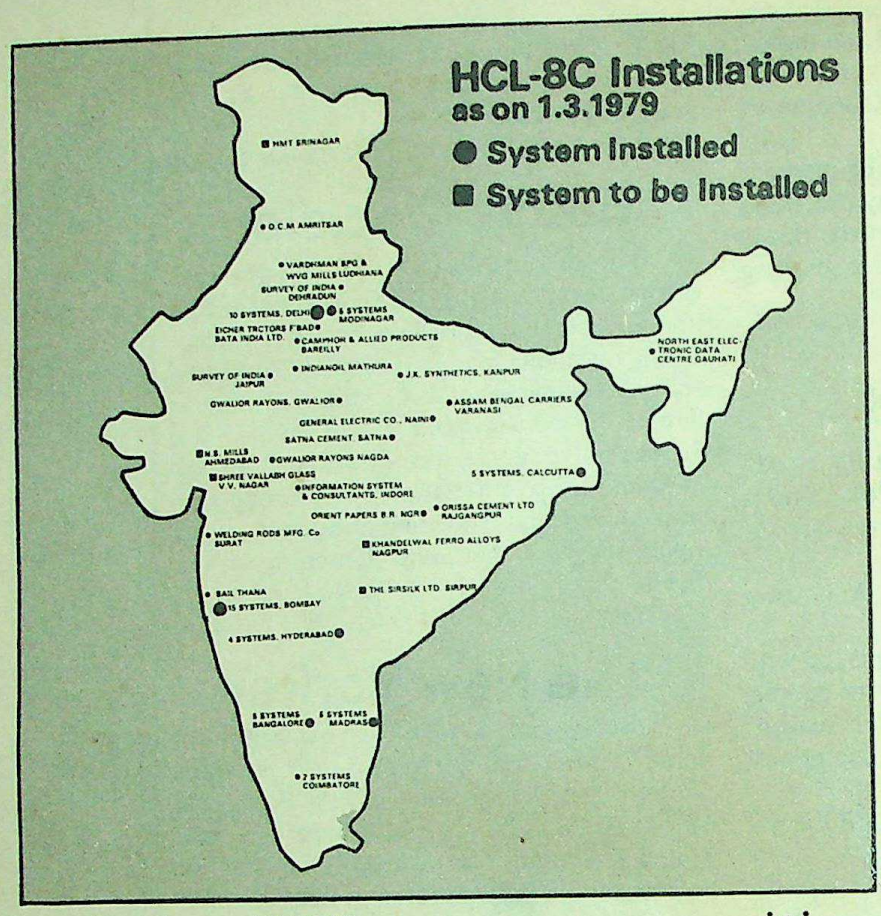

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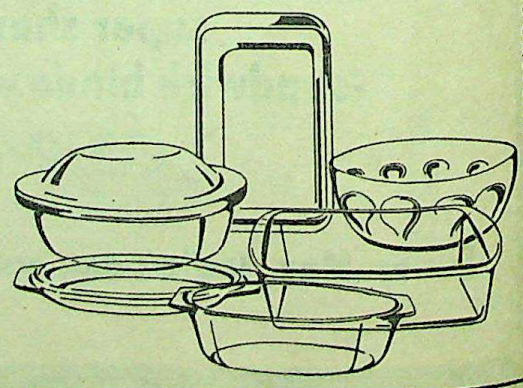

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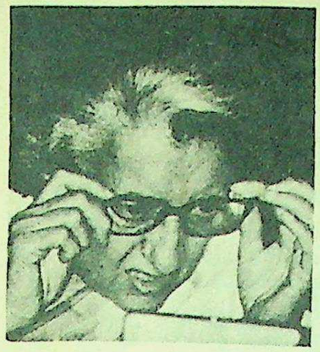
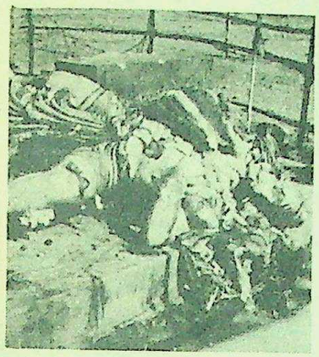
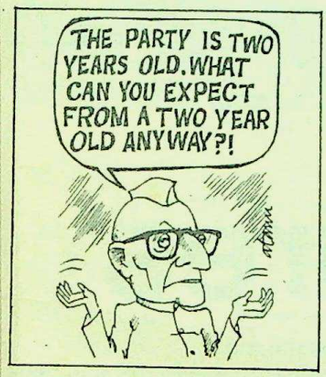
In Focus This Fortnight



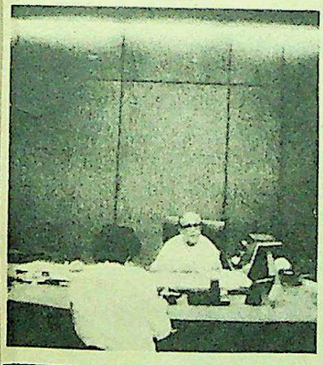
COVER STORY: Dark clouds are again hovering over the former prime minister Mrs Indira Gandhi. The Special Courts Bill designed to deal with Emergency cases is on its last legs. And within her Congress (I) she is faced with stern opposition from her senior colleagues who are reluctant to back her son Sanjay. With the ruling Janata Party in disarray and whispers of a Third Force emerging, can Mrs Gandhi survive yet another battle.? **Page 30.**



SPECIAL REPORT: Last month's communal riots in Jamshedpur, southern Bihar, were a violent reminder of the deteriorating secular image of the Janata Government. What was extraordinary about the events was the planning and the intensity of politicking that went behind them. Together with administrative failure and active participation of the Bihar Military Police, the steel city bore savage scars of death everywhere. INDIA TODAY correspondent SUNIL SETHI reports from the scene of disaster. **Page 8.**



GUEST COLUMN: On May 1, the Janata Party celebrates the second anniversary of its formal, if traumatic, political birth. But judging by the ever-widening schisms within the party structure, it seems doubtful if the Janata Party has much to celebrate about. Its failure to implement most of its election pledges has set off warning bells that are becoming increasingly strident. B.G. Verghese evaluates the party's performance since its inception. **Page 14.**

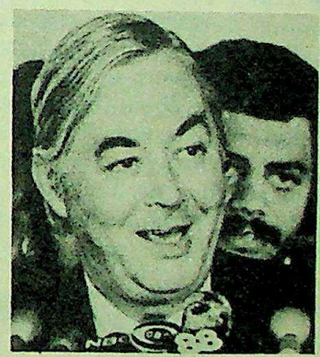


POWER CRISIS: Chief Minister Jyoti Basu was not to be seen in Calcutta as the state capital was engulfed in darkness by the worst power crisis to hit the state in recent years. All industrial activity in the state came to a grinding halt. Years of trade union rivalries, over-bureaucratization of power plants, fatal maintenance standards and negligent manpower planning is the cause of what is essentially a man-made crisis in West Bengal and other states. **Page 19.**

INTERVIEW OF THE FORTNIGHT: Petroleum Minister Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna is one of the most resilient politicians on the contemporary political stage. After being dispatched into political exile by former prime minister Indira Gandhi, Bahuguna bounced back with a bang as one of the architects of the Congress for Democracy (CFD) party. Bahuguna recently spoke to INDIA TODAY on the performance of his ministry and of the Janata Party as a whole. **Page 54.**

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON: The shrouds of secrecy that have mummified the covert operations of America's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) are being ripped off with increasing frequency. The latest—and most disturbing—exposé on the CIA is in the form of a book—*The Search for the Manchurian Candidate*—a chilling account of the agency's experimentation with Mind Control. INDIA TODAY'S Washington correspondent interviewed the author, John. D. Marks about the experiments. **Page 64.**

TECHNOLOGY: Peter Drucker, Clarke Professor of Social Sciences at the Claremont Graduate School in the US has acquired an enviable reputation in the contemporary management world. When he visited India last year, he was buffeted by sermons on the suitability of small industry and rural development by the Government's economic planners, including Prime Minister Morarji Desai. He dismisses it as mere rhetoric and discusses the concept of economic development in the Indian context. **Page 82.**



BOOKS: The former ambassador to India, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, put his literary cat among the pigeons recently when his controversial book, *A Dangerous Place* was belatedly released in this country. Published last year it went unnoticed by the Indian public, and the Government which has just woken up to the fact that the book contains some highly explosive material. Managing Editor CHHOTU KARADIA reviews the book along with the controversial extract. **Page 107.**

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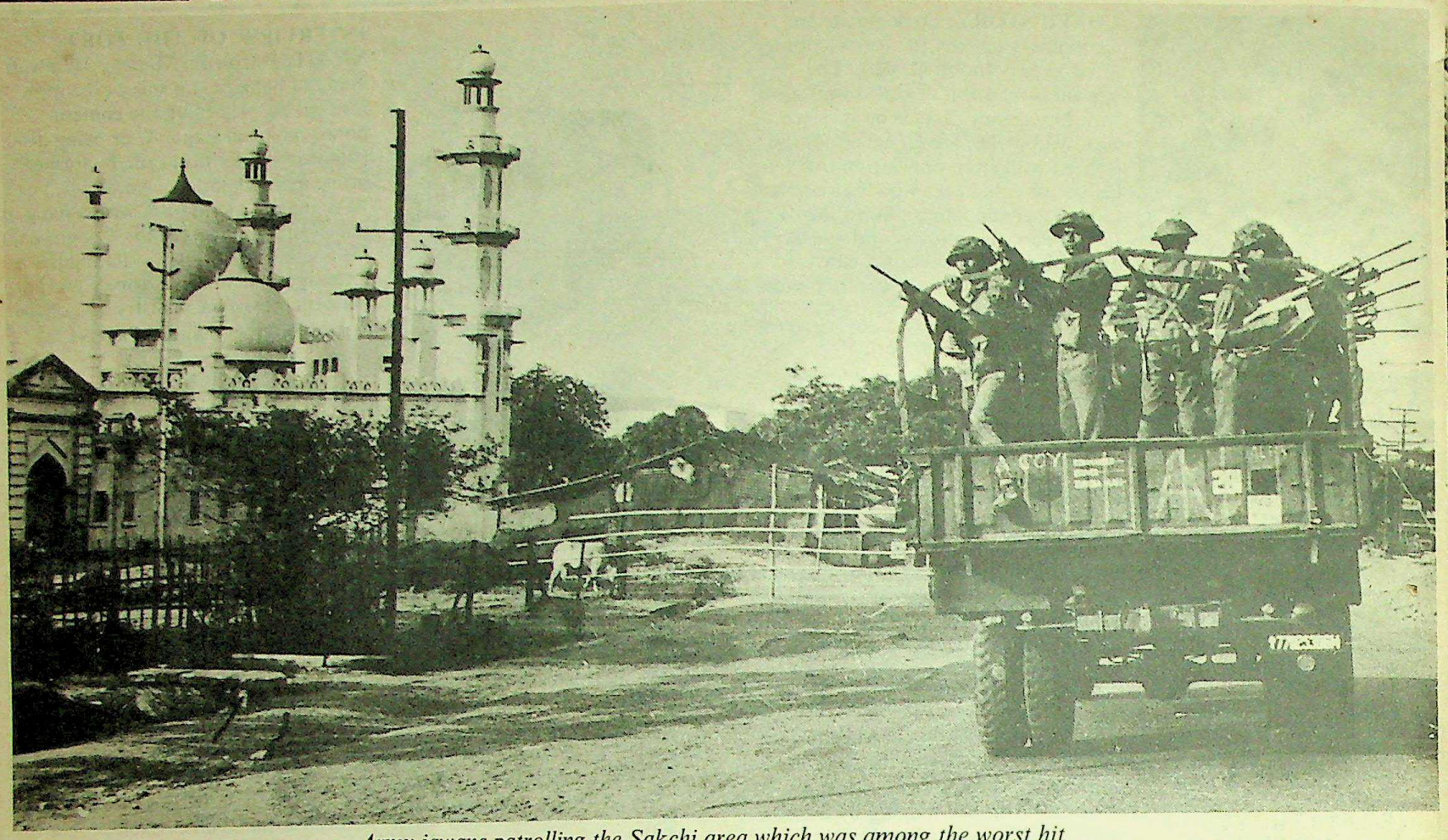


Army jawans patrolling the Sakchi area which was among the worst hit

JAMSHEDPUR

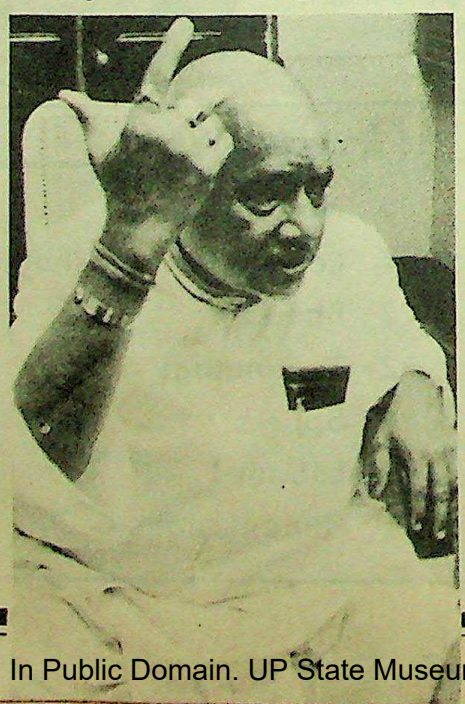
Day Of The Vultures

IN the neighbouring Pakistan General Zia-ul-Haq executed the former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto without any bloodshed whereas in India more than 100 lives were lost in communal rioting that took place in the steel city of Jamshedpur. It was one of the worst communal flare-ups in India after Ahmedabad and Aligarh. INDIA TODAY *correspondent* SUNIL SETHI *who toured the riot-torn city found that vultures had come to the rescue of the local officialdom to help clear the corpses. While the police and politicians moaned and groaned, the vultures went about their job with precision, speed and efficiency. Accusing fingers are now being pointed at the Hindu extremists, the RSS, for provoking the riots; the trigger-happy police force must equally share the blame for causing bloodshed on the religious festival of Ramnaumi.*

SILENCE ruled the steel city of Jamshedpur in southern Bihar last week. Two days after the grim scenes of communal murder and rampage had ended, the only signs of life evident amidst the wreckage were provided by the police, the politicians and the vultures quietly picking at the corpses. All three are traditional visitors at any scene of disaster; all three assume the responsibility for disposing of the dead. But it is characteristic of any Indian disaster that it is usually the vultures who go about their job with precision, speed and efficiency. The police and the politicians bumble on regardless, while the local administration, inept and wide-eyed at the outset, is caught wringing its hands in panicky sweat by the end.

That was what happened in Jamshedpur last month when virtually total administrative failure abetted by contingents of the notoriously partisan Bihar Military Police (BMP)—eyewitnesses frequently saw them actively participating at the scenes of crime—failed to check the worst and most organized communal riots in one of the largest and best-managed industrial towns

Raj Narain—blaming the RSS



Thakur—no comments to make

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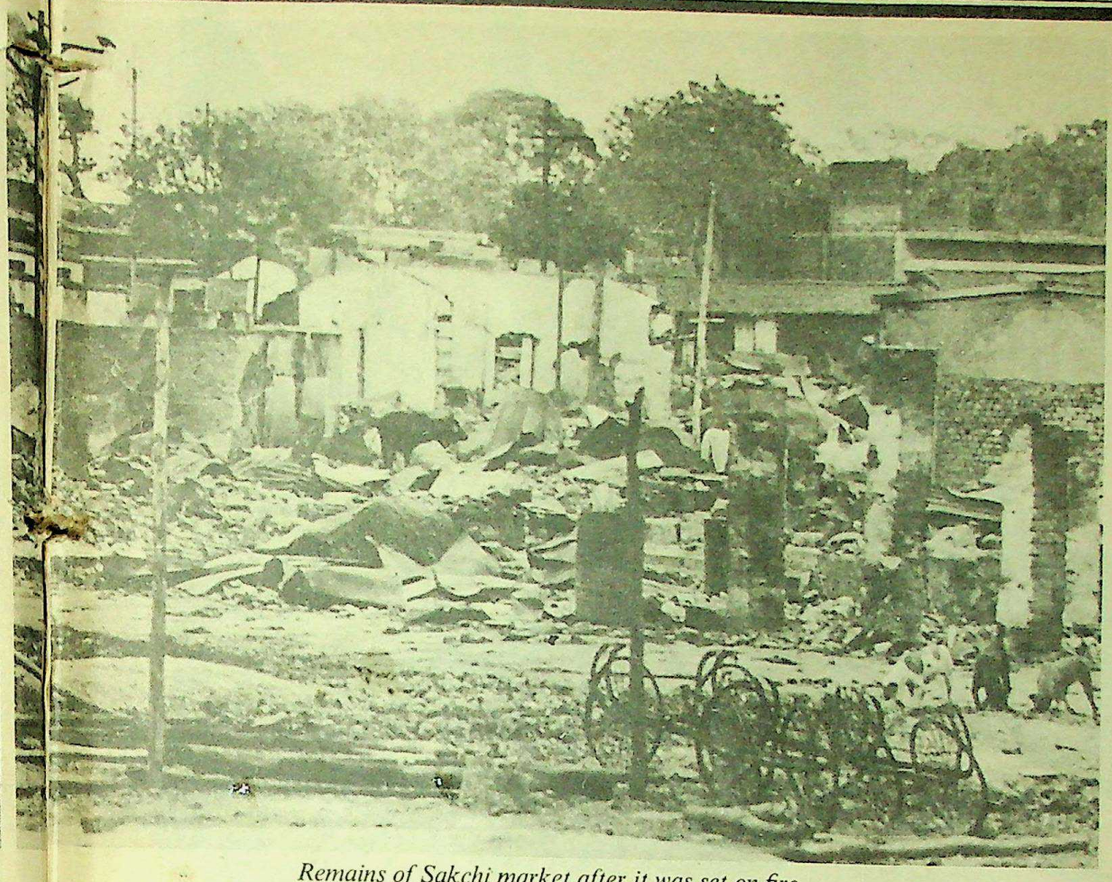


Pushkarna—India Today

Remains of Sakchi market after it was set on fire

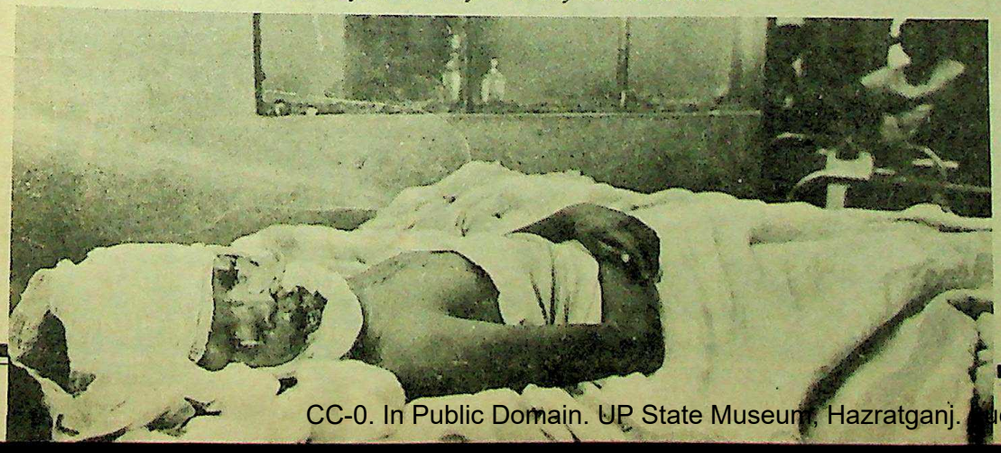
in India.

A bleary-eyed Karpoori Thakur (nursing a three-day old shave, as usual, for special effect) clucked around in the Circuit House trying to gloss over the outspoken claims of his old friend Raj Narain (who, as usual, accused the RSS with no effect at all). While long platoons of the BMP, the Central Reserve Police (CRP), the Border Security Force (BSF) and the local police strutted up and down the chalky, lifeless streets of a town under curfew, there were quiet reminders of vicious violence elsewhere.

Proud Hostess: In the local government hospital on the brink of the Subarnarekha river that cuts through the city, and beyond which lies the fateful Mango area with all-Muslim pockets such as Azad Busti where the riots germinated, a smiling nurse in a white sari was only too happy to show off her new acquisitions or "the deadly cases" as she called them. Here was a man with a severed leg, there a woman wholly bandaged over scorching burns, and finally her smile overflowed as she exhibited a 10-year-old lying motionless on a hospital bed. His face was virtually blown out, and most of his torso and one scrawny leg bandaged. He lay unattended. "Well, he just turned up," she said, "nobody knows from where. I think he was brought on the evening of April 11. But no one has come to look for him." Finishing the hospital round she led the way to the morgue, a little way behind the hospital. "Our PM (post-mortem) house," she said with a flourish. Amid the stench of putrefying flesh, the vultures were busy on the verandah. How many bodies?

"No count," said the nurse, "maybe 150, maybe 200 but they have been coming jumbled up, you see, in gunny bags, so how can one tell?" No sooner had the photographer drawn out his lens to take a picture, than a few hospital attendants came rushing to prevent him. No photographs could be taken without permission from hospital officials. Where were the officials? "All have gone to Circuit House." When, the next morning at dawn, the photographer returned to get his pictures, there were no corpses left. "All cleaned up," said the gatekeeper, "all buried at night."

A 10-year-old boy—nobody knows his name



Well-Prepared: Officially, the death toll after nearly three days of intense and widely-scattered rioting, looting, arson and street fighting was put at less than 120 more than half being Muslims. The number injured was estimated at about 350, of whom nearly 170 were Muslims. And the total number under arrest was officially placed at 832, of whom 142 were arrested between April 5 and 10, that is, before the outburst took place.

The areas where the worst scenes of brutal rioting had taken place were spread far apart—from Mango in the extreme north across the river, to Jugsalai in the south outside Tatanagar railway station, to Sakchi (where an entire shopping market was razed to the ground) and Bhalubasa in centre of the city, which altogether covers an area of roughly 25 square miles. The outbursts took place almost simultaneously, beginning on the early afternoon of April 11 and continuing through the night to grip most of April 12 as well. It was as if by some remote control mechanism the entire city burst into flames, thereby substantiating the theory that sections of the rabidly antagonistic Hindu majority and those of the Muslim minority—which constitute no more than one-sixth of a population approaching seven lakh—had carefully planned their strategies of assault and defence.

Since industrial cities like Jamshedpur not only become the hunting ground of criminals, thugs and other underworld species but also spawn a virtual industry in manufacture of illegal arms (vast caches of hand-made guns, grenades and sophisticated weaponry such as sten-guns have been recovered in police raids but the administration will not give the exact number of recoveries) there was no shortage of ammunition to conduct mass-scale riots. The only question was of timing and somehow hoodwinking the administration. Tragically, the city's administration played into the hands of the communal elements—in particular active members of the RSS—who were looking for an opportunity.

Chosen Route: The Hindu festival of Ramnaumi on April 5 provided the opportunity. On that day, the Hindus of Jamshedpur, as of most towns in southern Bihar, bring out processions and decorative saffron flags dedicated to Hanuman (called Bajrang Bali) and immerse them in the river as Statues of Durga are immersed in neighbouring Bengal. The processions are called *akharas* and there are 72 of them in Jam-

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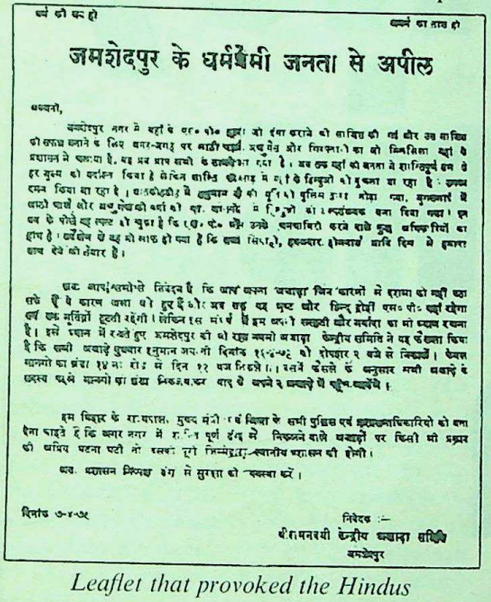
shedpur, each brought out by a locality and centred around every Hanuman temple. Last year, the six *akharas* of Mango area decided to carry out the procession on a certain route, called Route No. 14, which passed through the Muslim pocket of Azad Busti. The administration, fearing trouble in a mixed locality where communal tempers could be easily ignited, forbade them to take this route and offered instead Route No. 15 which skirted the Muslim *mohalla*. The Shriramnaumi Akhara Samiti took offence and took the matter to the Ranchi bench of the Patna High Court. The court, in its ruling, allowed the administration to use its discretion in the matter.

Thus checkmated, the Akhara Samiti decided to launch a tougher offensive this year. The Akhara Samiti, made up of traders who are staunch Hindus, also includes some avowed RSS workers who, it has been suggested by leaders as far apart



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जमशेदपुर नगर में यहाँ के ४८० वीं वर्ष से हिन्दुओं को आतंकित करने की एवं उन्हें आर्थिक क्षति पहुंचाने के लिए बराबर-बराबर पर आगजनी, मारपीट, लूटपाट और गिरफ्तारी का जो सिलसिला यहां के प्रशासन ने चलाया है, वह अब सभी के बर्दाश्त के बाहर है। अब तक यहां की जनता ने शान्तिपूर्ण ढंग से हर जुल्म को बर्दाश्त किया है लेकिन शान्ति प्रेमप्रिय मे ही हिन्दुओं को दुर्बला का रहा है। उनका दमन किया जा रहा है। आतंकवादियों के तुष्टमान की नीति को पूर्णतया क्रियान्वित किया जा रहा है। आये दिनों और अब तो हद हो चुकी है कि ए.एस.पी. तक उनके पक्षपातपूर्ण करने वाले कुछ अधिकारियों का हाथ है। उन्हें लेकर ये लोग यही समझ बैठे हैं कि अब सिर्फ ये, हथियार, होमगार्ड आदि हिन्दू के हमारा साथ देने को तैयार है।

अतः आर्थ/सम्मोपेत निवेदन है कि आप अपना जबाड़ा किन कारणों से हमारा को नहीं छोड़ते हैं ये कारण जाने को हुए हैं और अब वह घृणा एवं भ्रष्ट और हिन्दू होगी एवं ए.एस.पी. यहां रहेंगे एवं एक मूर्तियां टूटती रहेंगी। लेकिन इस संघर्ष में हम अपनी लक्ष्मी और मर्यादा का भी ध्यान रखना है। इसे ध्यान में रखते हुए जमशेदपुर की सभी रक्षा समाजी जबाड़ा केन्द्रीय समिति ने यह फैसला किया है कि सभी अखाड़े शुक्रवार हनुमान जयन्ती दिनांक १९-४-७९ को शोभायात्रा २ बजे से निकालें। केवल मालगो का झंडा १४ नं. रोड से दिन १२ बजे निकलेगा। इनमें फैसले के अनुसार सभी अखाड़े के सदस्य अपने मालगो का झंडा निकट्यकर बाद में अपने २ अखाड़े में शामिल हो जायें।

इस विषय के सम्बन्ध में मुख्य मंत्री एवं बिहार के सभी पुलिस एवं प्रशासनाधिकारियों को बता देना चाहते हैं कि अगर नगर में किसी पूर्व दंगे निकलने वाले अखाड़ों पर किसी भी प्रकार की अप्रिय घटना घटी तो उसका पूरी जिम्मेदारी स्थानीय प्रशासन की होगी।

अतः प्रशासन निष्पक्ष ढंग से सुरक्षा की व्यवस्था करें।

दिनांक ७-४-७९

निवेदक :-
श्री रामनवमी केन्द्रीय अखाड़ा समिति
जमशेदपुर

Leaflet that provoked the Hindus

as Raj Narain and the Shahi Imam of New Delhi's Jama Masjid, who showed up unexpectedly, took encouragement from RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras's presence in Jamshedpur on April 1 when he addressed a huge rally in the town's Regal Ground. Ramlakhan Singh Yadav of the Congress who was a member of the team headed by former union health minister Karan Singh, on the other hand feels that the riots had something to do with the RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras's meeting Jamait-e-Islami leaders in Jamshedpur.

No Compromise: Initially, the administration was well-prepared and stuck to its guns in forbidding the use of Route No. 14. It also began making precautionary arrests. The samiti—many of whose members found themselves behind bars—in frustration called off the *akharas* scheduled for April 5. Instead they began to make plans to collect the entire town's *akharas*. On April 7, a provocative pamphlet was circulated all over the city, stating "that despite the peaceful protests of the people against the arrests and despite their having suffered sundry oppressions, the administration's efforts in oppressing the Hindus had gone on unabated". The morning of April 11 was mooted as the day for all the *akharas* to unite and carry out a combined procession following Route No. 14.

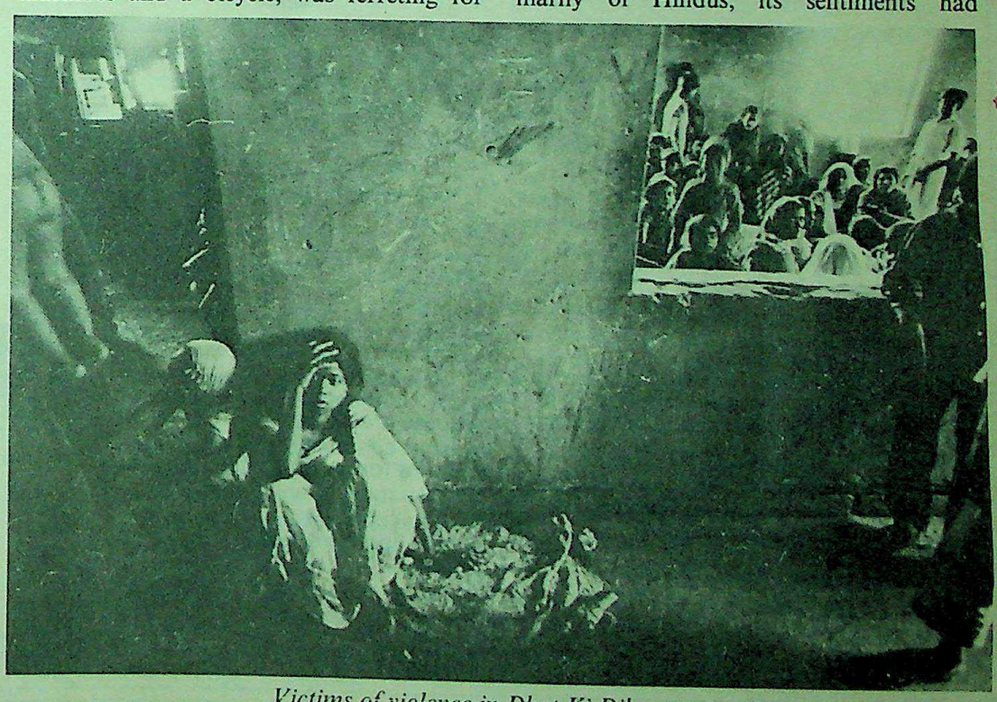
Hints were also dropped in the pamphlet against a Harijan Superintendent of Police, Ram Parshad, who had earned their wrath. Dinanath Pandey, the local MLA, was directly involved in organizing the collective procession. On April 10, a local peace committee was formed in the Mango area, consisting of Hindus and Muslims, to attempt a compromise solution for the route. But the Hindus were insistent.

When the procession began, it was peaceful. It consisted of only 50 to 60 people and Muslims also participated. By the time it reached the main road, where in the Mango Police Station, virtually the entire administration including the deputy commissioner was present, and BMP reinforcements were on the guard, the crowd had begun to swell. Nobody realized that thousands of Hindus were pouring across the bridge from the other side of the river to join the originally small *akhara*. In about an hour there was a crowd estimated at about 50,000 people. No one quite knows who called the first cry, or on whose roof the first firecrackers were burst. At about midday, the loud cries of *Jai Bajrang* mingled with stone-throwing, and the BMP began to open its first rounds of fire. After that there was no end.

Culprit: Syed Idaullah, a Telco worker, whose house and brother's tailoring shop on the main street have been reduced to cinders, with only the charred remains of sewing machines and a bicycle, was ferreting for left-overs when he told INDIA TODAY: "At one moment there was a shouting, restive mob. Then almost instantly, I saw smoke bombs which I thought was tear gas, but realized that there was open shooting. The next thing I knew was a few local *goondas*, political leaders like ex-CPI MLA Ram Avtar Singh and BMP soldiers emptying petrol cans on housefronts to set them ablaze."

Although the then chief minister sought refuge—as was usual—by saying that no comment could be made because a three-member inquiry commission was being set up to investigate the matter, there is clear and widespread evidence in Jamshedpur today of the involvement of the BMP in invariably inciting the mob, aggravating the situation by indiscriminately opening fire and indulging openly in arson and looting. "The BMP has become as dreaded an institution in Bihar as the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) was in Uttar Pradesh," said a local industrialist. According to Jagannath Sarkar, member of the central secretariat of the CPI, who head the party's team: "The role of the BMP stands out as a scandalous feature. There are many reports about its collusion in the riots. (Muslim) victims in refugee camps have complained: 'It is the BMP that killed us, not the Hindus.'"

In many instances the BMP, when not actually participating in crime, was reduced to an impotent onlooker. In several cases it simply turned around on its heels and fled. On April 12, when an ambulance full of women and children was set ablaze in the Bistopur area by a frenzied mob, killing nearly 40 of the occupants, the police were virtually helpless. A local official conceded off the record that since the BMP consisted primarily of Hindus, its sentiments had



Victims of violence in Dhat Ki Dih camp

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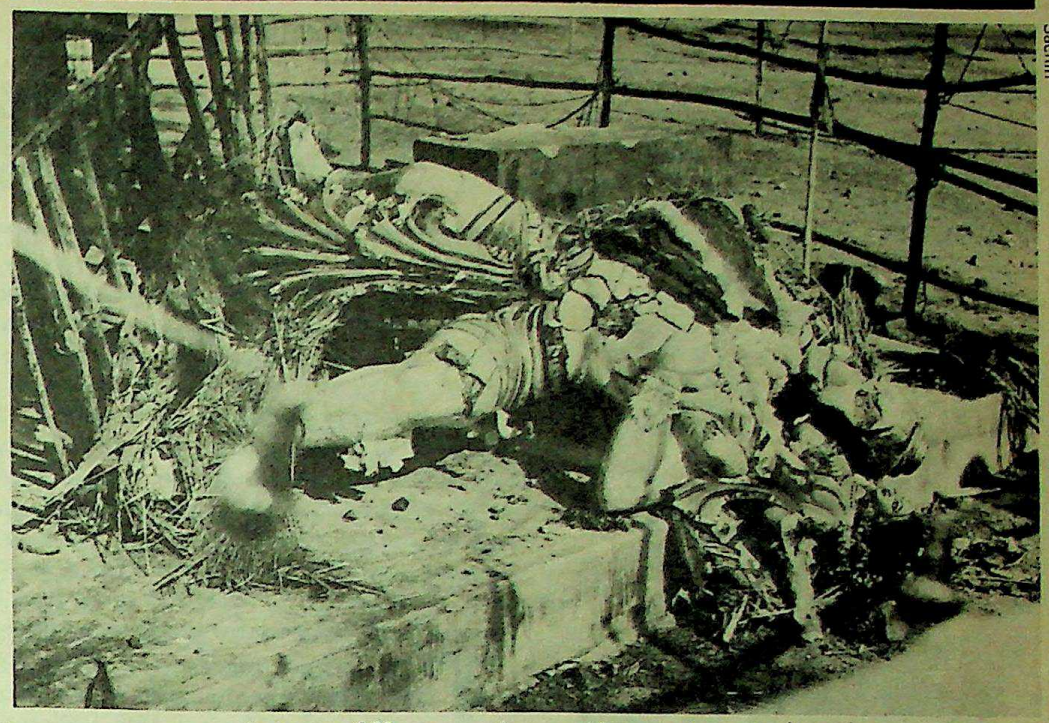
Shahi Imam—"inane police action"



Sachin

A statue of Hanuman damaged by a mob on April 12

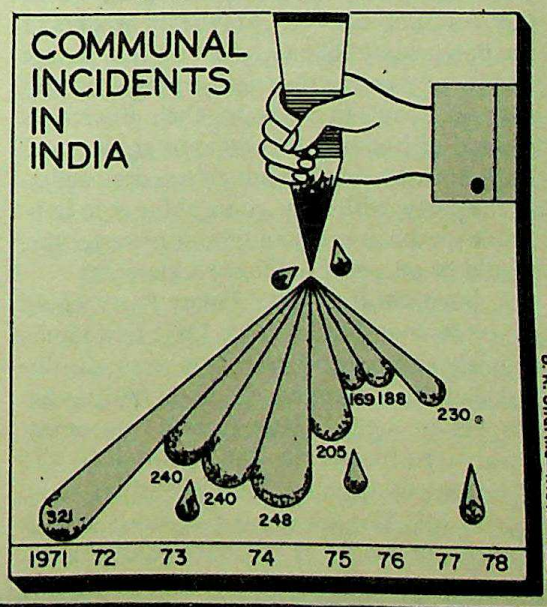
undoubtedly been aroused against the Muslims.

Better Informed: With the administration and the police force by and large paralysed into inaction it was left to the Tata Companies, Tata Iron and Steel Co (Tisco) and Tata Engineering and Locomotive Co (Telco)—altogether the Tata complex of industrial units that employ over one lakh workers have a total annual turnover of Rs 750 crore—to salvage the situation by setting up refugee camps, providing relief, and importing supplies in a city gripped by shortage of basic necessities. Even Russi Mody, vice-chairman and managing director of Tisco, when he arrived on the scene, was more aware of the incidents taking place than any member of the administration. "I find it incomprehensible that people should kill each other in the name of religion," he said, disbelief writ large on his face.

If the chief Tata representative in a city that was almost created by them when they produced the first steel ingot in 1912, harboured incomprehensibility at the ferocious turn of events, then most of the politicians and reporters present failed either to foresee or present the facts of the case in their true light. Few of them accurately reported the communal aspects of the crisis and the extent to which it had spread. Raj Narain, raising his usual political bogey, accused the RSS of being the cause of the agitation. The CPI and Congress (I) teams which investigated the causes separately have also accused the RSS of planning and executing the riots with the assistance of the BMP.

There are those who see the Jamshedpur events as deliberately organized ones which were a precursor of the confrontation between the Jan Sangh and the Bharatiya Lok Dal in the state capital. A Janata Party team led by Madhu Limaye has also supported this line of thought. Fact-finding committees set up by the Congress, Congress (I) and the Communist Party of India have found that the local administration failed to visualize the situation despite clear danger signs. The committees' reports state that the riots were pre-planned. Even a five-member team of the Bihar State Minorities Commissions which included Jayaprakash Narayan's private secretary, Sachidanand, notes: "The trouble-makers got a whole week's time to plan and prepare for the disturbances. There was planning on both sides. Hindu communalists planned offensive action against the Muslim population while the Muslim activists planned their defensive operation."

Disparate: All opposition parties' teams accused Dinanath Pandey, Janata Party MLA of involvement but in an interview in Patna he claimed that he had been wrongly held responsible. He said he had proof of the Congress (I) and the CPI having a hand in the tragedy. He alleged that the CPI leaders had conspired and distributed arms among Muslims. He says that it was a CPI worker who held up the procession till other processionists joined it. Bricks, bombs and other explosives were then hurled from a roadside Muslim residence and mosque, he claimed. He accused the local superintendent of police of instigating Hindus by arresting only them and seizing their arms. Pandey says he cabled the governor on April 7 about the partisan role of the superintendent of police and on April 9 tried to contact the chief minister through his secretariat.



The Shahi Imam made it clear in an interview with INDIA TODAY in Jamshedpur that he held politicians responsible for the situation. He said: "I do not call this Hindu-Muslim riots, I call it inane police action. The question in the end is not one of what happened in Jamshedpur, or Aligarh, or Varanasi. The question is if this sort of carnage will ever end. There was no end to it during the Congress rule and there is no end to it in the Janata Party rule. Although here it is popularly believed that the RSS is behind these riots, I want to make it clear that the RSS has not stuck to its promise of Hindu-Muslim unity and its ideology and path remain unchanged.

"I thought that after their years in jail, after their struggle to come to power, the Janata Party leaders would stick by what was promised. I had supported them and fought for them. But now a great deal appears ruined. Muslims are being consistently alienated throughout the country. Either the Government should do something about it or we will wait till the next elections and fight for our rights to the hilt. We are waiting for that moment. We are waiting for the moment when they will need us. We will have the answers then."

—SUNIL SETHI and FARZAND AHMED

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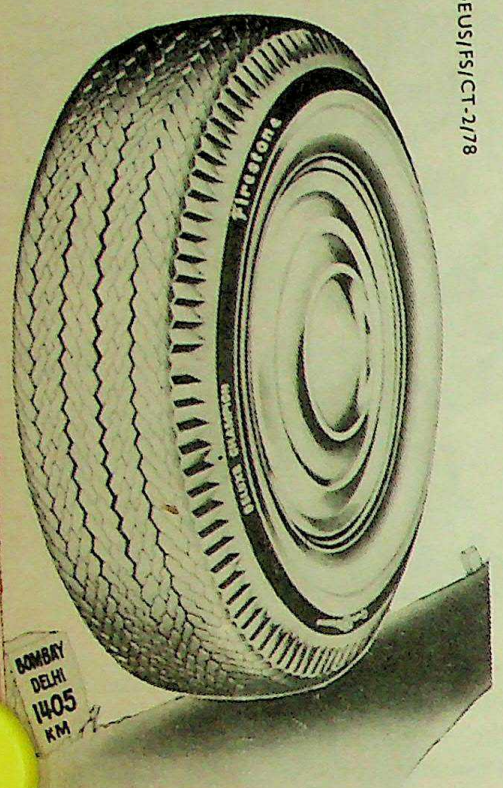

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JANATA PARTY

A Tale Of Lost

On May 1, the Janata Party observes the second anniversary of its formal founding when the five political parties which had swept the 1977 polls on an anti-Emergency platform merged into the party. But their election manifesto did not confine itself to the restoration of democracy—it also made other ambitious promises to the people on economic and social issues. Evaluating the performance of the party, columnist B. G. VERGHESE *says that as it enters its third year in office, it should heed the warning: "It is later than you think."*

THE prime minister broadcast to the nation recently reviewing the steps taken by the Janata Government over the past two years towards fulfilling the mandate given to it by the people. The record is not unimpressive if one merely runs through a check-list of items, especially with regard to the restoration of freedoms and civil rights. Measures have also been taken to give added emphasis to the rural and small-scale sector and enunciate Antyodaya programmes under various headings: adult education, community health, minimum needs, food-for-work, and micro-planning. True. Yet there is all too much evidence of poor style and lost opportunities. The psychology of change is absent. Instead, there is a sense of political indecision, pulling apart, and slow motion.

The political thrust has been blunted and confused by continuing dissensions within the Janata Party. What did the Janata manifesto promise? The Janata Party, it affirmed, "is not a mere alliance of parties but a new national party to which the Congress(O), the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Jan Sangh, the Socialist Party, Independent Congressmen and many others stand firmly committed. This manifesto is a solemn reaffirmation of that common resolve". Maybe the leaders of the party would like to reflect on that pledge and judge whether they are keeping true faith with the people in projecting their differences instead of building on common ground and on factors that unite. Thoughtless destruction of the party, with some going as far as to hobnob with the discredited tyrants of yesterday, would be an act of political recklessness.

Inaction: If only the Janata Party would act on its manifesto it could forge new bonds of unity and rediscover its true strength. The Lok Pal Bill is awaited. Electoral reforms are not yet in sight. There is little movement towards restructuring Panchayati Raj, and of reform of urban government there is no sign at all. The movement towards broadcasting autonomy is unconscionably slow. Little thinking is evident on cheaper options for mass transport systems or on a national energy policy. Necessary legislation to give coherence to industrial relations and purposeful trade unionism has been stalled and a commendable effort towards attempting to structure the beginnings of a wages, incomes and prices policy has been aborted, with business interests inweighing against necessary moves to enlarge and refine the public distribution system through a grass-roots network of fair price shops reaching down to population clusters of 2,000 even in the rural areas. One could go on. Even debate on these issues is muted and little effort has been made to build public opinion.

Lip service is constantly paid to agrarian reform but precious little has been done about it, especially in the Janata Party ruled states. On the contrary there has been every evidence of masterly inactivity for lack of political will. The matter has acquired urgency because although the new farm technology is neutral to scale, small and marginal farmers and insecure tenants and share-croppers do not enjoy equal access or incentive to adopt improved methods or use the available infrastructure. The dice is loaded against them.

The second green revolution that is now under way in both dry and irrigated regions all over the country is going to accentuate agrarian tensions as the new technology holds out promise of great gain to those that have. Pressures on the small, underprivileged and unorganized must therefore be expected to mount progressively and give a sharper edge to caste-class conflicts that could end in bloody violence. At that stage, problems of law and order and crisis management will usurp all attention and the development process will suffer just when it could gain significant acceleration.

It is precisely on such a wave of diversified agricultural growth with equity that the Janata Party could begin to deliver on its promise of the New Village and the right to work. It would sometimes appear that the nature of the problems and opportunities ahead are not comprehended at all by politicians who, like some generals, fussily plan to fight yesterday's wars.

Vital Issues: Likewise, inadequate thought has been given to emerging issues of water policy, especially in the dry belt. Who owns water? How should it be distributed? Should there be any priorities or prohibitions regarding its use? And how should it be priced? In the semi-arid tracts, water, not land, is the critical constraint. With the new dry-farming technology coming into vogue

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Lost Opportunities

and with the increasing exploitation of groundwater and surface flows, appropriate water policies need to be articulated. These are not merely technical but vital political issues.

While these issues have been sidetracked, national attention has been strangely diverted to a total red herring, the so-called Garland Canal Scheme to which a fascinated prime minister has given more publicity than to any other single project in any field over the past two years. He has now told Parliament that the scheme, earlier referred to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on grounds that are not at all clear, has now been additionally referred to the World

Bank and to Soviet experts. This would be unexceptionable but for the fact that the Garland Canal Scheme has been dismissed as technically unfeasible, scientifically unsound, and incoherently expressed by all competent Indian water resource, scientific and administrative departments as well as the Planning Commission.

If a further scientific and technical discussion were necessary in India this could have been easily organized. But what has happened is that the entire body of Indian scientific and professional opinion has been totally bypassed to project abroad a scheme which, if feasible, would profoundly affect the very basis of planning, national development priorities and foreign policy.

Disservice: Equally striking is the fact that the author of the Garland Canal Project, Captain Dinshaw Dastur, has been unable to defend or scientifically explain his project in public gatherings or symposia. Everyone is entitled to advance and canvass ideas and specific project proposals. But for the prime minister to divert Indian engineering energy into an intellectual desert is a mighty national disservice. The ecological, political, technical and scientific question marks raised by the Garland Canal Project are so basic and formidable that to give it a priority before all else without any known government statement of what it thinks the scheme is about, seems an act of runaway whimsicality. Meanwhile, more urgent matters wait.

A new educational policy has been promised and this will be awaited with interest. Two key elements would be to delink degrees from jobs, which should be filled through qualifying tests where necessary, and to develop part-time, non-formal and non-sequential systems of elementary education imparted by part-time instructors such as craftsmen and farmers drawn from local communities, in parallel to more formal systems. This is necessary if the large poll of non-school going children and so-called drop-outs are to be brought within the learning system.

The near-total breakdown in higher education especially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar has assumed the proportions of a national disaster. Standards have declined precipitately and all values have been negated. A drastic overhaul is overdue and it would be far better to close down the errant institutions or universities totally for some time than let the virus spread.

Danger: There is no visible movement to push ahead with the promise of legal reforms to make justice speedy and inexpensive and bring it within reach of the poor through legal aid. The due process of law as it obtains today is exploited by the wealthy, the vested interests, and opponents of change for their own ends, and there is little redress for the vast majority. Court arrears are mounting. The danger is that unless the judicial system can deliver, it will be bypassed and issues will be settled in the streets and through violence.

There is much else in the Janata Party manifesto that remains virtually untouched. Unless the Janata Party acts swiftly, the time and the mood for reform will have passed and the country will find itself overtaken by events which it is no longer able to influence and shape.

As the Janata Party enters its third year in office it should heed the warning: "It is later than you think."

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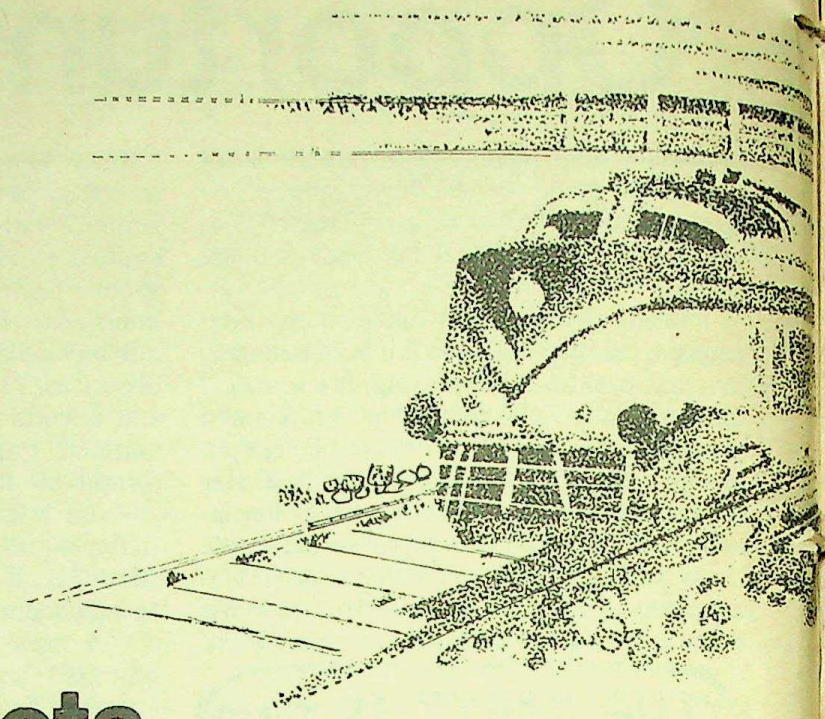

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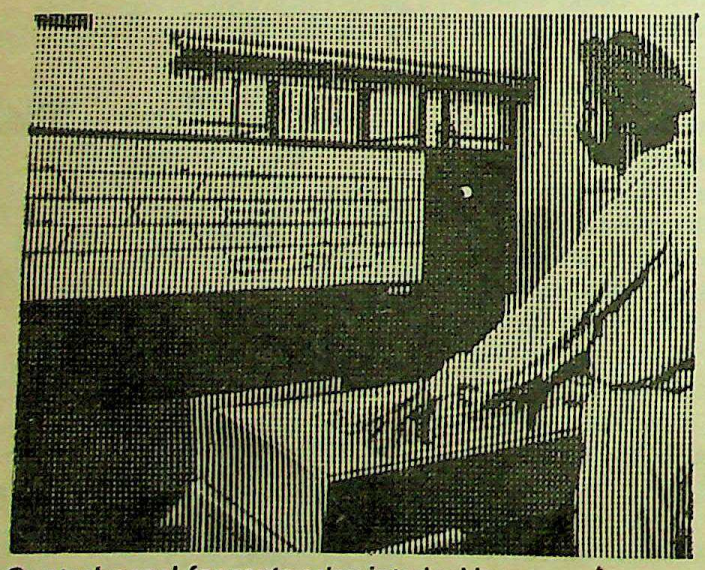

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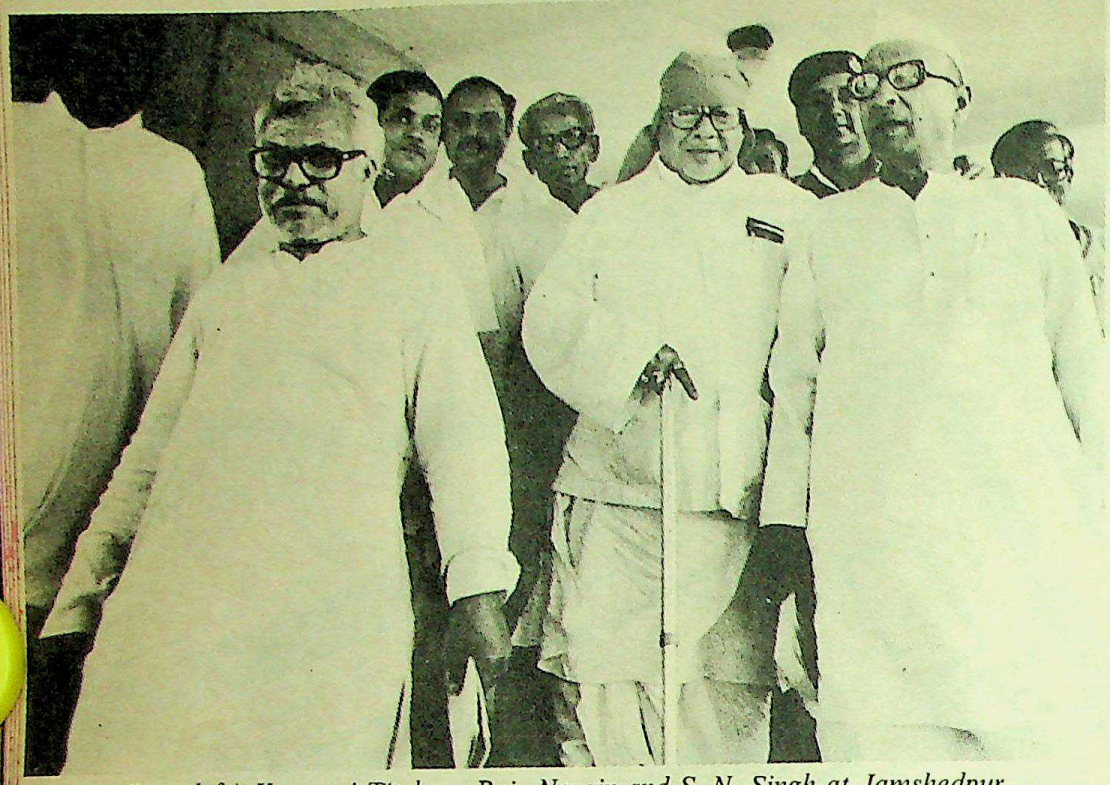
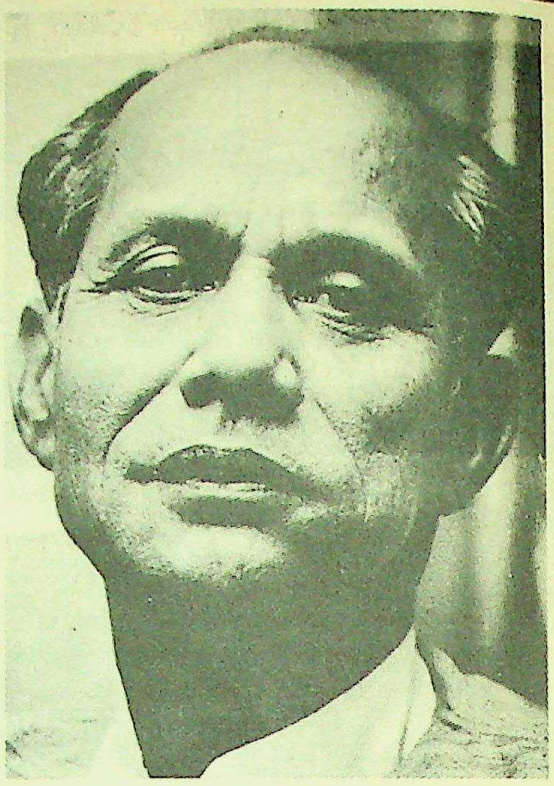


(From left) Karpoori Thakur, Raj Narain and S. N. Singh at Jamshedpur



Das—rise from anonymity

JANATA PARTY

Tenuous Existence

TWO days after he was rudely ejected out of the chief minister's chair Karpoori Thakur was squatting morosely at the house of his comrade and confidant Pranab Chatterji, MP, in Patna. He did not seem to have much to do: all morning he had been packing his bags to clear out of his official residence. Only four days earlier in Jamshedpur he had been very much master of ceremonies; he gave the impression of being in complete control politically. In the midst of questions about the communal riots someone had weakly asked if the chief minister had any plans for postponing the meeting of the state's Janata Legislature Party (JLP). Thakur snapped back. He intended to do nothing of the sort.

Now it was all over. "I was not in the least expecting it," he said, but apart from unleashing his venom upon the Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh (RSS) and the Congress For Democracy (CFD)—whose nth-hour withdrawal of support was the crucial factor for his defeat—Thakur was keeping his opinions to himself. "I knew it was happening—the RSS lobby had been organizing itself and trying for the past few months to show their strength. But I didn't think Jagjivan Babu would let me down."

Raj Narain, Thakur's chief propagandist, by then was shooting his mouth in both Patna and Lucknow, virtually at the same time it seemed. He told INDIA TODAY: "You want to know who bought the legislators in support of the Jan Sangh? You want to know how much they were bought for? The Bihar sugar lobby paid. The liquor houses paid. The top industrialists were involved in the toppling of this Government. But wait till we topple them. They won't last a day in the new Assembly. We'll finish them off in no time."

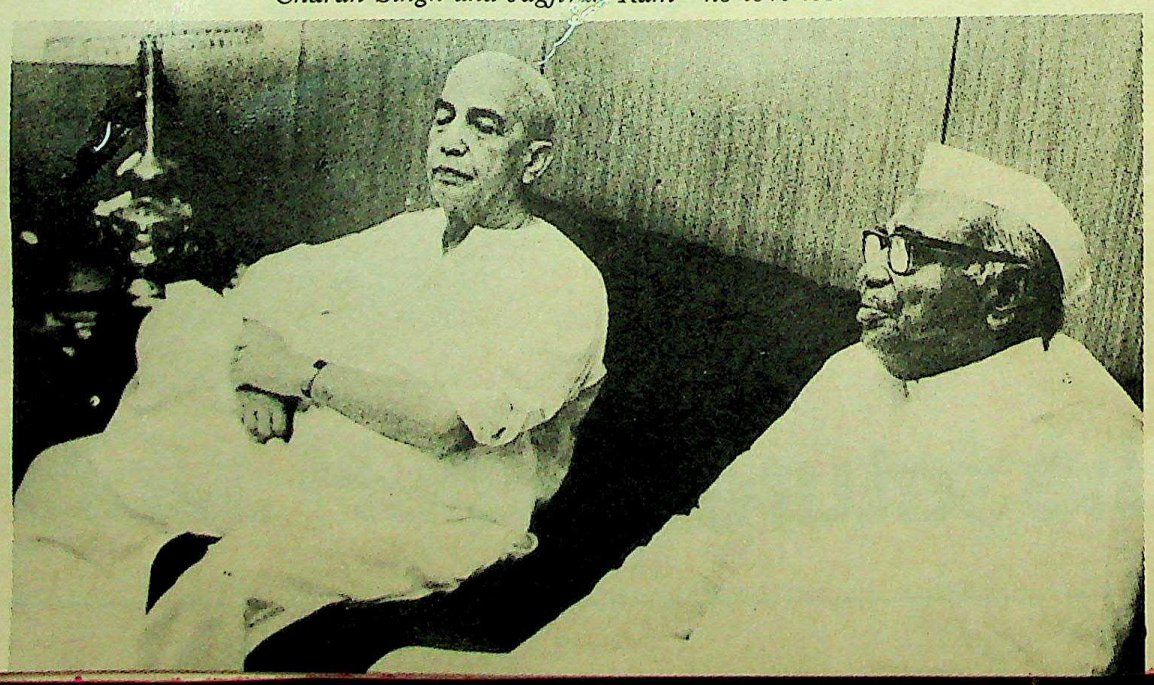
Rejoicing: Not too far away in the MLA quarters in Patna there were celebrations. A small crowd had gathered to hail the mildly innocuous new Harijan chief minister, 56-year-old Ram Sunder Das who, without any ministerial background or experience, suddenly found himself installed in what appears to be an era of puppet chief ministers being manipulated by the leaders in New Delhi.

The political fall-out engineered in Patna by the Jan Sangh (with RSS leader Sundar Singh Bhandari camping to put the final touches in the bargaining scheme) might, in retrospect, appear predictable after the fall of the last Uttar Pradesh ministry in February. But together the two states have embarked on a path that might be the final phase of Janata Party rule; because if the newly-born ministries in these two crucial states indulge in any more toppling, then the whole edifice in New Delhi might come crashing down.

Savage shows of strength in Bihar and Orissa (one Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD) bird flew, the other did not) had their immediate repercussions in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh last fortnight. Devi Lal promptly sacked four Jan Sangh ministers, Shanta Kumar walked the razor's edge again, and in New Delhi the plot dangerously thickened.

And as Finance Minister Charan Singh, leaning heavily on his stick, slowly walked into the South Block to attend a routine Cabinet meeting on April 19, he realized that he had been isolated again. Despite his strenuous efforts to teach "communal Jan

Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram—no love lost



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Sangh" a lesson, his grand strategy had failed. Karpoori Thakur, his unfailing protégé, had badly miscalculated and burnt his fingers, after full assurances that he could survive the show of strength. Charan Singh's old *bête noir*, Jagjivan Ram, had helped pull the carpet from under his feet, and Prime Minister Morarji Desai smiled benignly over his new-found connection with the Jan Sangh.

Belligerent: But no sooner had he lost, than Thakur was on the war-path in Patna. His followers would not support the new ministry, he declared. There could be no question of a compromise, especially as his decision to investigate the Jamshedpur riots was now to be reconsidered. Raj Narain was off to Lucknow to issue more explosive statements and rake up trouble in UP.

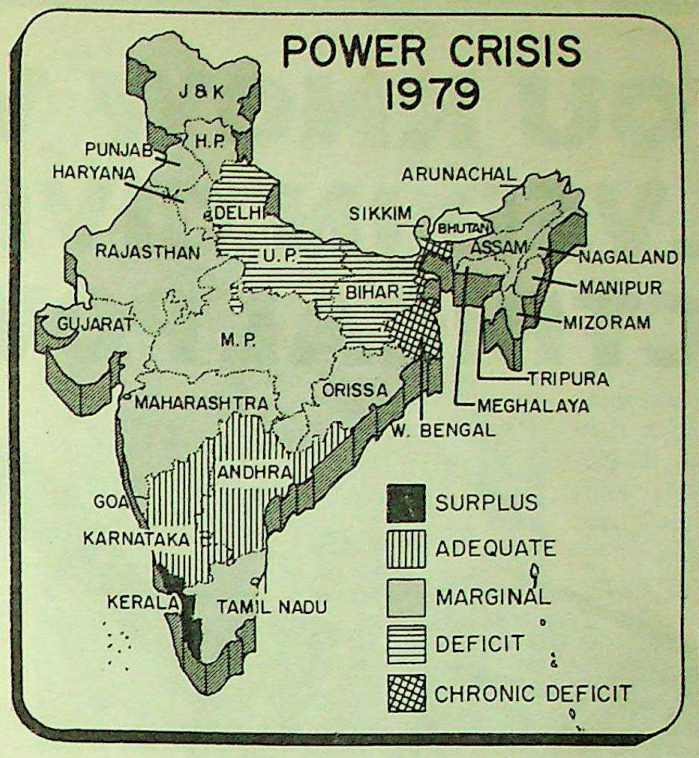
Later, on his way to Delhi and Bombay (where he was seeking "JP's" blessings) Ram Sunder Das was accompanied by the chief Jan Sangh forces of Bihar who had set him up as a "safe" chief minister unlikely to make trouble. Satyendra Narain Singh, the president of the state's Janata Party who was instrumental in winning the game for the Jan Sangh, was happily licking his chops as he held forth on the subject of Karpoori Thakur's evils. "He was weak, witless and incapable of ever taking a decision. Every body outside Bihar thought him to be a clean honest man. But in Bihar he became synonymous with corruption." As for his own part in Thakur's downfall, Singh was eager to spill all the beans: "Jan Sangh leaders in Delhi had been warning me since last year that Karpoori was eroding our base in Bihar. He had to go. Of course, we had it all planned long ago but I was not getting the green signal from Delhi. What with the UP crisis and JP's illness, the matter got delayed for a while."

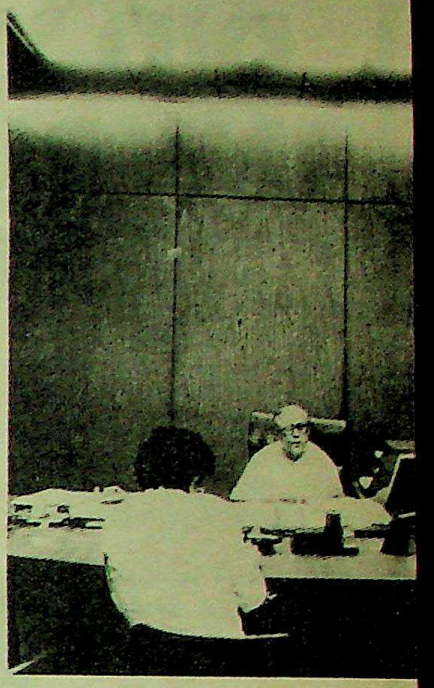
Jagjivan Ram's "betrayal" of the BLD in Bihar is attributed by sources in the defeated camp to reasons as various as "BLD leaders' refusal to return Suresh Ram's porno pictures" and the Harijan leader's insecurity at the growing strength of the Jat-Yadav lobby.

Uncertainty: But even as the new ministry takes over in Bihar, Thakur is consolidating his mandate with the help of the Congress led by Abdul Ghafoor and certain Sarvodaya and Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti elements. Already there is talk of a mid-term poll in the two most populous and politically unstable states of north India.

On the second anniversary of its inception the Janata Party might be racked by the cancers of venom and vengeance in the states but it is in the individual interests of New Delhi's seemingly ageless trio to show restraint, and keep the party in power at the Centre while the bickering continues elsewhere. No thought could be as nightmarish for them as the idea of another general election.

—SUNIL SETHI





As Bengal suffers lights blaze in Basu's office

POWER

Area Of Darkness

MOST crises are man-made, the power crisis in West Bengal which led to an unprecedented shut down of electric supply to all industry for a week, even more so. Jyoti Basu, the unflappable chief minister of the benighted state, took it coolly, as if half expecting it. At the height of the crisis, with much of Calcutta engulfed in darkness, Basu, who also holds the power portfolio, was away on party work in north Bengal. Then he went to Madras to attend a trade union conference, also a party affair. He was so busy with party work that the state was unrepresented at the recent conference of state power ministers in New Delhi. And when the crisis struck the powerful commissar turned yogi and quietly disappeared from the scene.

A further reflection of his curiously cavalier attitude was evident when he spoke to INDIA TODAY in his Writer's Building office in Calcutta last week. Sitting dwarfed behind a mammoth desk—a legacy of past chief ministers no doubt but hardly suited to a trade union activist—the chief minister's office positively blazed. Lamps of brilliant radiance shed light and more than one air-conditioner hummed away, even as virtually all industry using power from the Calcutta system had ground to a halt and severe load-shedding was being practised in most city areas. Basu was quick to pile the blame on the previous Government and absolve himself of the sudden seriousness of the situation. "I was not aware," he pleaded, "that things were so bad. How was I to know that there had been no maintenance, that nothing had been done to establish reserves and that the machines had been slogged so heavily?"

Failure of machines, of course, is eventually in the hands of the men who manage them. And although Basu, like any other politician, mostly accuses opposition trade unions (in this case, the Congress-led INTUC and Naxalite-oriented Workmen's Union) who he claims have ganged up against his own party's Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), much of the irony lies in a trade union leader now running the Government. "After all," said an observer in Calcutta last week, "if Jyoti Basu had been in the Opposition today, he would have made sure that there were rallies and *bandhs* and processions everyday in protest against the present situation. He knows he can get away with it because there is no opposition."

West Bengal is probably the worst managed state in the country and the communists have done nothing to improve the situation. "We have no reserves and no adjustments were possible in cases of plant failure. There has been deep-seated labour tension and no manpower planning in the Santaldih and Bandel plants and discipline was at a very low ebb when we took over," says S. M. Murshed, the state's forceful power commissioner who, as one of the chief minister's blue-eyed administrators took office in April last year. Murshed insists that no one, least of all the lobby of industrialists, hit the worst, could have predicted the appalling situation that suddenly develop-

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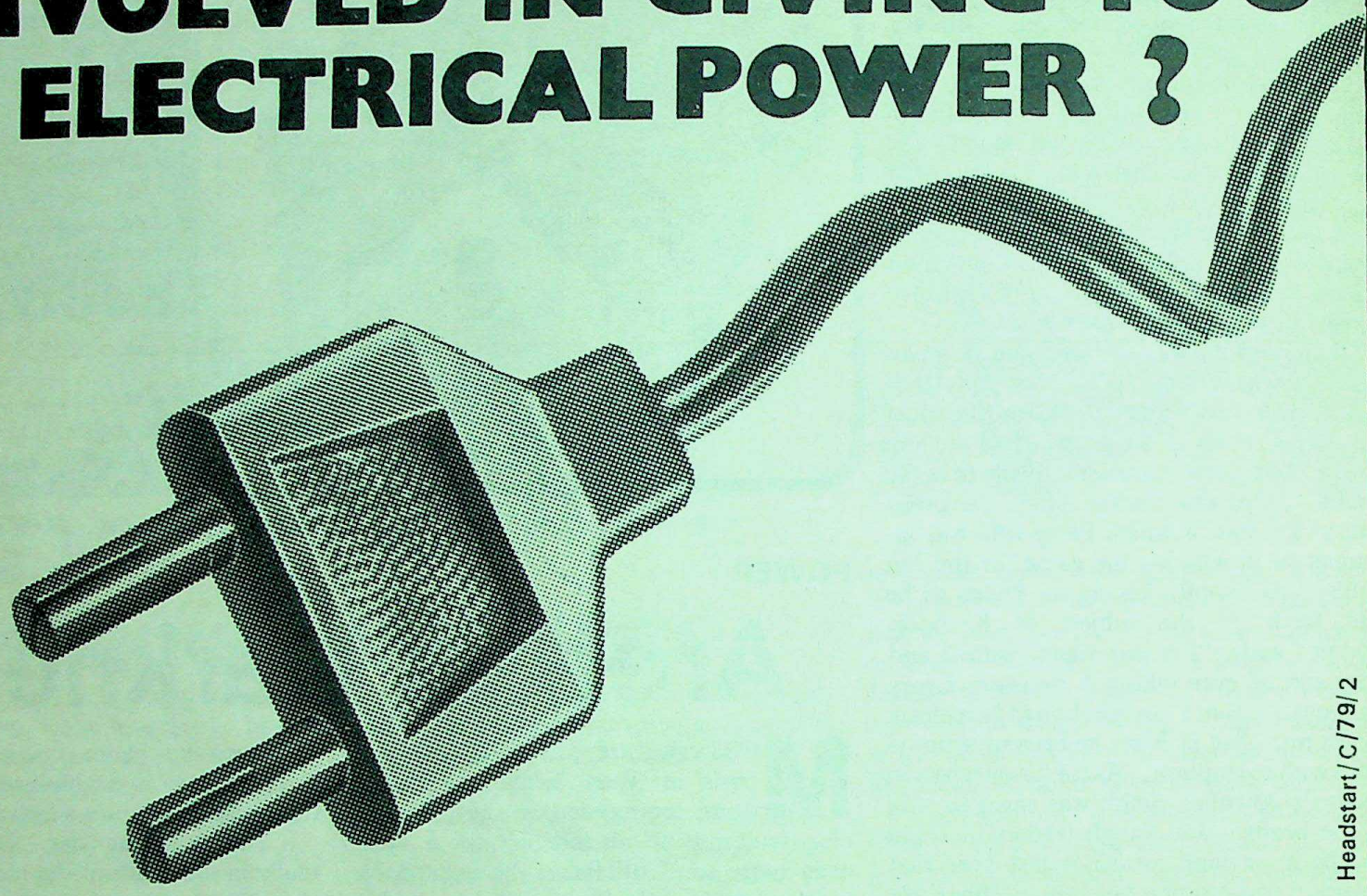

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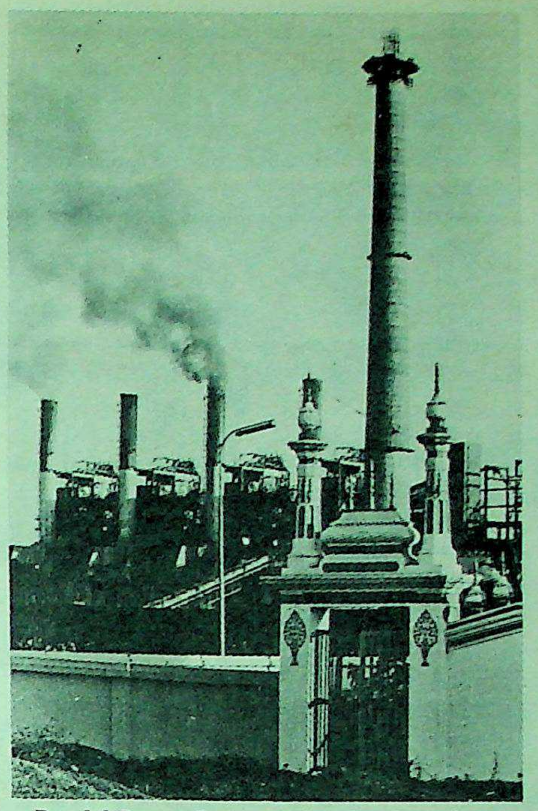
ed in the third week of March when the fire brigade had to be called on several occasions to rescue people stranded in elevators and everything, from Calcutta's trams to telephones, was a write off. (Of the four 75-megawatt units at Bandel, only one was working; of the two functioning 120-megawatt units in Santaldih, one worked; the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) and the Durgapur Projects Ltd (DPL) both simultaneously registered a sharp drop in their supplies to the Calcutta system; and power generation on the whole dropped to as low as 280 megawatt a day when the minimum demand is of 550 megawatt). "But even under an ideal situation with all channels working full blast we cannot get away without a shortage of 50 megawatt," admits Murshed, even as the chairman of the West Bengal State Electricity Board (WBSEB) S. S. Dasgupta spends most of his time these days literally going round with a begging bowl to cadge a few megawatts from neighbouring boards in Bihar and Orissa to meet the daily consumption.

As the officials in Calcutta wring their hands in panic, the Centre looks askance at the situation they have invited. A senior official in the Energy Ministry in New Delhi told INDIA TODAY that power projects in West Bengal taken up four years ago are far behind schedule. Had they been commissioned on time, the installed capacity would have doubled by now. (The third unit at Santaldih station manufactured by Bharat Heavy Electricals (Bhel) was to have begun functioning in December 1975; it was in fact installed in October last year and Murshed admits that it has broken down no less than 12 times in under four months).

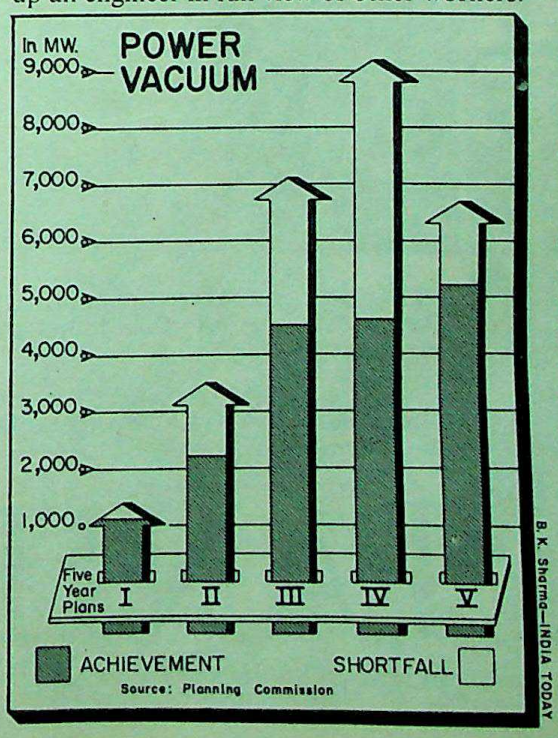
The power generation to the eastern region as a whole (including West Bengal) increased by only two per cent in 1978–79 against an average rise of 12 per cent for the country as a whole. There is, according to the Planning Commission, enough installed capacity in the state (1,500 megawatt), but the maintenance is so poor and breakdowns so many that utilization is very much below par. The administration is so negligent—and, possibly, even indifferent—that the five gas turbine sets of 20 megawatt each (one megawatt = 1,000 kilowatt) imported from Britain on a 'crash' basis have not yet been commissioned. Some sets have not even been unpacked and the packages rot in the sun.

The situation in West Bengal is further complicated by the communists' attempt to politicize every activity in the state, from Panchayat elections to labour management. It is an open secret that the ruling party in the state is pushing its own men into every crevice in the establishment and the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) trade union, CITU, is having a heyday making rings round every other trade union. There is no discipline worth the name in any of the power plants and the management dare not enforce discipline where the cadre of the ruling party is involved. The energy crisis has severely affected the summer paddy crop as also potato cultivation. Along with erratic power, diesel too has disappeared from the market, resulting in destruction of nearly half the standing crop.



Bandel Power Station—low-level working

In Santaldih the most notoriously inefficient of all units, for instance, CITU workers prevented the engineers from repairing all the tubes of a boiler unit on the excuse that only one was leaking. "It is a conspiracy to undermine the left front government by shutting down the unit," they protested. The inevitable result was that the boiler burst when it was put back on stream and the powerhouse had to be closed down. In another instance last April a trade union worker, Kamal Ghosh, beat up an engineer in full view of other workers.



The power crisis in West Bengal is the cumulative effect of indiscipline in the plants, gross neglect of equipment, inter-union rivalry, jealousy among engineers and, above all, politics. The last is a special gift of Jyoti Basu and company.

But maladministration and neglect of equipment are not confined to West Bengal alone. About this time every year, a crisis in power generation and supply erupts almost all over the country like a seasonal epidemic, its dimensions varying from state to state. It began this year with a complete six-day shut down in West Bengal and a near-breakdown in neighbouring Bihar and it is a matter of time before it spreads to Assam, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and New Delhi, roughly in that order. Delhi, like Calcutta, is perpetually in the throes of a crisis and hardly a day passes without a major trip-up at one or the other of its supply points.

Andhra Pradesh and Kerala with exportable power surpluses have helped stave off power crisis in the southern region by sharing it with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, where demand cuts have created operational problems for the continuous process industries. Textile mills and other units working through the week have been forced to shut for a day. Mills have also not been able to switch on generating sets following the ban on the supply of high speed diesel oil for power generation in the industrial sector. Tamil Nadu mill owners are sore that an investment of over Rs 10 crore for installing standby generators of capacity for producing 1,00,000 KVA have been made unproductive with the ban on diesel oil.

The Southern India Mills' Association has warned that Tamil Nadu accounted for more than a third of the yarn delivered to handlooms, powerlooms and knitting factories in the country and fall in yarn production in the state will lead to a chain reaction in the decentralized sectors. Tamil Nadu and Kerala have worked out a power deal whereby the additional power will be used by cement units to work to full capacity and divert a part of the production to Kerala. Karnataka has decided to buy power under a four-year agreement with Kerala at 23 paise a unit.

In Europe, there have been cases where even a minor power black-out has led to the resignation of top executives. But in India, power shut downs, like corruption in high places, are accepted as a fact of life. And it is perhaps this passive acceptance, more than anything else, that is at the root of the total indifference, bordering almost on callousness, which characterizes the general attitude towards power development in the country.

It is not as if there has been no development at all through all these years of growth but a growing economy has insatiable appetite for power which never seems to be adequate enough. The installed capacity has increased nearly 15 times since Independence—from just under 2,000 megawatt

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in 1947 to 29,000 megawatt in 1978–79—but the rate has slackened off with the years and it is now nowhere near what it should be.

A rate of growth of 10 per cent per year is considered moderate for a developing country, which, when compounded, gives a doubling period of around seven and a half years. By this token, the current installed capacity should have been of the order of 40,000 megawatt, as against 29,000 megawatt—a shortfall of 11,000 megawatt, or more than 25 per cent. It must be said to the Janata Government's credit that it has recognized the crucial role that electricity plays in the country's economy by stepping up the outlay on power from 18 per cent (of the total public sector outlay) in the fifth plan (1974–79) to 23 per cent or Rs 15,750 crore in the sixth plan. But such crash programmes are always suspect particularly when neither the equipment manufacture unit like Bhel nor the state electricity board are equipped to handle such a huge increase in their responsibilities.

Bhel has recently come up for considerable criticism, a good deal of it politically motivated—the Industry Ministry had to fly out a team of Bhel specialists to Calcutta headed, not by Bhel chairman or engineering director, but by a secretary in the ministry. There are genuine doubts whether its manufacturing programme is in line with the realities of the situation.

The manager of the Pathratu Power Station in Bihar has complained that the sets made by Bhel are subject to frequent breakdowns, as is the ill-fated third unit at Santaldih which was apparently not the case with the old sets supplied by Soviet organizations. The Bhel answer is that they are working to specifications over which they have no control and if, for instance, the ash content in coal goes on increasing as it has been doing, they can do little about it. The ash content in middlings can be as much as 40 per cent which means that of every 100 tonne of coal received, 40 tonne is just ash. This leads to colossal corrosion and abrasion of boilers and auxiliaries, including high wear and tear in coal mills and fans, and eventually, reduces efficiency. However, according to some engineers, the Russian equipment is apparently sturdier and being less automated, can be adjusted quickly to take care of changes in coal supplies. If so, the attempts of Bhel to update design may be of questionable utility. Under Indian conditions, it may be better to go in for sturdier and less automated equipment based on relatively backward technologies rather than highly sophisticated plants that cannot take the rough with the smooth.

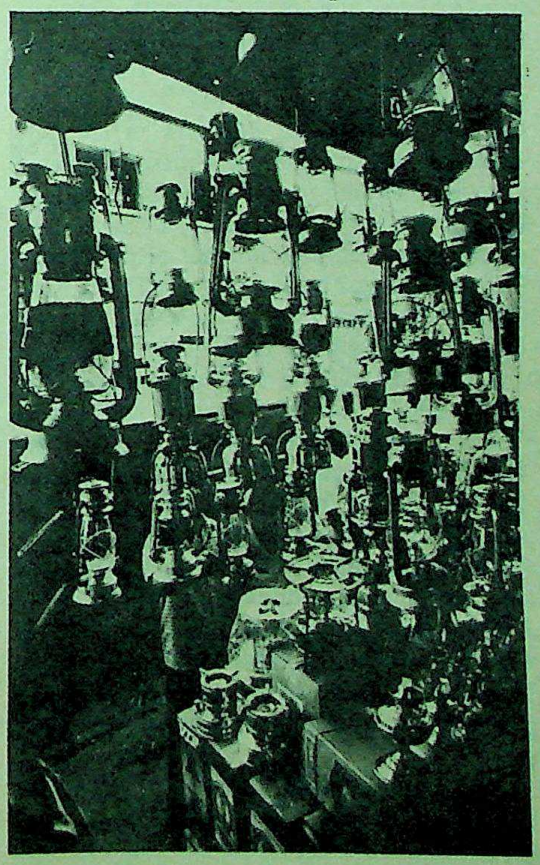
The babu-ridden State Electricity Boards (SEBs) are in a class by themselves. Most SEBs do not have trained staff to man the new large size generating units and in the case of West Bengal (WBSEB) vacancies, beginning with two on the board itself, remain unfilled for years particularly at the level of assistant engineers. On the other hand, Jyoti Basu's major grouse against his predecessor, Siddhartha Shankar Ray has been that he inducted no less than 12,000 people into the WBSEB, mostly as an election sop. "What am I to do?" says chairman Dasgupta, "I am still left with 4,000 people to accommodate."

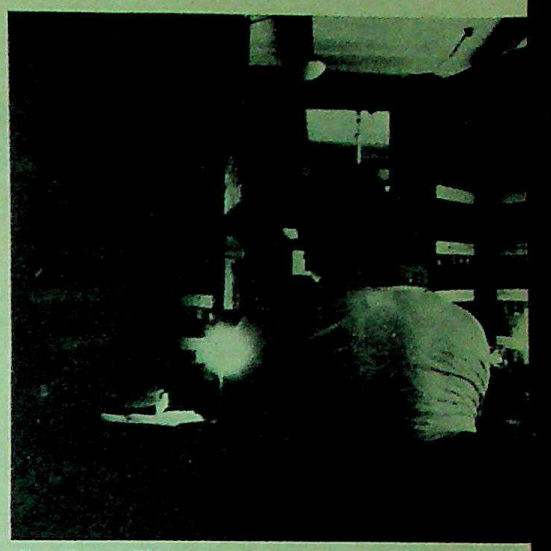
But more important than their endemic inefficiency (on market day at Santaldih droves of workers and engineers have been known to saunter out to spend the day loafing in the town and leaving the plant to the mercy of no one in particular) SEBs in general are apparently totally immune to the 'profit' culture.

The power supply in Calcutta was among the best in India—next only to Bombay—as long as it was operated by the Calcutta Electric Supply Company Limited, a British-owned company, that was nationalized in the early '70s. Since then, electricity in Calcutta has never been quite the same again. The boards have to depend on state governments, that is local small-time politicians, for budgetary allocation and this has affected their management and efficiency no end. It is doubtful whether things will really improve if engineers instead of babus man the upper heights of the management ladder.

The WBSEB is headed by an engineer—its secretary and public relations men are also engineers—but this has not improved its functioning, nor its public relations. The Atomic Energy Commission is also headed by an engineer (who is also secretary of his department and reports directly to the prime minister) but the Commission is even more inefficient than some electricity boards. The babu vs the engineer is a red herring: the management of SEBs is not better or worse than that of other public sector organizations. It just seems worse because it is not as remote as, say, Hindustan Steel or National Seeds Corporation.

Lanterns in a Calcutta shop—brisk sales





Candlelit Chowringhee railway booking office

Power is in a mess, because it is everybody's and, therefore, nobody's baby. Because power is money, everybody has a finger in it. There are, apart from the much maligned SEBs, power departments of state governments, their irrigation departments in charge of hydro-electric projects, project control boards (for inter-state projects), regional electricity boards, Central Electricity Authority, the Union ministries of Energy and Irrigation, Atomic Energy Commission, Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals and the Oil and Natural Gas Commission, National Thermal Power Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation, Planning Commission, Ministry of Industry—the list is endless. Any one of these organizations can bring the parade to a halt. This is only as far as planning is concerned.

Where it comes to operations, there is the familiar merry-go-round of complaints and back-passing; railways blaming Coal India, Coal India blaming electricity board and electricity board blaming railways. With over a score of organizations at each other's throat, it is a minor miracle that there is any power at all at the end of the cable.

Things might perhaps improve if the power establishment is debureaucratized and a profit element is introduced in certain limbs of the power industry. In Maharashtra, Tatas run in tandem with the state electricity board, and this is apparently good for both. In highly industry-intensive areas like, for instance, Calcutta, a large power station, owned and operated by a private sector company would keep the 'sarkari' power complex on its toes. Jyoti Basu may not like such a non-Marxist solution to the power problem, but, on the other hand, he might, as it would afford him and his colleagues more time to deal with pressing party affairs instead of worrying about such trifles as leaking boiler tubes, stuck valves and the wear and tear on turbine blades.

—JAY DUBASHI and SUNIL SETHI with Bureau Reports

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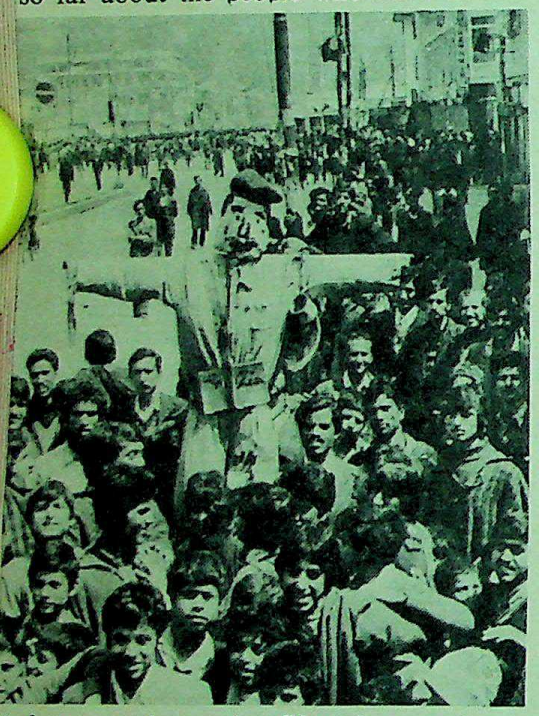
Anti-Zia Movement

Bhutto's execution has severely buffeted the pro-Pakistan movement in Kashmir Valley. Cries of "Down with Pakistan" and "Quit Azad Kashmir" rent the air even in Pak-occupied Kashmir as anti-Zia demonstrators took to the street. The Pakistani authorities alarmed at the escalating violence cracked down heavily on the protestors, many of whom attempted to cross over to the Indian side of Kashmir.

The Indian border force, alerted by New Delhi on April 4, prevented a large influx of refugees but 12 families reportedly managed to infiltrate into the Indian territory of Poonch and Rajouri sectors. A senior official told INDIA TODAY that the authorities "have not taken any final decision so far about the people who have crossed over" but patrolling on the line of actual control has been intensified to prevent "illegal" entry. Over 100 persons, who had tried to cross into the Uri and Keran areas of Kashmir and Poonch sector in the Jammu region were reportedly forced back by Indian security forces. The official said that refugees who have managed to infiltrate are seeking asylum on the plea that "a reign of terror has been unleashed by Pakistan authorities against pro-Bhutto men".



A demonstration against Bhutto's execution

Pro-Indian: In the state Assembly recently in session in Jammu, both the Opposition and ruling National Conference members urged "steps to get back Pak-held Kashmir". At several rallies in Srinagar, speakers, resentful of Prime Minister Desai treating Bhutto's case as Pakistan's internal matter raised pro-India slogans. In fact, most Kashmiris are veering round to the view that Sheikh Abdullah's decision to support accession to India in 1947 was "right" and he stands vindicated by "undemocratic developments in Pakistan".

A political observer, however, cautioned that the anti-Pakistan feeling presently swamping the Kashmir Valley has not changed the basic thinking of the pro-Pakistan lobby in Srinagar. Political groups like Maulvi Farooq's Awami Action Committee, Maqbool Mahaz Party and People's League Party have not denounced their commitment for a plebiscite to decide the future of Kashmir.

Says a Kashmiri leader: "A concrete change in the thinking of the pro-Pak lobby would very much depend on Zia's failure to handle Pakistan after Bhutto."

—B. L. KAK

SIKKIM

Ethnic Struggle

It is now fairly certain that Sikkim's state Assembly elections will be deferred at least till November or may be, even till March next year. But some of the controversies triggered off by the possibility of an April poll continue to be avidly debated.

Almost all issues in Sikkim originate from and end in its ethnic diversity. Lepchas, the original inhabitants are today facing extinction; the Bhutias who ruled after them are also in a minority. Nepalis, who immigrated in large numbers in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, are now in an overwhelming majority and are clamouring for their right to rule. Adding to the confusion are a large number of plainsmen, identified as "of Indian origin". The tension and bitterness created by the ethnic struggle have cut across party lines.

The Central and state governments are committed to the abolition of the present "parity system" under which Lepchas and Bhutias who constitute only 20 per cent of the population have 15 seats reserved in the 32-member Assembly. Nepalis—in 1975, of 133,000 voters 98,000 were Nepalis—also have a similar number of seats. This was done under a formula devised by the Chogyal to keep Nepali power in check. Nepalis find this regulation stifling under it since they cannot hope to dominate Sikkim's politics.

Citizenship Problems: Sikkim will probably be the first region in the recent past, where the most debated issues in the elections will pertain to those of the elections itself. After the merger of Sikkim with India, the Indian Government granted citizenship to all Sikkimese subjects listed by the former Chogyal's administration. But Nepalis who came to Sikkim after 1961—when the Sikkim Subject Regulation came into force—were not made Sikkim subjects and hence were missed out in the Indian list as well. Ironically, the political movement of 1973 which had dethroned the Chogyal, Palden Thondup Namgyal, had the active backing of thousands of such Nepalis. They are said to number about 50,000 and Nepali politicians are working hard for their inclusion on the election rolls.

Incongruity: An equally unfortunate case is that of people of Indian origin in Sikkim, who are estimated to number about 60,000. In the normal course, when a person changes his place of residence from one state to another no restriction is placed on his right to contest an election from his new state. But in Sikkim, people of Indian origin—some have been staying since very long—who form over 20 per cent of the population are foreigners in their own country and do not retain the right to contest elections. This section is likely to be alarmed by the reported remark of Ram Chandra Poudyal, Sikkim's Tourist, Land Reforms and Forest Minister that the question of "Indian" immigrants could not be sorted out before that of the Nepali immigrants was settled. The Nepalis are apparently not too keen on the induction of "Indians" on the election rolls since this might weaken their power base.

The questions of protective representation and citizenship right for Nepalis will only be settled when the Central Government introduces a bill in Parliament defining its objectives and intentions in "public interest". Until then Sikkim promises to be an unkind home for its numerous settlers.

—PRAKASH YOGI

THE NORTH-EAST

No Peace Signs

Peking's assurance to Foreign Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee during his recent visit to China that no assistance would be given to Naga rebels has come as a crippling blow to the insurgents. Particularly dismayed are the rebels—reported to number over 3,000—who have been camping across the border in Burma since 1977 because they cannot hope to enter India without Chinese assistance.

After the January 5 massacre of Assamese villagers by armed Naga rebels, the situation along the Assam-Nagaland border has become quite fluid. For the first time since the Shillong Accord of November 1975 the Nagas have taken to attacking security personnel. In the last week of March, Naga rebels ambushed an army patrol killing

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seven jawans and injuring four seriously.

To add to their problems, curfew has been imposed for two months along the entire Indo-Burmese border to prevent rebels from crossing over into India. Smugglers often cross the borders on bribing the officials and underground elements have taken advantage of this. They have gone across the border for guerilla training and returned, masquerading as smugglers.

Top Naga rebel leaders are meanwhile working hard to arrange another round of talks between Prime Minister Morarji Desai and the self-exiled Naga leader A.Z. Phizo. But chances of bringing the two together at the negotiating table are slim. Immediately after the unproductive talks in London between them in June 1977, Phizo had reportedly circulated spliced tapes of the talks to his followers and after this, Desai has naturally assumed a rigid stand: Phizo has first to become an Indian citizen and give up the demand for a sovereign Nagaland before the start of negotiations.

Difficult: New Delhi may try to be flexible on the demand for a sovereign Nagaland but on the question of Phizo's nationality, Desai is unlikely to budge. If Phizo were to come to India as a British citizen, the issue would be internationalized. On Phizo's part, Desai is asking for the impossible because he (Phizo) still maintains that Nagaland is not a part of India. It is unlikely that for just another round of talks he would throw everything he stands for to the winds.

Meanwhile, the Naga rebels now in India and Burma have no inclination to accept the Shillong Accord of 1975 in letter and spirit. This has been one of the main reasons for the failure of the series of talks at Pangsa between rebel leaders and representatives of the Nagaland Peace Council.

The hostile attitude of the local population has been the result of their exploitation by unscrupulous businessmen who have converged on this region from all over the country. Moreover, candidates from other states, taking advantage of the low level of literacy, have grabbed a large percentage of the white-collar jobs. To top this, the people feel neglected by the Centre. Under the circumstances, the people have been quick to respond to the anti-Indian propaganda of the rebels.

Violence: Nearby Mizoram and Manipur have also been badly affected. With the expulsion of Laldenga from the Mizo National Front, the strength of the Mizo rebels has been considerably reduced. But with elections to the 30-member Mizoram Assembly held recently, political parties had taken up the cry that Mizoram's problems cannot be solved without the participation of Mizo rebels. In Manipur, policemen and jawans have been shot down in broad daylight only to have their arms snatched. The number of bank heists and hold-ups has risen as the underground elements intensify their search for funds to finance their activities. But until now, not one of the insurgents has been arrested.

Though the impossibility of arranging talks between Desai and Phizo is apparent, it has also become increasingly clear that Nagaland at least cannot hope to see peace until Central leaders and the Naga National Council—of which Phizo is the president—come to an amiable settlement.

—IBOYAIMA LAITHANGBAM

KERALA

The RSS Factor

A long round of tantrums dealt with by placatory moves has finally come to an end in Kerala politics. The desperate attempts by Communist Party of India (CPI) Chief Minister P. K. Vasudevan Nair and his colleagues in the coalition government to rope in the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) have failed. The need was urgent in view of four Assembly byelections scheduled for May 17.

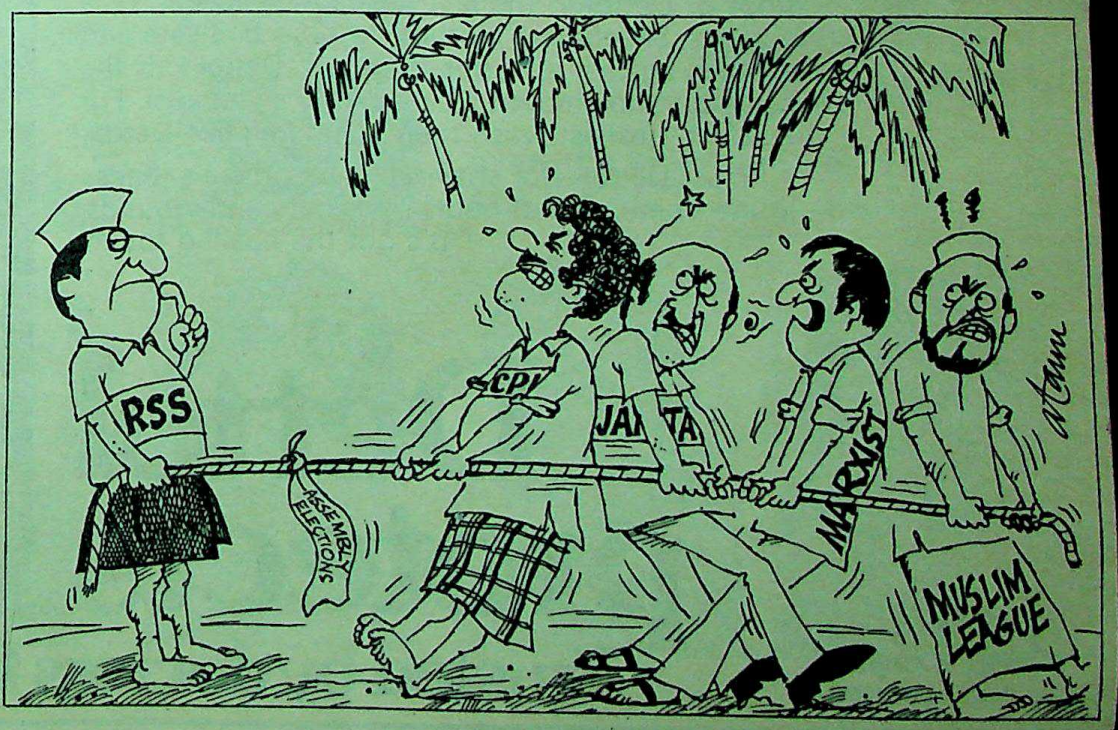
The ruling front had been going out of its way to have the Marxists on its side. On Marxist leader E. M. S. Namboodiripad's demand, its leaders readily responded by publicly declaring that the front had never been anti-Marxist. They agreed with the CPI-M proposal that there should be "no liberalization of pension for MLAs". During the Rajya Sabha election, in another attempt to woo the Marxists, the ruling front legislators gave their second votes to the CPI-M candidate, K. Chathunny Master. But Namboodiripad's conditions were stiff. He wanted the ruling front to express its regret publicly for having toppled his government in 1969 to usher in a CPI-led coalition government headed by C. Achutha Menon. But the ruling front's leaders refused to oblige.

The political sparring and handshakes between the two were the result of a common threat they felt they experienced. The Marxists were scared of the growing influence of the Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh (RSS). This fear was spurred by the influx into the RSS of youth of the Marxist fold in the northern districts of Kerala. The CPI and the Congress, major participants in the coalition, also shared this apprehension.

But Namboodiripad's "clean slate" diplomacy, implying that the past be forgotten, was too much for the ruling front to stomach particularly since it involved the resignation of the Nair ministry. Said Nair: "There is no need for the front to be apologetic to anyone about the functioning of its government." The front, he said, was functioning well on the basis of certain programmes and policies. But he issued a last half-invitation to the CPI-M by underlining the need for all those opposed to reactionary forces to join hands at the state and national level.

Result: The end of one series of talks for the CPI-M merely meant the beginning of another—this time successful. The Janata Party moved in swiftly and the Marxists have concluded a pact with it, the rebel Muslim League and the National Revolutionary Socialist Party. The CPI-M will contest two seats and the Janata Party and the Muslim League, one each. But the RSS factor stuck out like a sore thumb. According to the agreement, the Janata Party will not field an RSS candidate and the CPI-M will retain the right to attack the organization in its campaign speeches.

For the Janata Party it may not be such a sweet victory. The RSS element in the bargaining may cause unpleasantness between members of the former Jan Sangh and other constituents of the Janata Party. For the ruling front on the other hand, it might not prove to be such a bitter defeat. An alliance with the CPI-M, whom they have vehemently opposed in the last two elections could have led to a fall in its credibility with the voters. As for the Marxists, this summer in Kerala is likely to be a pleasant one.



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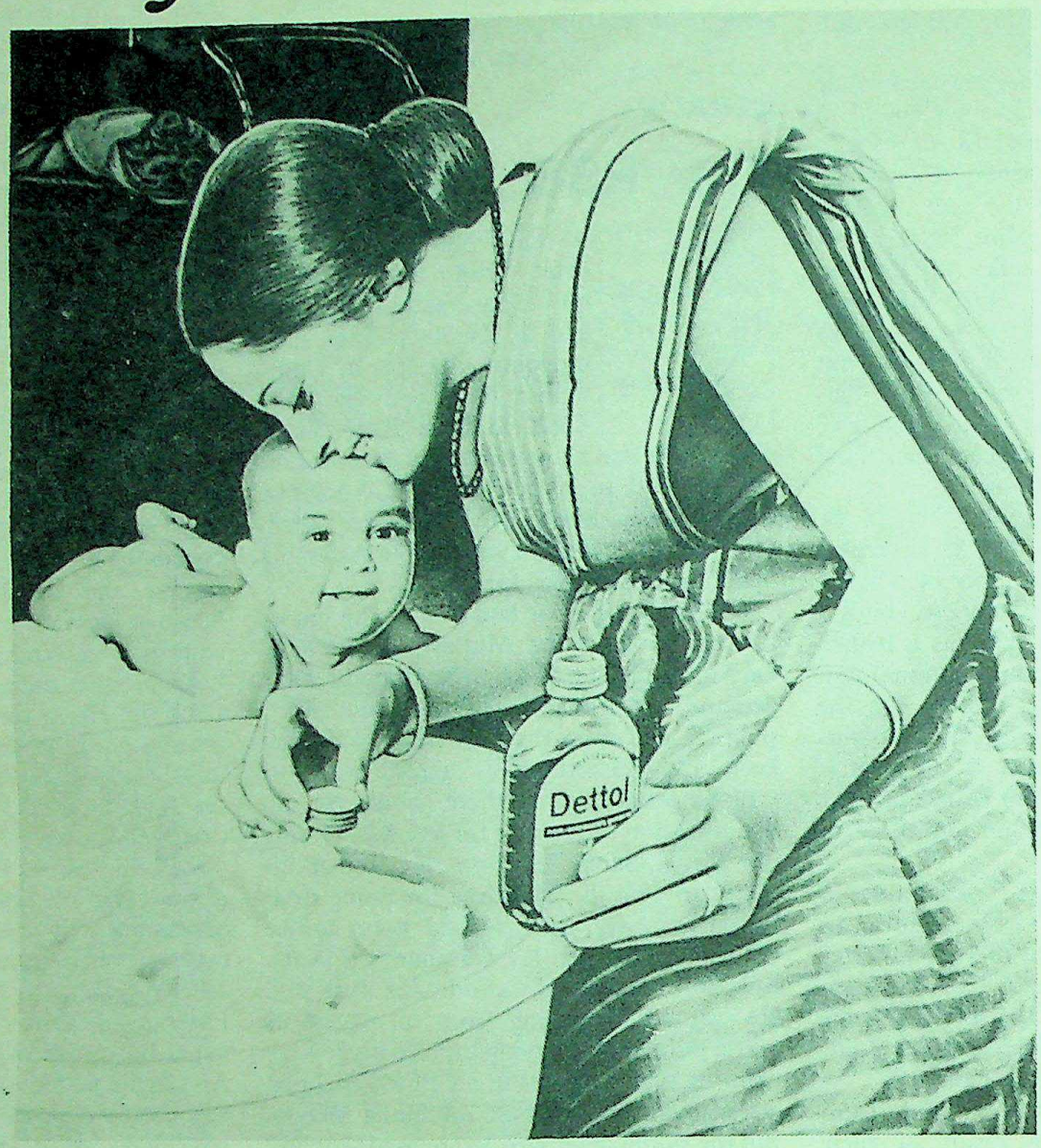

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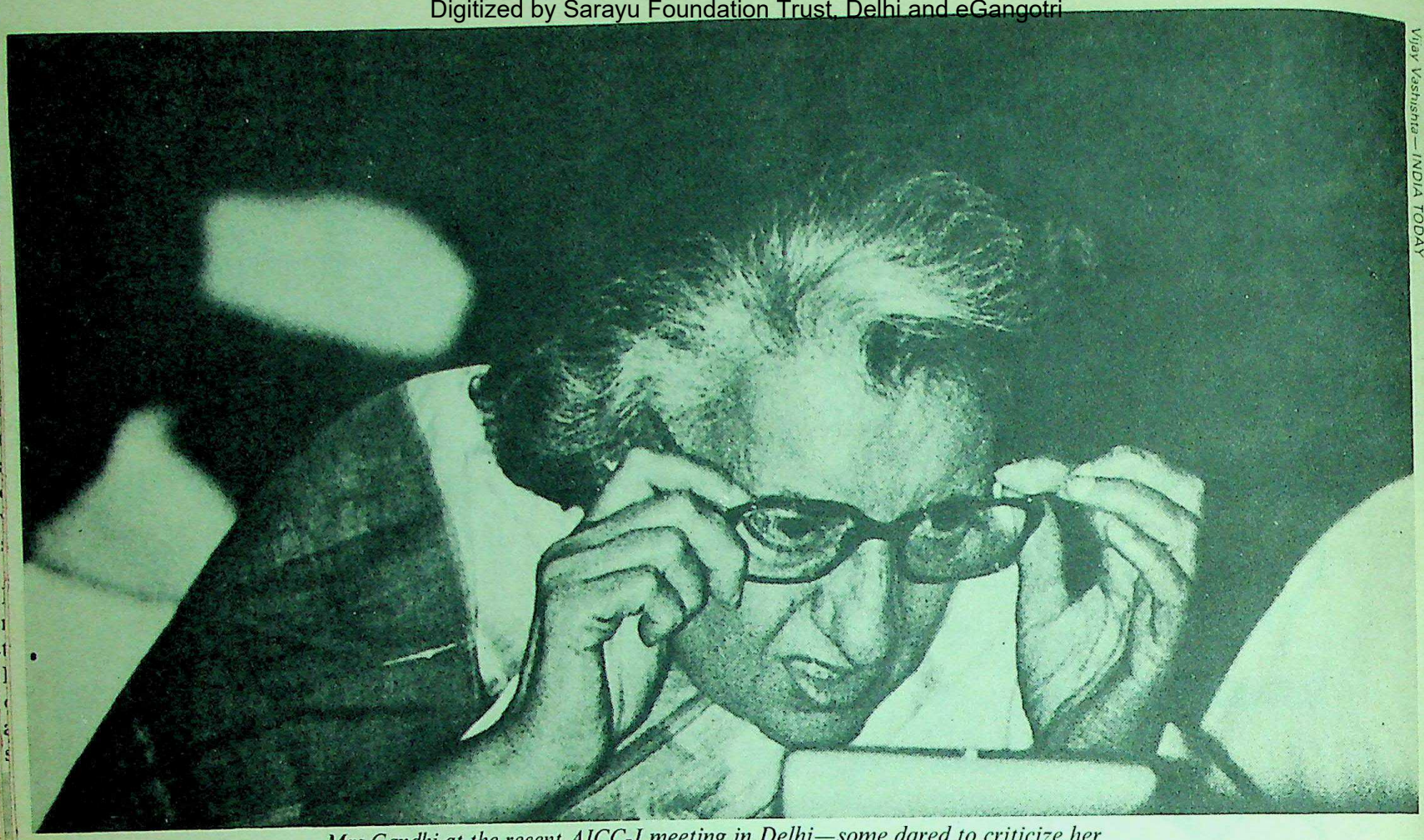

Vijay Vashishta—INDIA TODAY

Mrs Gandhi at the recent AICC-I meeting in Delhi—some dared to criticize her

INDIRA GANDHI

Back To The Wall

CAUGHT in a pincer attack from the Janata Party's Special Courts move and from her rebellious partymen, Mrs Indira Gandhi, the imperious Empress of the Emergency, is now fighting for her political survival. Despite her attempts to quash the Special Courts Bill it was passed through Rajya Sabha where the Opposition enjoys a majority. Now it is only a matter of time before it becomes law.

Hard political realities are staring starkly in her face. The Special Courts Bill designed to bring to book those responsible for the excesses committed during the 1975–1977 Emergency is sending cold shivers down her spine. Her partymen and women who have perceived the shape of things to come have pointed out the danger signals, but her arrogance and misplaced sense of grandeur have so far prevented her from coming to terms with her political doom. One of her former ministers attending the AICC-I session in Delhi quietly said: "She is now a political irrelevance. She will be summoned, prosecuted and sentenced."

Her legal advisers fear that the Government has at least one strong case—the alleged illegal detention of veteran freedom-fighter Bhim Sen Sachar. With less scope in a Special Court for legal manoeuvres to buy time, Mrs Gandhi has reasons to worry about her political future. When she was jailed for contempt of Parliament last December, the public response in her favour in the north, which holds the key to national power, was weak. Though there were a handful of demonstrations, some of them violent, there were virtually no public meetings in her support in marked contrast to the south. Under the circumstances a long spell in jail could be politically fatal for her. And here lies the crunch.

Resistance: To stop the Special Courts from functioning, the Congress (I) will have to take the issue to the streets and organize nation-wide protests. This the older leaders like Karnataka Chief Minister Devraj Urs and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chenna Reddy are reluctant to do. She needs the support of her errant son's organization—the Youth Congress. But any such upsurge of the discredited Youth Congress and their patron saint, Sanjay Gandhi, is being resisted by a growing number within the party.

Said a pot-bellied senior delegate at the AICC-I pointing to the complacent dull assembly of delegates: "Look we are all finished. We can't fight any more. The party needs new blood but the problem is that of finding a matching blood group for transfusions. She is trying to give the party a transfusion with the Youth Congress and the two groups don't match. Naturally it will be rejected."

Pipe-smoking Urs, probably the only other leader in the Congress (I) with a following of his own, fired the first salvo (*see interview*). One of the first speakers on the opening day of the session, he said: "If I know Mrs Gandhi's mind, she will not bring him (Sanjay) to the forefront of politics." Hitting out at the caucus around Mrs Gandhi, he threatened to "expose from public platforms" all those who "clandestinely and surreptitiously" made use of Sanjay to get favours from Mrs Gandhi.

The delegates to the AICC-I, in the air-conditioned Gujarati Samaj auditorium in old Delhi, heard him in stunned silence, except for a meek protest from the back-benches occupied by the Youth Congress members. When Urs resumed his seat on the podium, Mrs Gandhi stared at him and said: "I will resign." Urs shot back: "I can also do that. But that is not going to solve our problems." A little later, Urs left the session. He had lunch with Maharashtra Congress leader V.P. Naik, and went back to his luxurious suite in the Karnataka Bhavan and slept while Mrs Gandhi's camp pondered over the attack from one of her loyal supporters.

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On the second day of the session, Urs continued to keep her in suspense and went off to attend an All India Muslim Youth Convention, one of whose patrons is Kashmir Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah's son Farooq. The message of Urs's antics was clear—Mrs Gandhi could no longer count on his unconditional support.

Here again, the underlying reason which provoked the Urs outburst was the ubiquitous Sanjay Gandhi. Apparently, some ministers in Urs's cabinet like Transport and Tourism Minister Gundu Rao have been maintaining a direct dialogue with Sanjay, which has got Urs nervous. In addition, there is an election petition contesting Urs's election in the state elections of February 1978, and if he is unseated by the court the leadership may well pass into the hands of the pro-Sanjay lobby in Karnataka. Urs also fears that if Mrs Gandhi is convicted, the leadership of the Congress (I) may fall into Sanjay's lap. But this apprehension could well be a cloak to hide the ambition of a local chieftain who wants to come into the big league specially when his national leader is on the defensive. Obviously, his political mentor's sense of timing has rubbed off on him, and Urs is likely to continue to apply pressure on Mrs Gandhi's Achilles' heel—Sanjay.

Irked: Urs's battle against Sanjay Gandhi and the caucus got a further boost when the attractive firebrand Tarakeshwari Sinha, who defected from the Congress (O) to Mrs Gandhi's party during the Bihar movement in 1974, said: "Some people have formed a Saturn ring around you. People have opened shops to trade on your name and that of your son's." Mrs Gandhi, who was presiding, angrily rang the bell to interrupt her. "This is a session to discuss programmes, not personalities." Sinha retorted: "If you are going to keep your eyes closed, nobody can help you."

When Mrs Gandhi continued to interrupt her, Sinha threw up her papers on the platform and walked out in a huff claiming that she was not allowed to speak. Only a couple of women in the front rows protested against Sinha's remarks. But outside the hall, Sinha became a heroine. They patted her on her back for speaking out her mind. Said Sinha: "Sometimes I feel we have to save Indira from Indira."

It was now clear to Mrs Gandhi that the misdeeds of her taciturn wayward son were once again being visited on her and she was none too comfortable for it. She squirmed uneasily on the dais and twitched her eyebrows nervously, and showed the annoyance of an empress who had been scolded by her retainers. But she kept a stony silence about the apple of her eye, on the grounds that she would not discuss personalities. This, however, did not prevent her from giving full rein to her loyal minions to rant about the hardships of being a prime minister's son.

Ramachandra Rath, the president of the Youth Congress, said: "You are born into a family because of providence, but you become somebody because of yourself. A beggar's son and a prime minister's son must have equal rights. You can't stop a beggar's son (from entering politics) just as you can't stop a prime minister's son." He thought the campaign against Sanjay was part of a plot against the party and Mrs Gandhi. "It should be dealt with seriously when it shows signs of coming up within the party."

Threat: And to boost the lady's morale there was no shortage of rhetoric. Moving the resolution condemning the Special Courts, leader of the Opposition, C. M. Stephen, 60, thundered: "Indira Gandhi is the commander-in-chief of the party and the people of India. They will fight the battle for her; they will accept the challenge." And he added a veiled threat to potential candidates who might aspire to the benches of the Special Courts: "When this party assumes power anything will be forgiven. But a judge who offers to be the instrument of political vendetta commits a heinous crime. This cannot be forgiven."

The degree of Mrs Gandhi's paranoia about the Special Courts was brought into sharp focus when a petition form against the "black law" was used by delegates to write a note for making an announcement. As soon as Mrs Gandhi saw the note, she grabbed the microphone and screamed in her schoolteacher voice: "Don't misuse these forms. If you don't wish to collect signatures, please return them. Do not use it as a writing-pad."

It was obvious from the manner in which she conducted the sessions that she felt this was her own show. The idea behind holding the AICC-I session was to establish the legality of Mrs Gandhi's Congress and demonstrate her control over it. General Secretary A. R. Antulay jubilantly claimed that of the 620 AICC members belonging to the pre-split Indian National Congress, 376 were present at the session, giving Mrs Gandhi's faction the right to call itself the *real* Congress. "Twenty-six delegates have sent telegrams and letters pledging their support to us," he said. But a bystander quipped in: "Yes, they are 420 in all." And to prove to the election commissioner that those delegates had attended, Mrs Gandhi's men were busy herding them for group photographs which would be produced before the election commissioner.

Mrs Gandhi is making a determined bid to get recognized as the Indian National

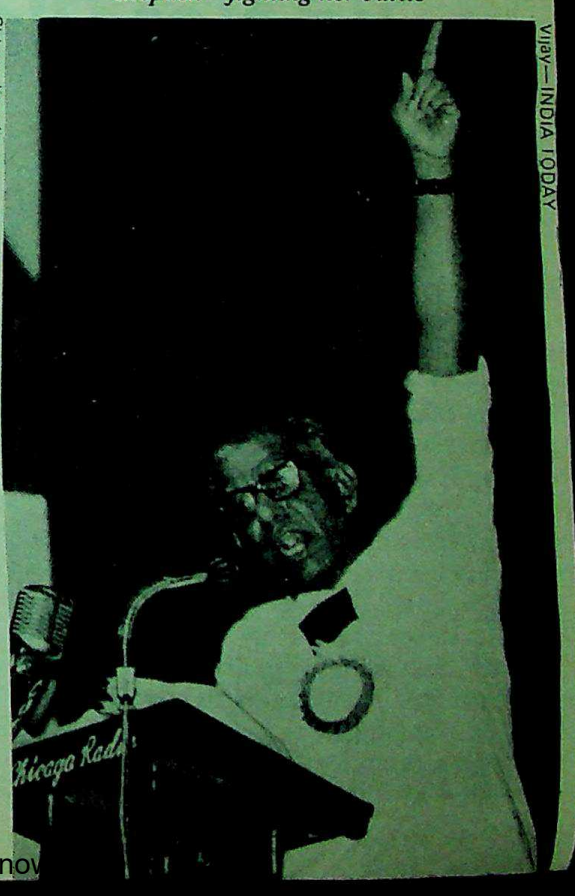
Urs—fighting the Sanjay smell

Vijay—INDIA TODAY

Sinha—"saving Indira from Indira"

Chhotu Karadia

Stephen—fighting her battle



Vijay—INDIA TODAY

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Mrs Gandhi meets Sanjay and (on his right) Bansi Lal's son Surinder at an IYC meeting in 1976

R.K. Dhawan (left) and Charanjit Singh with M

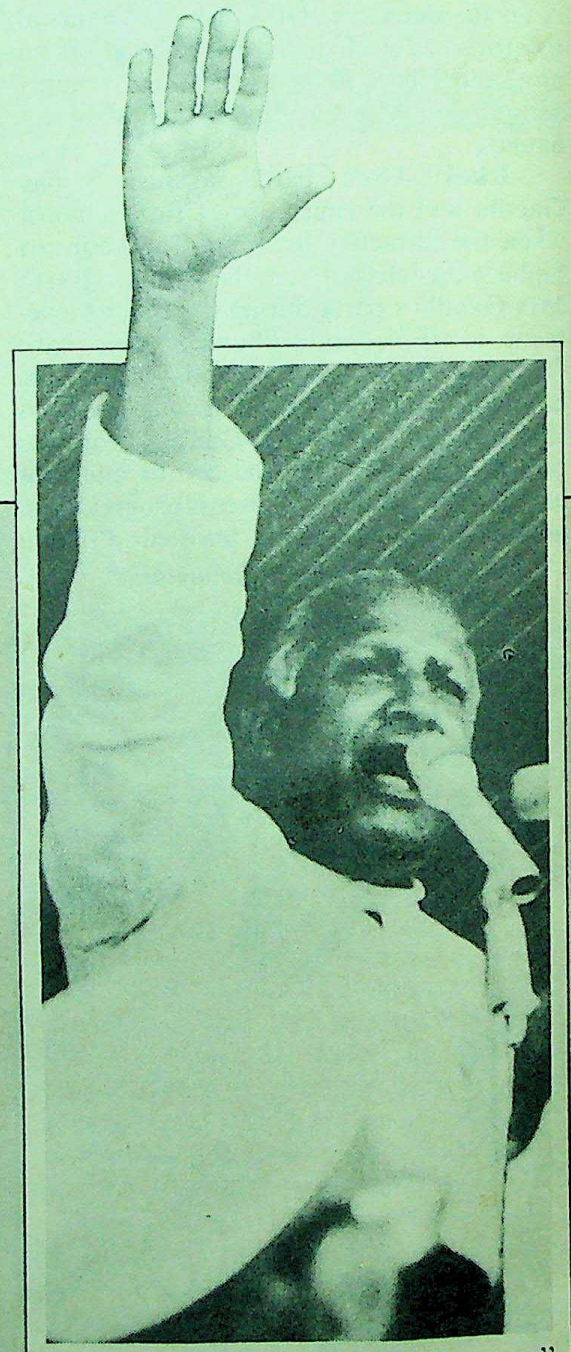
Gandhi at the

Congress since she well appreciates the election advantages of such a recognition. She would not only totally demoralize the rival Congress (S), but would also have a popular election symbol and a nation-wide party network for fighting elections.

But Y. B. Chavan, former leader of the Opposition and now with the rival Congress(S) said: "They are wasting their time. It is a futile effort." The AICC-I will go down in history as a session where Sanjay ruled the roost and Mrs Gandhi stood by her son.

However, Mrs Gandhi and her supporters claim that Sanjay Gandhi is not in politics but is only doing some social work. The distinction is as academic as the one in the Janata Party over the political role of the Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh (RSS) which claims to be only a cultural organization. Said one close associate of Sanjay Gandhi: "My friend has lost his business, his factory and is facing so many trials. What else can he do but enter politics. There is really nothing else a young man who is not qualified for any job and is not even a graduate can do under the circumstances."

But others in the party would like to see the young man politically unemployed. An associate of Urs, a former minister, articulated the feelings of his group: "We are only saying it is politically inadvisable for Mrs



Urs—"expressing the feeling of partymen"

DEVRAJ URS

"I Did Not Blame Sanjay"

KARNATAKA Chief Minister Devraj Urs, 63, who is spearheading the rebellion in the Congress(I) against the return of Sanjay Gandhi, is a suave diplomat and a shrewd politician. In an interview with INDIA TODAY *Urs explains his attitude towards Sanjay, Mrs Gandhi and the Janata Party. Excerpts:*

Q. *What prompted you to make those remarks about Sanjay Gandhi at the AICC-I meeting?*

A. Some people are unnecessarily dragging in his name for their own ends. Why should it be done at all? I am not against Sanjay Gandhi coming back to politics. How can anyone prevent it? I'm not one who says that because he is Indira Gandhi's son he should not be allowed to enter politics. I am only saying that he should come on his own steam and there should be no room for suspicion that he is being imposed or that he is being built up by someone or some people.

Q. *But do you think there is a danger of Sanjay Gandhi becoming powerful again?*

A. Why do you call it a "danger"? It is because it seems unnatural. It is not the way one should come to a position of power. Sanjay's comeback should be natural.

Q. *What would you call a "natural" way to come into politics?*

A. Supposing you want to stand for elections, what should you do? You should choose a constituency and nurse it. You should work there among the people and serve them. You should win their confidence and get to know them. They may elect you and who can prevent it? It is all your own effort and you are accepted by the people for what you are and what you do. Nobody imposes you.

Q. *Is Mrs Gandhi angry with you because*

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jit Singh with M

Gandhi at the AICC-I—caucus' conspicuous presence

Gandhi to bring in Sanjay. Let's face it, the only solid base the party still has left is in the south. The people there literally worship her. Even I wept when she was arrested. But they don't like Sanjay and why destroy the party."

Lonely Woman: Much to the chagrin of several delegates, the Emergency caucus had a conspicuous presence at the session. Soft-drinks tycoon, Charanjit Singh, and Mrs Gandhi's Man Friday R.K. Dhawan hovered around the dais. Stephen and several delegates even made a plea for taking up the cause of Dhawan, who is likely to face a Special Courts trial for alleged Emergency excesses. Several delegates fulminated against his presence—he is not an AICC member—but could do little without annoying Mrs Gandhi. Said one Bihari member: "We have got to be grateful for small mercies. At least Sanjay is not on the stage and Dhawan hasn't yet been made the party general secretary."

Other delegates secretly criticized her autocratic style of leadership. Said a Congress (I) MP: "She has alienated most of her close colleagues by playing one against the other. She is a very lonely woman and her son makes it worse by not letting anyone come close to her." When Sinha criticized Sanjay, Mrs Gandhi angrily told her: "You seem to know more about Sanjay." Sinha snapped back: "I am glad you don't know."

But others do know, and the present rumblings may develop into a bigger rebellion if Mrs Gandhi does not mend her ways. As long as she continues to be surrounded by her Emergency hangers-on, and is secretly influenced or controlled by her son, the hopes of her political revival look dim. Also, she now lacks the clout of political office to silence her critics who now see through her political game. Although, her biggest asset remains as the prime vote-catcher among all the Opposition parties, the revelations of the Shah Commission and Moynihan's allegations (*see Books*) have shown her to be a political leader without any scruples.

Few of the mature members in her party have any illusions about her using the party as a shield to protect herself and Sanjay from the Special Courts. It was aptly summed up by an elderly Congress (I) legislator from Andhra Pradesh: "Mrs Gandhi is playing for short term stakes. She is now preoccupied with escaping from the Special Courts and she thinks only Sanjay and his unruly Youth Congress can help her. Therefore, she is prepared to even risk the break-up of the party if that could get her off the hook." But that just might be one risk too many.

HOWEVER, taking risks is nothing new to Mrs Gandhi. She is used to them as a duck is to water. When cornered by the Allahabad High Court decision, she leapt back like a wounded tigress, declared the Emergency, changed the Constitution and imprisoned thousands of innocent people, all in her selfish interest to remain in power. For 18 months the country buckled under her

Dr Karan Singh, Congress (S) MP and former Union health minister:

"I certainly do not think she will come back to power. If the public is disillusioned with the Janata Party, it is equally apprehensive about the Congress (I). Recent events indicate that the caucus continues to dominate the party. Moreover, the party is badly split in the states. As I had said in Parliament, between Kissa Kursi Ka *and* Hissa Kursi Ka, *a third alternative will emerge, and that is what we are working on."*

of your remarks about Sanjay Gandhi?

A. She was under the impression that I said something that was unnecessary. I was only expressing the feeling of our partymen. They felt happy that I voiced what they were hesitant to speak out themselves. I don't see any reason why Indira Gandhi should be angry with me. I did not denigrate Sanjay Gandhi. I did not even blame him. I only spoke against those who are trying to capitalize on his name for their own ends.

Q. ***Do you think that given the infighting in the Janata Party, Mrs Gandhi is going to return to power soon?***

A. I don't know when. But there is every possibility of her coming back to power. Because I think so, there is all the more reason that there should not be an atmosphere of suspicion around her (regarding Sanjay Gandhi).

Q. ***Do you attach any importance to the reports that Mrs Gandhi might contest a byelection from Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu instead of Chikmagalur?***

A. Not at all. I take it that when she wants to stand for elections she will stand from Chikmagalur. Parliament might have expelled her but the people of Chikmagalur haven't. Why should she leave the constituency?

Q. ***What is cooking at the dinner diplomacy with the Janata Party leaders?***

A. What dinner diplomacy? I didn't even have dinner at Chandra Shekhar's (Janata Party President) house that day (April 19). I had had my dinner with a friend when I went to talk to Chandra Shekhar about Vinoba Bhave's (anti-cow slaughter) fast. Some other friends were also there.

Q. ***Do you think there is a possibility of an alliance between your Congress and those in the Janata Party opposed to the Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh (RSS)?***

A. Congress (I) is not in a position to say that they should form an alliance with us. It is for the Janatamen to decide whether they want to continue with the RSS or not, and what they should do to fight it.

Q. ***You have good relations with Janata Party leaders...***

A. Yes, of course. Opponents are not enemies. The two words mean different things. In a parliamentary democracy this basic difference should be understood. When we fight elections we are opponents, not enemies. Both of us are fighting because we feel what we want to do is the right thing for the country. It is nothing personal. Enmity comes only when we fight over something personal. Should not we have cordial relations with people of all parties? How can we have democracy if you don't want to have social relations with political opponents?

Q. ***What are the prospects of unity with the Congress Party led by Swaran Singh? Is it a closed chapter?***

A. It looks like that. There may be individuals or groups coming over to us from that organization. If our party grows like this, what would be left of the other party to unite with?

f partymen"

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iron-fisted rule, till like most dictators, she wished to legitimatize her powers, and made the blunder of declaring a general election in March 1977. Surrounded by the coterie of sycophants who are still by her side, the master tactician had lost her touch, and she suffered a crushing defeat at the polls.

But after a brief spell of hibernation to nurse her wounded pride she rose again like a Phoenix to split her party to mould it into her image—Congress(I). The bickerings within the Janata Party helped her along the way and her party thundered home in the two southern states—Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and did well in the others, in the state Assembly elections of February 1978.

With the break up of the Congress, the country is left without a national party. The Janata Party is north based and suffers from the weaknesses inherent in a forced unity between parties of a divergent ideology. Infighting among its various constituents has now become an exhausted subject of drawing room gossip. Said editor of *Seminar* and political commentator, Romesh Thapar: "Our politics is based so much on personality conflicts that it defies analysis of the kind one is accustomed to: for example, Mrs Gandhi's fortunes are taking a nosedive just when the Janata mess is coming to a boil."

Alliances: And if the Janata Party pot boils over and the party splits, it would most probably be because of the burning ambition of Deputy Prime Minister Charan Singh, of the BLD faction, to become the prime minister. To do this, he will need to break the present alliance between the RSS backed Jan Sangh and Prime Minister Desai's Congress(O) within the Janata Party. But for the time being, with memories of his ouster from the Government fresh in his mind, he is exercising restraint and not risking a direct assault on Desai. His strategy is to hit at the RSS in the states (*see current events*).

But this uneasy peace at the Centre is unlikely to last. The RSS-backed Jan Sangh is already on the political offensive. Jan Sangh faction leader and political commissar of the RSS, Sunder Singh Bhandari, recently said that Charan Singh is welcome to leave the party. "We will run the party," he asserted. His mood was indicative of the hardening of attitudes among the various factions within the Janata Party. The much-talked-about realignment of forces has now simply boiled down to the question: whether the Jan Sangh-RSS faction is acceptable in the Janata Party.

Desai, who has taken a battering at the hands of the BLD and the Socialists, is firmly allied with the Jan Sangh group which has offered him its unflinching loyalty. Ranged against them are the BLD (Charan Singh, Raj Narain, Biju Patnaik), the Socialists (George Fernandes, Madhu Limaye, and Madhu Dandavate) and Chandra Shekhar's rebel Congressmen (like Mohan Dharia, Ram Dhan, and Krishan Kant).

Clash: Jagjivan Ram, characteristically, is sitting on the fence. He is not favourably inclined towards the Jan Sangh, but he is even more suspicious of the BLD and in the existing caste configurations an alliance with the BLD could be dangerous for him.

SPECIAL COURTS

Long Arm Of The Law

VERY soon some of the top political leaders and senior government officials, who held the destiny of the country in their hands only about two years ago, will be lined up before Special Courts to stand trial for the alleged offences committed during the Emergency.

Heading the list of political leaders would be Indira Gandhi, former prime minister, who ruled the country for 11 long years—from 1966 to 1977. She would be followed by V.C. Shukla who was information and broadcasting minister in her cabinet. Both had held the country in thraldom for 19 months.

After these two come Bansi Lal and Pranab Mukherji, Union ministers in the Indira Gandhi government, and three former chief ministers, Zail Singh of Punjab, P.C. Sethi of Madhya Pradesh and Hardeo Joshi of Rajasthan.

Those figuring prominently in the impressive list of officials are D. Sen, former Central Bureau of Investigation director, S.R. Mehta, former chairman, Direct Taxes, R.K. Dhawan, additional private secretary to Indira Gandhi when she was prime minister, P.S. Bhinder, former deputy inspector general of Delhi, Jagmohan, former vice-chairman of the Delhi Development Authority, and V.S. Ailawadi, former secretary to the New Delhi Municipal Committee.

The Special Courts would be set up soon after the Special Courts Bill is finally adopted by the Lok Sabha by the end of this month. These courts, four in all, according to Home Ministry sources, would be presided over by the sitting judges of the High Courts.

Wider Scope: The Bill was first adopted by the Lok Sabha on March 9 though it was strongly opposed by the Congress (I). The Communist Party of India (CPI) wanted two amendments made in the Bill but the Government turned them down. When the Bill was taken up by the Rajya Sabha it passed it on March 21 with two CPI amendments. They widened the scope of the Bill to cover offences committed by holders of high public or political office disclosed in future during investigations conducted by the government agencies or probes by commissions of inquiry, and provided for the sitting judges of the High Court to preside over the courts nominated by the chief justice of the High Court concerned with the concurrence of the chief justice of India.

V. C. Shukla and Sanjay Gandhi leaving Tis Hazari court after Kissa Kursi Ka case

Indira Gandhi is involved in the cases about the harassment of some senior government officials who were collecting information about Sanjay Gandhi's Maruti Ltd, and illegal detention of Bhim Sen Sachar and a number of her political opponents soon after the Emergency was clamped. Bansi Lal and former chief ministers are also accused in the case about illegal detentions. V.C. Shukla is facing the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity posters case and Pranab Mukherji and S.R. Mehta are arraigned in the Baroda Rayon case.

Sanjay Gandhi is implicated in cases about illegal detention of textile inspectors who tried to check the alleged fraudulent deals of Messrs Indira International, demolition of houses at Kapashera near Maruti factory, Gurgaon (about 45 km from Delhi) and Gaffar Market demolition in Delhi. Almost all important officials listed above are entangled in these cases in some way or the other. The cases would be prosecuted by the CBI.

According to the Home Ministry sources, since the scope of the Bill will be widened, several other cases not based on the findings of the Shah Commission, like the Jeeps Scandal case, may also be brought up before the Special Courts. "In fact, cases pending against Indira Gandhi and her son anywhere in the country can be transferred to the Special Courts for early disposal," said an official.

—BRAJ MOHAN

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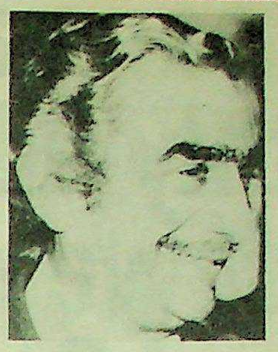
His Harijan followers come more into direct conflict with the middle castes represented by Charan Singh than with the upper castes represented by the Jan Sangh. And both Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram have their eyes on the prime minister's chair.

A similar process is taking place in the Congress(I). Sanjay Gandhi is to the Congress(I) what the RSS is to the Janata Party. With Sanjay and the RSS forming the opposite ends of the political spectrum, there is a tendency among the groups in the middle to move towards each other to deal with their common foes. "There are two evils in body politic," said a former Congressman, "one is the RSS and the other is Mrs Gandhi with Sanjay." There is now a possibility that the Congress(S), the Congress (I) dissidents like Urs, and the anti-RSS elements in the Janata Party could all come together on this anti-Mrs Gandhi-RSS platform under the banner of what is now being termed as the 'Third Force'.

The go-between for these exploratory moves is the Bombay based politician-cum-lawyer Rajni Patel, who ironically was one of those who ardently supported Mrs Gandhi after the 1969 split, and was her principal fund-raiser for the 1971 elections. With the rise of Sanjay, he fell from grace and has been in the political limbo since. In the present state of political flux, Patel has used the opportunity to renew his wide personal contacts cutting across political lines to build up a consensus for the concept of the Third Force.



***R. K. Karanjia*, 66, *Editor-in-chief*, Blitz:**

"But for Sanjay Gandhi, any referendum or election would bring her back to power. People would prefer her and even her Emergency to the mess being made by the Janata Party. The present Third Force is all bogus and is merely a ploy to save the Janata Party."

Third Force: Asked about his role, Patel modestly told INDIA TODAY: "I have been given credit when it is not due and discredited when it was not necessary. But the country does need some kind of a coming together of progressive elements." He felt that Mrs Gandhi had no chance of coming back with Sanjay behind her. He added: "After all, Mrs Gandhi's base is in the south and if she loses the support of powerful chief ministers like Urs, then where does that leave her?"

The move to work for the Third Force was born in the Jaslok Hospital where several leaders of the Janata and Congress parties like Chandra Shekhar and Chavan were visiting the ailing Jayaprakash Narayan in March. Patel carried the word around and this was followed by several meetings in Delhi last month between Urs, Fernandes, Patnaik, CFD leader Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna, Mohan Dharia, and Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar of the Congress.

BYELECTION

A Safe Constituency

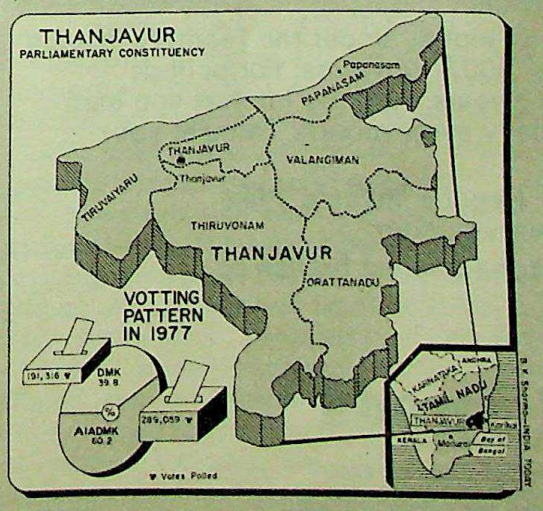
MRS Indira Gandhi seems to be looking for a seat safer than Chikmagalur to make a bid to return to Parliament from where she was ousted last December. An insecure Mrs Gandhi now appears to be turning to the voters of Thanjavur in All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-ruled (AIADMK) Tamil Nadu. The AIADMK has agreed to offer the seat to the Congress (I) and support its candidate in the byelection on June 17.

The Thanjavur seat was held by AIADMK's S. D. Somasundram, 49, who recently resigned from the Lok Sabha to join the state ministry. He had defeated his nearest Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) rival S. Ganesan by a margin of nearly one lakh votes in the 1977 General Elections.

The supporters of the Congress (I) had been looking around for a safe seat for Mrs Gandhi since her expulsion from the Lok Sabha last December (INDIA TODAY, January 1–15). Chikmagalur from where she staged her brief comeback last year, after being routed at Rae Bareli in the 1977 General Elections, is no longer favoured by Mrs Gandhi's strategists. They are sceptical of Chief Minister Devraj Urs who is still making efforts for Congress unity and is opposed to Sanjay Gandhi's re-entry into active politics.

Support: But with the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M. G. Ramachandran, and Sivaji Ganesan, both popular matinee idols of the Tamils, willing to campaign for her, Mrs Gandhi's supporters are optimistic of an easy victory at Thanjavur. They are, however, taking no chances, and are trying to secure the support of the Communist Party of India (CPI), albeit indirectly. The AIADMK has offered to support the CPI in the byelection also on June 17, at Nagappattinam (70 km east of Thanjavur) provided the Communists do not contest the Thanjavur seat.

Thanjavur is an ancient temple town which was once the seat of Tamil kingdoms. The district straddling the Kaveri river is the rice-bowl of Tamil Nadu. It has been the scene of agrarian tensions. On the one hand the CPI and the Marxists have organized militant peasant struggles there and on the other the landlords and big farmers have been carrying on Charan Singh style agitations for cheaper power and agricultural inputs. The district has also witnessed clashes, between landlords and landless peasants agitating for higher wages, affecting the popularity of the ruling party.



Exigency: The AIADMK had fought the 1977 Lok Sabha elections in alliance with Mrs Gandhi's Congress, the CPI and the Muslim League in Tamil Nadu, but after the Janata Party victory it broke up the alliance and hitched its wagon to the Janata Government. The CPI and Muslim League, meanwhile, gravitated towards the Opposition DMK. Exigencies of Tamil Nadu politics, therefore, have forced the AIADMK to seek the hands of the Congress (I) again. It was in pursuance of this policy that the AIADMK members in the Rajya Sabha cast their votes against the Special Courts Bill. The AIADMK badly needs the support of the Congress (I) when it faces the electorate in Pondicherry in the next few months.

The only factor holding up Mrs Gandhi's final decision is the deep division within the Tamil Nadu unit of her own party and the rivalry between the factions led by the former Tamil Nadu Congress Committee President, Karupaiah Moopanar, and Nedumaran, responsible for the replacement of the former by Swaminathan. When Swaminathan replaced 12 District Congress Committee presidents by pro-Nedumaran men recently, Mrs Gandhi promptly annulled the action as a sop to Moopanar. Thanjavur is Moopanar's stronghold. A formal invitation from Moopanar is all that Mrs Gandhi is now waiting for before entering the fray.

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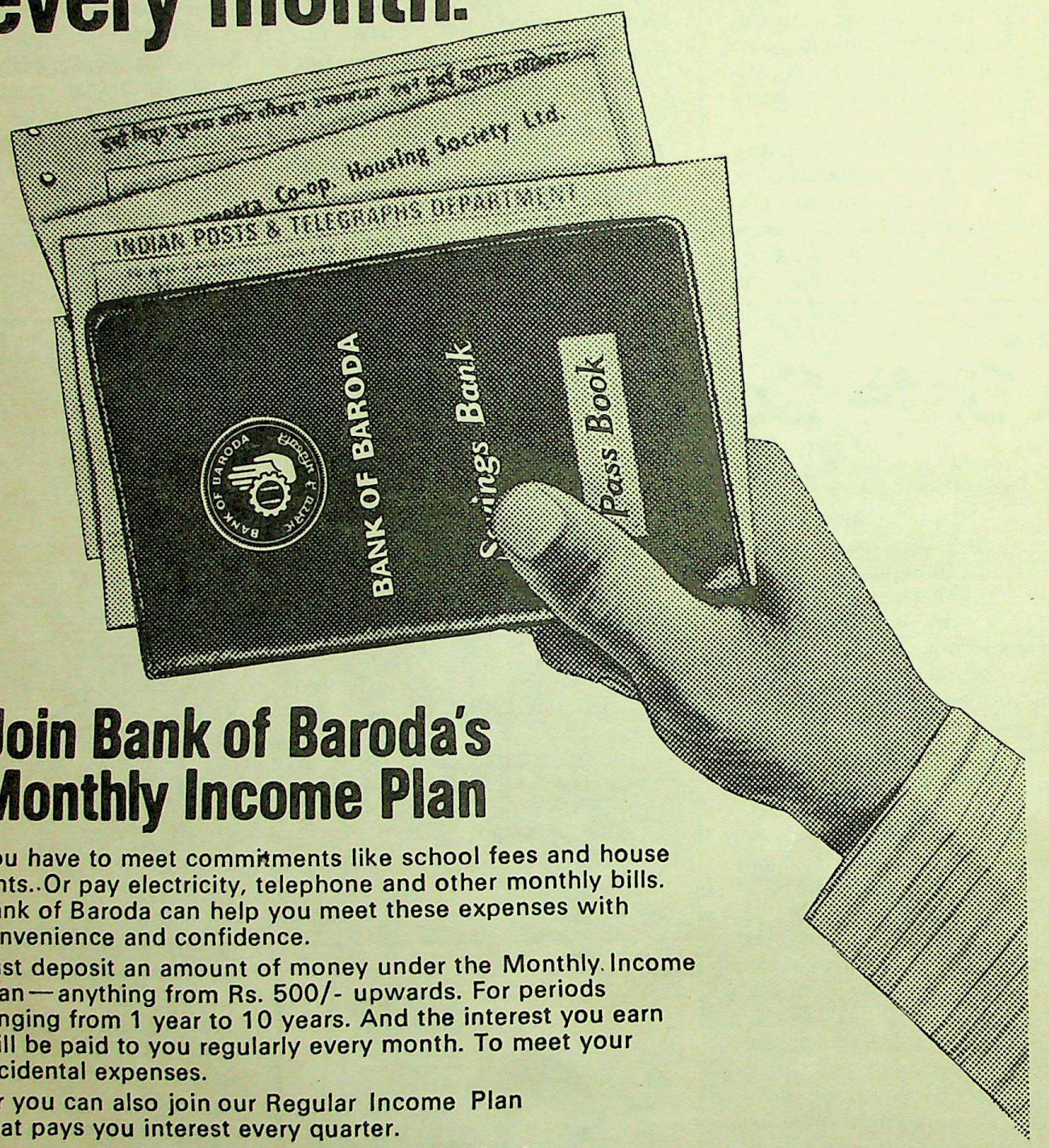

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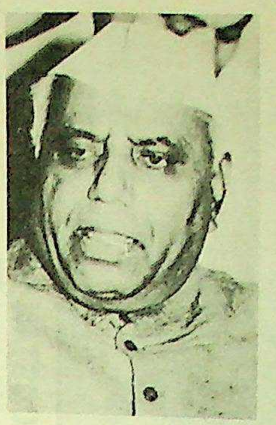

***Y. B. Chavan*, 66, *MP and leader of Congress (S)*:**

"It is not going to be easy for Mrs Gandhi to come back in the post-Emergency India."

***Ayub Syed*, *Editor*, Current:**

"Mrs Gandhi's charisma is gone and she will lose her hold. But if a Third Force does not emerge, the Janata Party with its mess is virtually laying a red carpet for Mrs Gandhi's return."

***K. R. Malkani*, 57, *Chief Editor*, Organizer:**

"The Janata has an awful image—but its performance is reasonably good. Mrs Gandhi's chances of a comeback are next to nil."

The proposal put forward by the Janata Party leaders was that Congress leaders and those of the Congress(I) should join the Janata Party, even though the Jan Sangh—the political wing of the RSS—is still a constituent of it. They reasoned that this influx of "progressive forces" into the Janata Party would weaken the Jan Sangh faction's influence and may even force them to quit the party.

An alliance: The Congress(I) leaders are not as yet prepared to accept this proposal because of the Jan Sangh. After having riled against the communal RSS for so long, an alliance that includes them would be difficult for their followers to swallow. On the other hand, the other Congress leaders probably would not have much objection to this as they have already entered into an alliance with the Janata Party in Maharashtra. In fact the Pawar Ministry is being held out as the future model for political alignments. Pawar heads a coalition of the Congress and the Janata Party, with some Congress(I) dissenters joining his ranks.

Now this experiment is about to be tried again in neighbouring Goa with a slight modification. After the ouster of Shashikala Kakodkar, who succeeded her father as chief minister in the dynastic tradition of the Nehrus and showed signs of turning authoritarian, a coalition government of the Congress, the Janata and the Maharashtra Gomantakwadi Party (MGP) is taking over under the leadership of Shankar Laad, an MGP dissident.

The votaries of the Third Force feel that it is time to carry it to the south where a similar government has been functioning in Kerala in alliance with the Communist Party of India. The natural choice for extending the experiment would be Karnataka headed by Urs.

Though Urs has been making loud protestations of loyalty to Mrs Gandhi, political circles do not attach any importance to these. Said one Janata Party leader from Karnataka: "Mrs Gandhi filed the nomination papers of Sanjiva Reddy in the 1969 presidential elections just before the first Congress split and then she went and opposed him. Jagjivan Ram supported the Emergency all through and when the elections were announced he bolted out of the party. You can't take a politician at his word, especially a master manoeuvrer."

Focus: If Urs goes out of the party, the dissidents in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh would probably also join him. Goka Ramaswami, who resigned from Chief Minister Chenna Reddy's cabinet in March after making allegations against Reddy's son Ravinder and protesting against the refusal of entry to a Harijan legislator into a temple, is one of the prominent Andhra dissidents. Lately he has been camping at Bangalore and the other Andhra dissidents, former health minister K. Rajamallu and state Congress(I) general secretary, K. Keshav Rao, have a good rapport with Urs. After his bold stand at the AICC-I meeting, Urs has become the focus of all Congress(I) members around the country who are opposed to the return of Sanjay. Leaders from several states have been meeting him and offering their support.

Mrs Gandhi has been quick to grasp the dangers of the Third Force move. If by her quitting politics, the country would become strong, she said, she was prepared to do it. But she warned her partymen of the "dangers" of the Third Force. All the "confusion and contradictions of the Janata Party" would be manifested in it. "It would be worse than a *khichri*; it would be a mess." Hitting out at the BLD, which has stolen her anti-RSS platform, she said she doubted if those who had joined the Jan Sangh to share power would be able to shake off the "RSS tentacles".

Opportunity: However, the result of all these manoeuvres is the political isolation of Mrs Gandhi. But it must be remembered that Mrs Gandhi works best alone. If she gets into Parliament from Thanjavur in June this year, and it seems likely, she will politicize her trial by the Special Courts as she did the Shah Commission and her arrest in October 1977. Her political creed is opportunism, and with deft political footwork she may outwit all of them to a point where they cancel each other out. She has vigour, versatility, cunning and an unquenchable thirst for power which could send her again round the country in an attempt to restore her credibility.

Most of the Janata Party leaders have stopped seeing her as a potential threat and this could well be a fatal mistake. Although, she is now on the defensive, she is not an opponent to be underestimated. And the ball is now firmly in the Janata court to take the action they have been promising for the last two years. Their only chance for retaining power is to improve their performance and to act decisively against Mrs Gandhi.

And if she is convicted, the Congress(I) would lose an unrepentant evil genius who could be forgotten in time and the sordid memories of a totally unacceptable era in Indian politics would fade away. Said a senior Janata Party MP: "The Shah of Iran is gone. Bhutto has been hanged and Idi Amin has fallen. And Indira Gandhi has so far been lucky because of our democratic tradition. Now it's her turn to face the music."

But this is only possible if the Janata musicians would stop squabbling amongst themselves and unite to strike the last note in this tragic symphony.

—ARUL B. LOUIS with Bureau Reports

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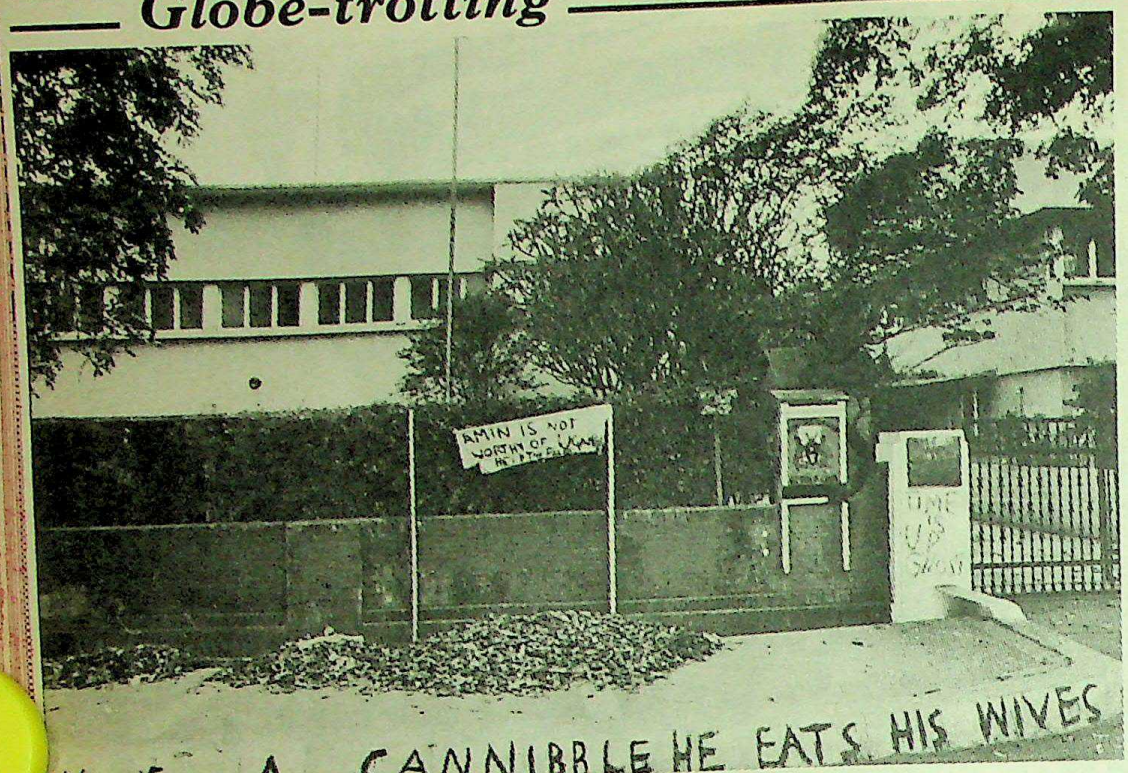
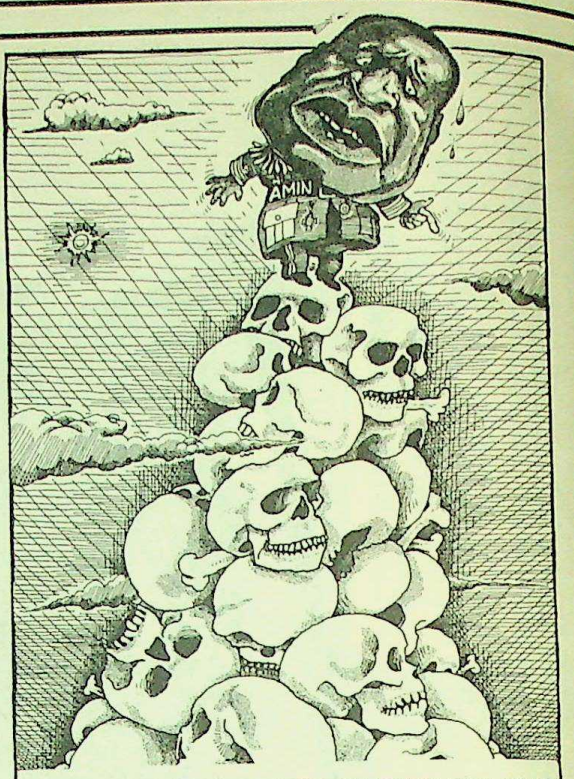


Ugandan High Commission in New Delhi—fall of a hated leader



"BUT I MAY HURT MYSELF JUMPING OFF SUCH HEIGHTS?!"

UGANDA

Asians' March Home

Hopes soar as Amin's dictatorial regime falls

NO international tears were being shed last fortnight when Tanzanian troops mopped up the putrid remains of Idi Amin's brutal regime. Amin's end was being predicted months before he finally fled, but there was one group of observers that followed events in Kampala with more than anxious interest. Seven years ago, in August 1972, 50,000 Ugandan Asians, mostly of Gujarati origin, were booted out of Uganda by Amin.

Last fortnight, however, the Asians were making tentative probes into Kampala to pave the way for their eventual return to Uganda. Correspondent K. SRINIVASAN who has recently returned from Nairobi, reports that a small conclave of Gujarati businessmen had been holding regular meetings in Nairobi weeks before Amin's fall to decide on a question of vital importance to them—their return to Uganda to pick up the economic threads that had virtually controlled the country's economy before their ignominious ouster. The meetings were not to decide whether to return, but when to return.

Some of the members had contacts with the Save Uganda Movement and had actively and financially supported it. "Now that Amin is gone, Uganda is the best country for us to be in," said one Gujarati businessman who had been living in London since his expulsion from the country. In fact, of the 50,000 Indians expelled by Amin's "economic war", a majority had settled down in Britain and built up their businesses from scratch.

Willing: Now, it appears that most of them are willing to return. Members of the Madhvani (the son and heir, Mayur, married well-known Indian actress Mumtaz some years ago) and the Mehta families are planning to return to claim their enormous industrial and agricultural interests in Uganda. Less influential Asian exiles have also started trickling back from Kenya. In the pre-Amin days, they controlled 80 per cent of commerce, 75 per cent of industry and manufacturing and controlled a total of 4,000 business houses.

Seven years ago, when they were expelled, they were only allowed to carry meagre personal belongings with them. But most of them had little doubt that they would return. "Our faith was not misplaced," says one Gujarati businessman who returned last fortnight.

Uganda's new ruler, Yusufu Lule *(see box)*, has already extended an invitation to all Ugandan Asians to return. Lule's gesture is not based on humanitarian grounds. In the shattered state of Uganda's economy today, they are sorely required to start the

YUSUFU LULE

Reluctant Liberator

YUSUFU LULE, 68, is perhaps the most reluctant liberator in modern history. When influential Ugandan exiles in East Africa and London first approached him to lead them against Idi Amin, Lule had just retired as secretary general of the Association of African Universities in Ghana, and all he was looking forward to at that time was a quiet superannuated life with his family in his London home. When he finally accepted the role under pressure, it spelled the end of Amin's brutal rule.

President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had stated that the only condition for the continuation of his support of the anti-Amin movement was that the exiles find an acceptable leader. Lule's was more than acceptable to Nyerere. He had been his contemporary at Edinburgh University 30 years earlier and they had become close friends.

Lule's takeover from Amin has been widely hailed by a majority of Ugandans. He has had a distinguished career in and out of Uganda. He graduated from Fort Hare University in South Africa and went to Edinburgh for his masters' degree after a short spell as a teacher in Uganda. He returned home as the first African lecturer at Makerere University. From 1954 to 1961 he was, with Apolo Koronde and Zekeria Mungonya, one of the three African ministers in the colonial government. He was later appointed chairman of the Uganda Public Service Commission, the Ugandan equivalent of the Union Public Service Commission in India, which appoints civil servants.

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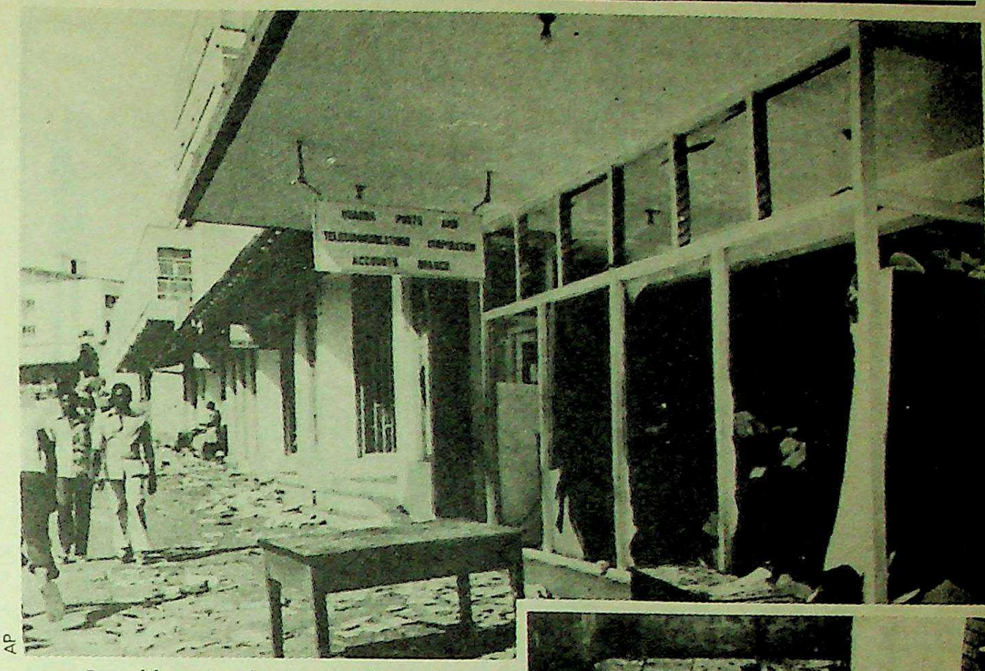
wheels of commerce moving again.

The collapse of Idi Amin has left Uganda literally in a shambles. Hundreds of Ugandans have taken the opportunity to seize whatever they can carry from abandoned banks, shops and houses. Entire offices have been stripped of furniture and equipment. Under Amin's rule, the machinery of government had ground to a halt and the coffee, tea, tobacco, sugar and cotton estates, formerly run mainly by Ugandan Asians, had been left to rot.

Buried Treasure: It is obvious that the Asians who are returning to Uganda will not exercise the same control over the country's economy that they did before. According to one spokesman, the majority have plans to start off with small-scale industries. A large number of them freely admit that they had buried most of their financial wealth in various places, and that they would now try to recover it. Though the task of rebuilding their's, and Uganda's, shattered economy is a daunting one, the eventual rewards could well justify the risk in returning to Uganda to pick up the threads.

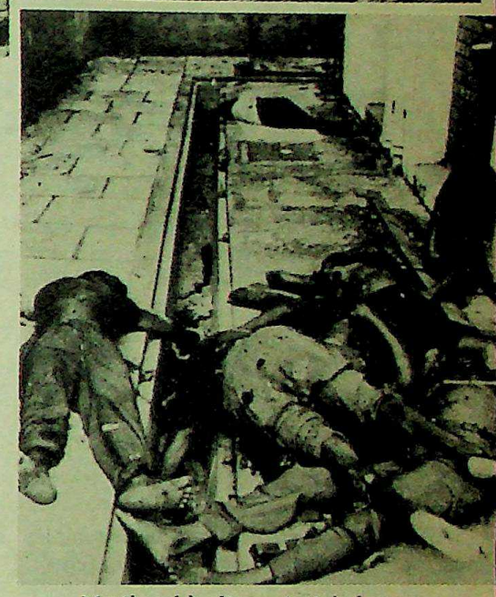
Uganda's broad agricultural base and its fledgling mining industry makes it one developing country with almost unlimited potential. But the suicidal economic policies of Amin have taken Uganda back by at least a quarter of a century. "The infrastructure is completely destroyed," stated Lule last fortnight. "We have some crops but we can't even move them because of the chaotic state of the roads and the railways."



AP

Post-liberation looting in Kampala

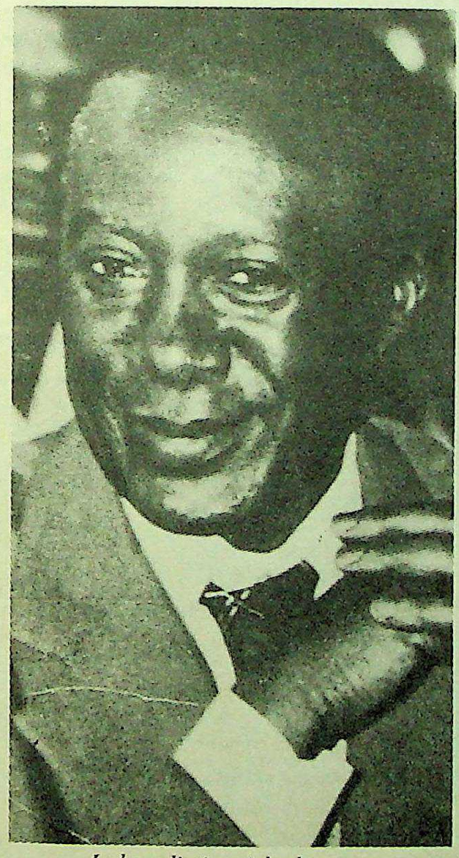
Good Scope: For an enterprising businessman—and Uganda's Gujarati business community is if anything enterprising—the sky is the limit. Virtually everything—from consumer goods to soap to insecticides and agricultural tools—is in great demand. Whatever products are available are beyond the reach of most consumers. A bottle of milk is currently selling for $3 (Rs 24) and a pair of ordinary trousers costs around $200 (Rs 1,600). The biggest hit has been the country's vast acreage of cash crops. Uganda, once the largest coffee exporter in the Commonwealth, now has barely enough to satisfy local needs.



Mutilated bodies—Amin's legacy

The Government has promised to try and pay as compensation an estimated $200 million (Rs 160 crore) to those whose assets were confiscated by Amin. The return of a large chunk of the 50,000 Asians who were expelled will give the country's economy a major boost. The Ugandan Asians also accounted for a large percentage of the country's managerial, technical and commercial manpower, and though life will be painfully difficult in the initial stages, a large number of them hope to return and take up new jobs in post-Amin Uganda.

But no matter how successful their efforts are, it will be a long time before Ugandan Asians can think of being economically restored to pre-Amin levels. Judging by the mess the country is in, things will get a lot worse before they start getting better.



Lule—distinguished career

In 1962, the three East African colleges, Makerere, Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam were merged into the University of East Africa with President Nyerere as the chancellor. Lule was appointed to the prestigious post of the principal of Makerere.

No Politicking: But despite all his qualities as an educationist and an administrator, Lule did not get on well with Dr Milton Obote's radical regime which sought to spread its politics into every Ugandan institution, including Makerere. Lule resented this, and with the backing of members of his staff, managed to keep politics out of the campus.

The three university colleges split in 1970 with each becoming a full-fledged university. Obote, who automatically became chancellor of Makerere, immediately sacked Lule. After leaving Makerere, Lule joined the Commonwealth secretariat as assistant secretary general in charge of education, youth and the legal division at Malborough House in London. Two years later, Lule became secretary general of the Association of African Universities in Accra. He retired a few months ago, little knowing that he would eventually succeed Idi Amin as President of Uganda.

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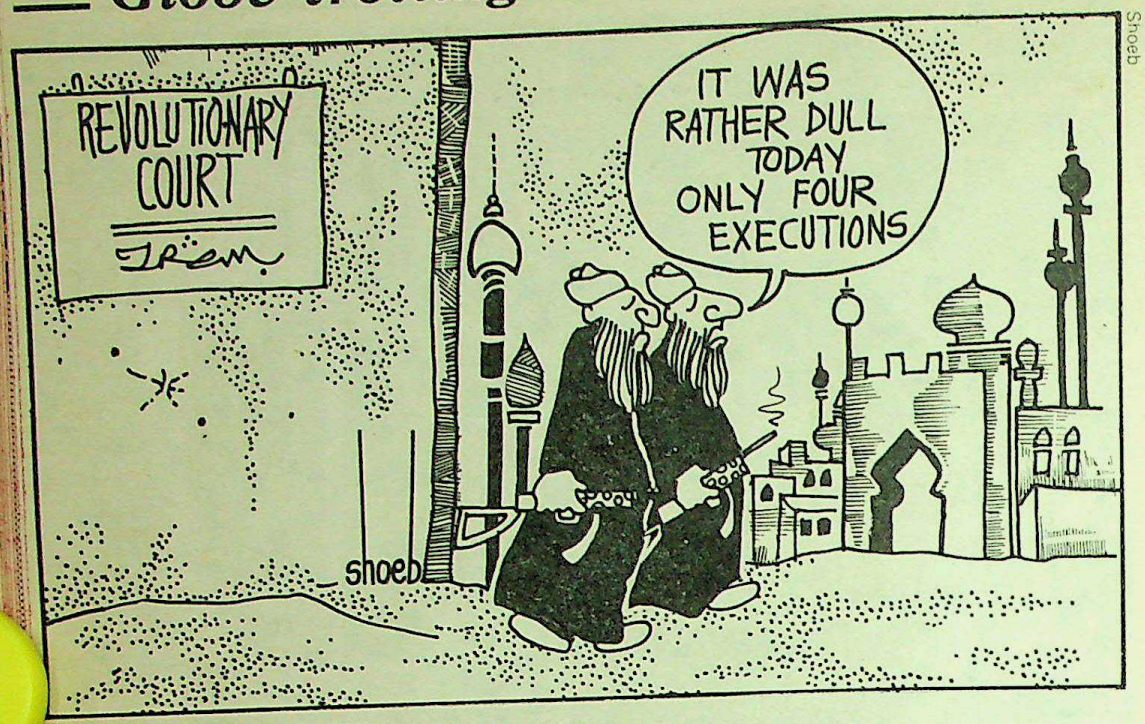


MIDDLE EAST

Iran's Red Peril

Khomeini's troubled regime faces a dangerous communist threat

WITH the situation in troubled Iran growing increasingly volatile, the country finds itself edging closer to the possibility of a civil war and to a potentially dangerous communist threat. In addition, Iran's long-simmering problem of nationalities has also surfaced forcefully, with demands for more autonomy and political concessions undermining Ayatullah Khomeini's headlong rush to turn the country into a full Islamic Republic.

With the Iranian economy in a shambles and the widening rifts between Khomeini and his ministers, the situation has been further complicated with the return of the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party's first secretary Nureddin Kianuri from a 25-year exile. Further, the influential religious leader Ayatullah Teleghani, who left Iran recently in protest against violation of human rights, has returned, having established close contacts with pro-Moscow elements. In the face of these recent developments, the communist threat to Iran has become increasingly real.

Kianuri, a hardened communist, has been urging Khomeini to abrogate all defence or economic pacts with the US made during the Shah's rule and instead enter into treaties of peace and friendship with neighbouring Iraq, Marxist Afghanistan and Turkey. Kianuri has also been trying to get Khomeini to accept the principle of collective Asian security (as propounded by Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev). Meanwhile, he has recalled Iranian guerillas (estimated at between 3,000 and 5,000) from Herat and other Afghanistan provinces and is now frantically lobbying in Tehran for a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union.

Main Thrust : With Kianuri's return, thousands of exiled communists have followed suit and pledged their full support to the Tudeh Party leader. Kianuri has stated that the main thrust of the Iranian is the "struggle against imperialism". He insists that the Islamic Republic should be "anti-imperialist, democratic and should actively support non-alignment and the establishment of good relations with socialist countries".

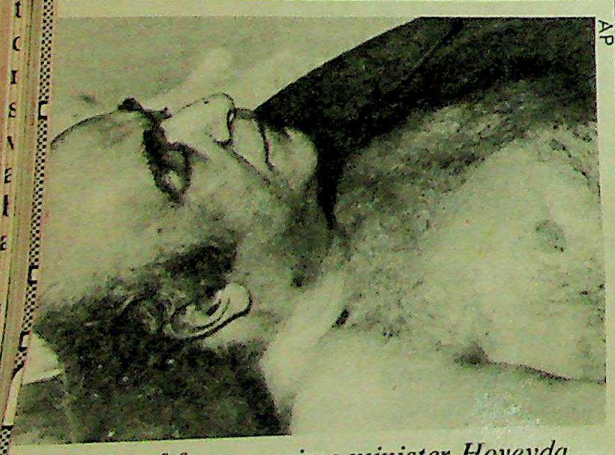
The clandestine radio station located in southern Russia (INDIA TODAY, March 1–15) gives Iranian listeners daily instructions on how to stage demonstrations and "resist security forces equipped with American-made riot fighting equipment". The radio station has been warning listeners to guard against the wider "conspiracy of the West to perpetuate its influence in Iran".

The communists have also exploited the recent arrival of some 200 Americans in Iran to train defence personnel in the use of billions of dollars worth of American military hardware lying unused there. Khomeini, however, feels that some American influence at this juncture is necessary to fend off the growing communist threat.

Khomeini seems to be trying to counter the influence of the Tudeh Party, the People's Fedayeen and the People's Mujaheddeen, the two most important urban guerilla

Apostle Of Death

EVERY morning, after the daily rituals of executions in Iran have been completed and the bodies dispatched to the morgue, an unassuming man unlocks his tiny office and starts his work. The sheaves of files on his desk and in the steel cabinets seem innocent enough. But for many, the contents of the files spell death by the execution squads.


AP

Body of former prime minister Hoveyda

The files contain the names of Iranians suspected of such bizarre crimes as declaring war on God and his Prophet, defiling all that is sacred, and corruption on earth. The mild-looking man who guards the files so jealously is Mehdi Hadavi, prosecutor-general for the Islamic Republic of Iran—a man who holds the power of life and death for thousands of Iranians in his hands. It is he who decides who is to face the Islamic justice of the revolutionary courts. His spartan office has the names of individuals against whom complaints have been made.

Mass Complaints : Each day, scores of people gather at the gates of Tehran's Revolutionary Committee headquarters holding out scraps of paper on which are written complaints against servants of the Shah's regime. It is from these bits of paper that Hadavi decides who is to be arrested and eventually tried and sentenced by the revolutionary courts.

It is estimated that there are 2,000 suspects awaiting the life-or-death decision of the man who has become the symbol of Islamic vengeance. But very few people actually get to meet Hadavi. He remains an anonymous face behind the bloody spate of executions which have sickened most of the world.

Hadavi was appointed by Khomeini's revolutionary committee to spearhead the massive and bloody purge which began in real earnest with the execution of former prime minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda. Hadavi works 15 hours a day keeping the revolutionary courts and the executioners busy. Before the revolution he was just another nondescript lawyer. Now he has become the acknowledged overlord of Islamic justice.

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organizations. But he has been careful not to risk offending the communists to a point where they could stage a revolt.

Khomeini believes that without some American support and technical assistance, the Iranian armed forces, mostly equipped with US material, would lack effective punch and thereby fail to counter the communist threat. But for him the biggest worry is that the growing support and power behind the communist movement in Iran would shatter his dream of establishing an ideal Islamic state.

BRITAIN

A Tragic Trend

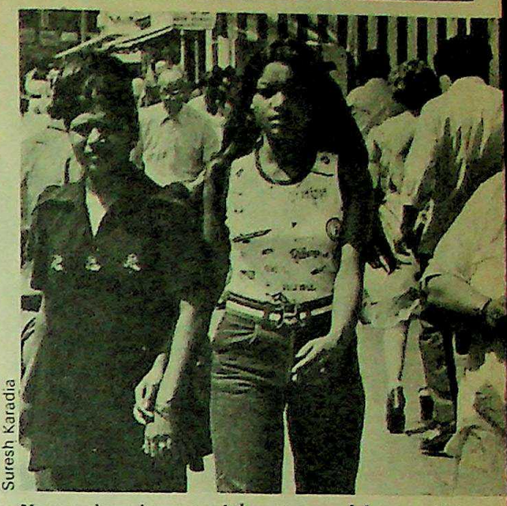
Immigrants rebel against traditions

EARLY last month, Tara Meisuria, a young Indian immigrant in Britain checked into a hotel with her boy-friend, Rajinder Singh. The couple lay on the bed and swallowed a dose of sleeping pills. According to the coroner, Dr John Burton, Tara was a "normal English schoolgirl—except that she was of Indian origin". She killed herself because her parents insisted that she marry a boy brought up in India. She was sent to India to meet her prospective husband. She returned to Britain, and, rather than spend the rest of her life with a man she had nothing in common with, chose the only way out—suicide.

Tara's is just one of the many tragic cases involving young immigrant women in Britain—some barely out of school—who are increasingly rebelling against the traditional path of marriage arranged by their parents. Jane Gaskell, a woman columnist for London's *Daily Mail*, has recently filed a report on this new trend and its repercussions on the lives of thousands of Indian immigrants. Burton, the coroner who performed the inquest on Tara Meisuria, told Gaskell: "This case represents the ultimate in despair. I have heard seven similar cases this year. These girls are frequently trapped by tradition and family honour. If they go against their parents' wishes they become outcasts."

Gaskell also spoke to another man who has become familiar with this situation—Inder Singh Uppal, the community relations officer for Hounslow, Middlesex. "There was one girl," said Uppal, "who, in desperation, hitch-hiked here from Slough in the dark for help. She was a young Indian immigrant who had never been allowed out of her parents' sight except to go to school. She was being forced to marry a total stranger, so she defied her family and came to us for help."

Uppal now handles so many similar cases that he has had to hire extra staff. "For the girls it is obviously tragic to have to marry a man they neither know or understand," Uppal told Gaskell. "Very often, the man has been born and bred in a remote part of India and has in-built attitudes the girl cannot willingly accept even for her parents' sake now that she has grown up in England."



Suresh Karadia

Young immigrant girls—trapped by tradition

Refuge: Uppal's aim is to bring a daughter and her family together again, says Gaskell, but he also wants a hostel where Asian girls can safely go if they feel they can no longer remain at home. Betty Keirle, a welfare officer at Hounslow College where hundreds of Asian children take A-level courses along with their British counterparts, disagrees. "If there were a hostel, parents of runaways would go straight there looking for them." She does, however, feel strongly that there is a need for "somewhere where these youngsters, caught between so many pressures, hammered by the old customs and their new thoughts, can have a little time to think". Many Asian girls under her charge, she

ELECTION

The Black Vote

WHAT price the immigrant vote in Britain's general elections scheduled for May 3? Apparently not very much judging from the various party manifestos issued so far. The National Front is so rabidly anti-immigrant that any comment would be superfluous. What is surprising, however, is that Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party, which needs every vote possible to get a hold on the keys to 10 Downing Street, has alienated Britain's immigrants.

Immigrants from India will have ample reason to worry if the Conservatives romp home in the elections. In their manifesto, the Conservatives have pulled no punches on the immigration issue and have pledged to go all out on immigration restrictions, though they have stated that there will be no question of "compulsory repatriation". They have also pledged not to allow the husband or fiancé of any immigrant resident to enter the country except in a very restricted number of cases—a measure that James Callaghan's Labour Government had so far opposed.

Powell—"the numbers game"

The factor that influenced the Conservative stand is purely statistical. There are currently 1.9 million "coloured" immigrants in Britain comprising about 3.5 per cent of the total population, according to one recent estimate. In electoral terms, the voting power of the immigrant community would be largely negligible.

Thatcher has stated that she stands by her favourite theme aired last year about British people feeling "swamped by migrants". The Labour Party's silence on this issue has been defeaning.

The only prominent political leader who has defended the immigrant issue is Liberal leader David Steel who called on politicians to "resist stirring Enoch's pot".

Numbers Game: The Conservatives, on the other hand, have tried to justify their stand by arguing that the concessions given by the Government to immigrants have been abused. There are certainly signs that point to some abuse of current immigration laws (INDIA TODAY, April 1–15), but whether the entire immigrant community in Britain should be held ransom for the crimes of a few is debatable. Apparently Enoch Powell's strident voice has been heard in the right places and the misleading "numbers game" played by him and National Front spokesmen has had the desired effect.

If Thatcher's party is returned to power—a likely possibility judging from the opinion polls—immigrants in Britain will have to face troubled times ahead.

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says, want to marry the man of their parents' choice. But many others feel very strongly that this is an insult to their integrity as young girls.

Opposite View: The Indian Workers' Group in Britain takes the opposite view. "Very often," said a spokesman, "English girls think they are in love when it is infatuation. They present a pretty face before marriage. Then, suddenly, the girl finds she is married to a stranger. If her parents had arranged the marriage lovingly between families who knew and respected each other, with every detail sorted out in advance, all would have been well."

But to many immigrants who have spent all their lives in Britain and have worked alongside others who are allowed to choose their own boy-friends, the cross is a heavy one to bear. To an increasing number of them, the freedom to lead their own lives and choose their own husbands is outweighing the cost of breaking with tradition, and, in most cases, with their families.

AFRICA

Swiss Connection

Botha puts the Swiss in a spot

AS South Africa's Muldergate information scandal stirred up the country's political morass, Foreign Minister Pik Botha, was causing similar tremors in Switzerland and its fledgling relations with Black Africa.

Just over a month ago, Pierre Aubert, the country's foreign policy chief, returned from a two-week visit to five black African countries. It was the first such trip undertaken by a Swiss foreign minister and it culminated in a resounding condemnation of apartheid by Aubert in Lagos.

Within days, Botha pulled the rug from under Aubert's feet by demanding an audience, which Aubert reluctantly agreed to. Then, at short notice, Botha summoned South Africans from the four corners of the globe to the Zurich Hilton for what was billed as an emergency session on Namibia.

Botha—playing his trump card

Both actions revived the controversy aroused by Aubert's own trip to Africa, which right-wingers had claimed jeopardized Switzerland's traditional policy of neutrality.

Capitalistic: Botha's visit, however, did cast revealing light on traditional Swiss neutrality, which left-wing critics and those who say Switzerland should join the United Nations, argue is a chimera.

This was forcibly driven home during Aubert's visit to Africa when Switzerland was experiencing its own controversy over the South African "Muldergate" information slush fund. The Rand *Daily Mail* revealed that the Zurich-based Thesaurus Continental Securities Corporation (wholly owned by the powerful Union Bank in Switzerland) had provided a loan contract to Lewis Luyt for $13.8 million to establish the *Citizen* newspaper that was going to spread the good news about South Africa's racial policies. The *Citizen* is smack in the centre of the Muldergate Scandal. One of the signatories on the loan was Bruno Saager, a board member of the Swiss-South African Association whom Botha had met on his Swiss visit. The association includes Switzerland's most powerful bankers and businessmen.

Important: Botha's meeting with them had immense significance because of the possibility that the UN might impose economic sanctions on South Africa. There are only 18 Swiss companies who have invested in South Africa (compared to 699 British) and trade between the two countries is negligible. But in the event of UN-imposed sanctions, these companies could be a valuable life-line to the West, since Switzerland is not a member of the UN.

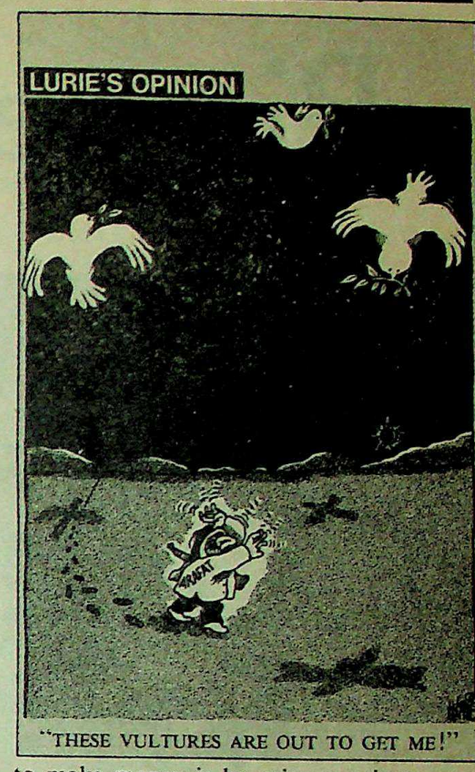
Botha's objective was therefore to shore up his country's flagging image with Swiss bankers and businessmen. Fortunately for him, Aubert's *faux pas* on apartheid in South Africa put the Swiss in a spot and gave Botha the ideal opportunity to play his trump card.

Chicken Economy

Ghana grinds to a halt

OFFICES in Ghana are vacant most of the time, their occupants queuing up for toilet rolls, searching for car parts and otherwise trying to maintain some semblance of a normal life-style. Raging inflation and crippling shortages of consumer goods have destroyed the previously comfortable life of Ghana's middle class. "It is not possible for any member of my staff to live on his salary. He must have some other source of income," said the head of a Ghanian university.

The most popular source of a secondary income is raising chickens. Another way



"THESE VULTURES ARE OUT TO GET ME!"

to make money is by using a private or a company car as a taxi. Both methods are resorted to, often during working hours.

The increasingly time-consuming search for goods and the money to pay for them is slowly bringing much of the country's civil service to a halt. Teachers often skip classes, officers do not appear at work for days, and trading has become a national pastime.

The problems are a result of seven years of military rule characterized by corruption and mismanagement. To meet growing debts, the Government merely printed more money. Consequently, inflation has been running at 100 per cent per year for more than two years. Prices sky-rocketed as traders made vast profits from the shortage of essential commodities.

Most people have no option but to make money by other means. Corruption in every walk of life is rampant. Ghanians, however, are becoming increasingly incensed at the level of corruption. Strikes by students and professionals—lawyers, engineers and doctors—finally forced the resignation last year of General Acheampong as head of state and the announcement of elections for a civilian government.

But an increasing number of professionals have started leaving the country. Between August 1977 and September 1978, more than 4,000 teachers left Ghana. Even the statistics on inflation are months behind because the Bureau of Statistics cannot keep staff. Most Ghanians, however, seem confident that the new civilian government to be elected in June will straighten things out. But many also wonder how deeply ingrained the pattern of the last seven years has become.

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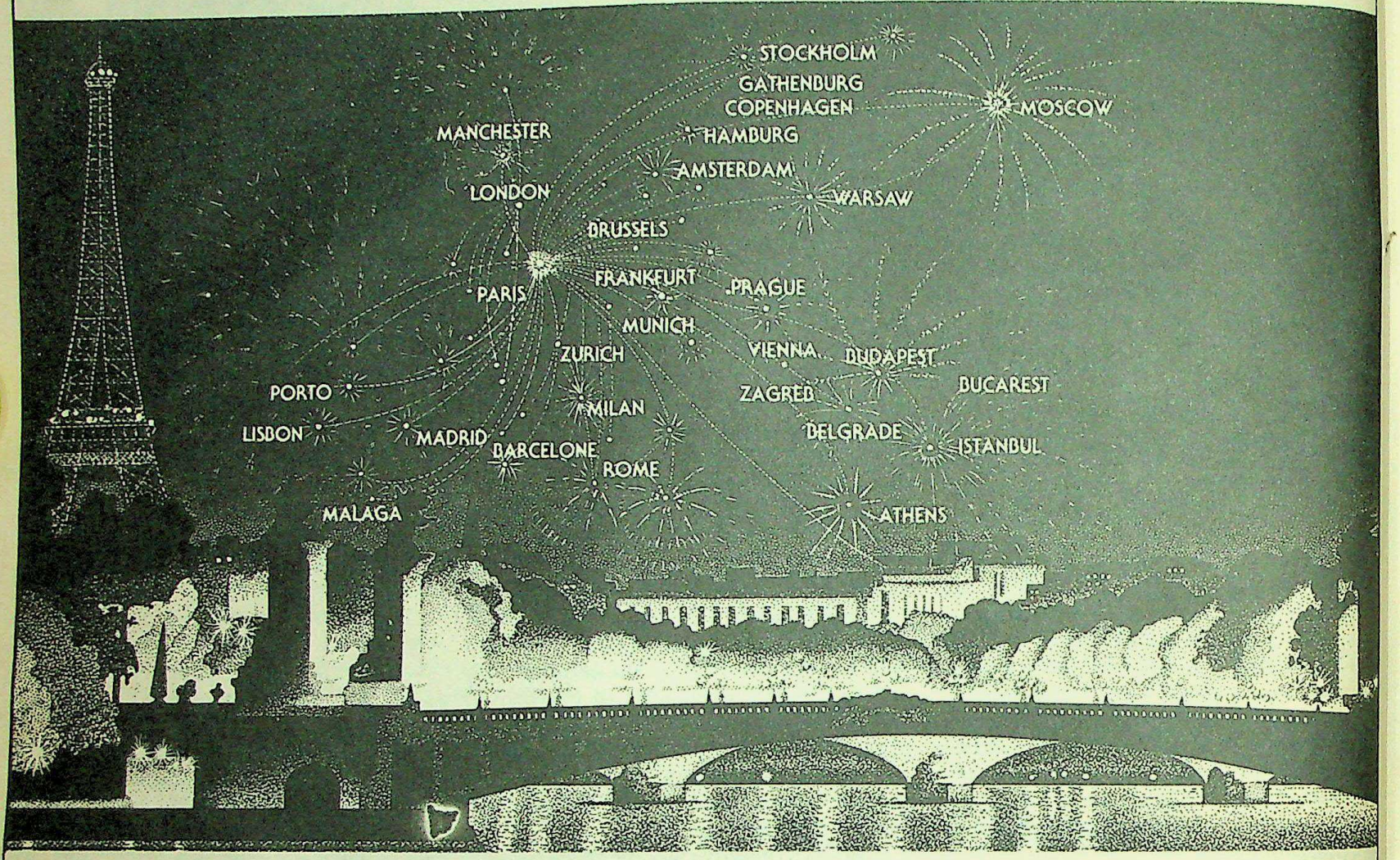

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Globe-trotting

Clumsy Seducer

■ Film stars rarely, if ever, live up to their screen image. Bloodthirsty villains of the silver screen often turn out to be gentle, unassuming people in real life and vice versa. Sex symbols, more often than not, are actually prudish, home-loving females, while rib-tickling comedians turn out to be dour and dull. The latest example of this myth is the virile all-male Hollywood star, Marlon Brando.

According to his Indian-born ex-wife Anna Kashfi, Brando was inarticulate, incoherent, a clumsy seducer and a lousy lover. According to her, Brando's seduction technique showed all the subtlety of a guillotine and his love-making resembled a well-rehearsed, polished performance lacking warmth and naturalness.

Kashfi, the latest to succumb to the tell-all-for-money memoir craze, reveals a fury undiminished by the 21 years since her marriage with Brando ended in 1958. In a bitter literary tirade against her ex-husband, Kashfi complains that during their three-year marriage, Brando would disappear for days on end and return only to play bongo drums until dawn.

Baldies, Bad Luck

■ There is bad news for baldies. According to the 650 scientists who met recently in Hamburg for the first International Congress of Hair Research, there is no known cure for baldness. The delegates confessed that they had tried everything—ointments, tonics, special food and medicine, scalp massages, magic rituals and even prayers—but the tragic conclusion was that once a head went bald, nothing would grow on it again.

Delegates seemed totally baffled by the fact that two-thirds of all males in the US experience some degree of baldness, while only one in every eight Orientals loses his hair. They seemed to have the answer to another phenomena, however—why a growing number of women are reporting loss of hair. According to some scientists, oral contraceptives affect the body's hormones and this often results in loss of hair. They also claimed that an unhappy love affair or other emotional disorders could have an unhealthy effect on a woman's hair. Baldness, according to them, was also hereditary. The unanimous advice for people growing bald was to adopt a philosophical attitude to the phenomena. As the old saying goes: "Hair today, gone tommorrow."

Financial Spaghetti

■ What could be world's most expensive jigsaw puzzle was put together last fortnight by a Texas bank under rather unusual circumstances. Because of a computer error, all incoming cheques and deposit slips—about 200,000 vital pieces of paper worth around Rs 16 lakh—were fed by mistake into a shredding machine.

Years of uncertainty, dispute and acute embarrassment appeared to be in store for the bank. Brooding over the countless fragments of financial spaghetti, each strip no more than three-sixteenths of an inch wide, Buddy Ragley, president of the bank, hit on a plan, promptly dubbed Operation Humpty Dumpty by his staff. Ragley closed the bank doors, and instructed his 15 staff members and 45 temporary helpers to paste together the jigsaw puzzle. Incredibly, after a session running 24 hours a day in eight hour shifts, all but 400 of the cheques and deposit slips were pasted back into readable form. As a reward, Ragley distributed mock-shredded bonus cheques to his staff.

Twin Coincidences

■ Coincidences do occur occasionally, but the odds against twin sisters who were married on the same day giving birth within minutes of each other are extremely rare. Yet, that is exactly what happened last month to Renee and Christopher Montross and Bernee and Lance Laurie. Renee gave birth to a girl at 4.48 p.m. in the Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital. Her twin Bernee also gave birth to a girl in the same hospital minutes later.

The couples were married in a double ceremony in Las Vegas in August 1977 and, not surprisingly, have bought houses next door to each other.

True To Form

■ The fall-out from the disastrous accident at Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania last month has not just been radioactive. Running true to form, Hollywood has now become the biggest beneficiary of the world's first nuclear disaster. In has turned Jane Fonda's new film, *The China Syndrome*, about a near-disaster at a California nuclear plant, into the box-office hit of the year. A major factor in the movie's phenomenal success was its timing. *The China Syndrome* opened just 12 days before the Harrisburg disaster and the $6 million (Rs 5 crore) "nuclear thriller" has already raked in $30 million (Rs 24 crore), boosted Columbia Pictures' stock, and helped Fonda and co-star Jon Voight win last fortnight's Oscar awards for their roles in a Vietnam war film, *Coming Home*.

"The boom started the day of the accident," said a Columbia Pictures' executive. "Everyone has heard they will get an inside look at what went wrong in Harrisburg." California's Governor Jerry Brown saw the film and described the resemblance between the Harrisburg accident and the film plot as "eerie". He then called for a closure of the State's biggest nuclear plant, Rancho Seco—a sister unit of the one in Harrisburg. Meanwhile, a triumphant Fonda announced that she and her husband, activist Tom Hayden, would make nuclear power "the issue in next year's Presidential election".

Healthy Imagination

■ When British doctors finally put their heads together they discovered that there was absolutely nothing wrong with the man who had been admitted more than 200 times to at least 68 hospitals and had been given thousands of blood tests and X-rays. This 34-year-old case history of imaginary illnesses was reported in last month's issue of the *British Medical Journal*. According to the report, the unidentified man spent a total of 10 years as a patient in National Health Service hospitals and used at least 30 different names. The man suffered from "Manchhausen's Syndrome" named after an 18th century character who told lurid tales of war adventures, all of them imaginary. Doctors said the man's abdomen resembled a "scarred battlefield because of the innumerable operations he had been given for imaginary ailments". The cost of treatment for Britain's state health service—Rs 1.6 crore.

Voight and Fonda—nuclear fallout helped them

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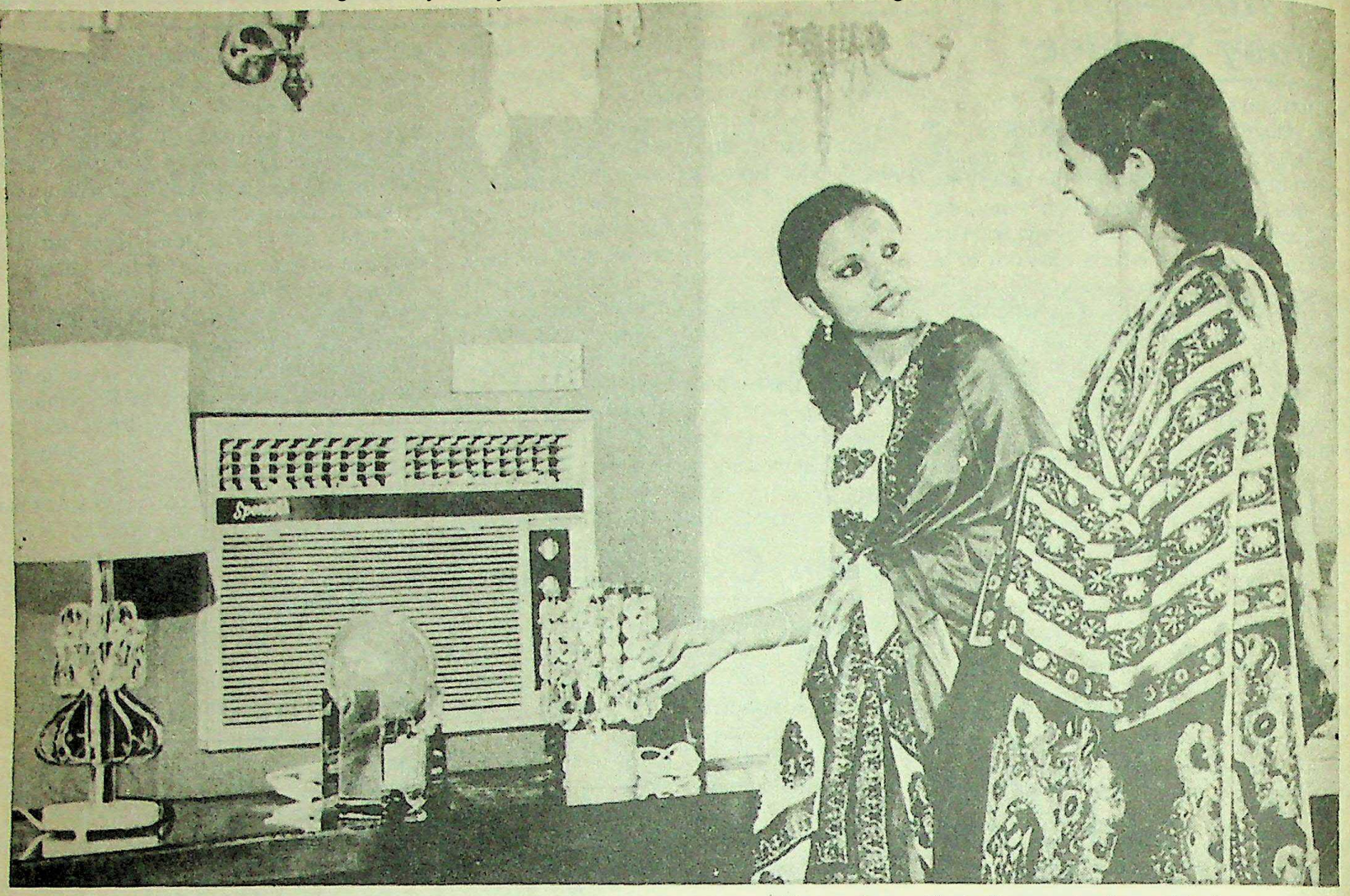

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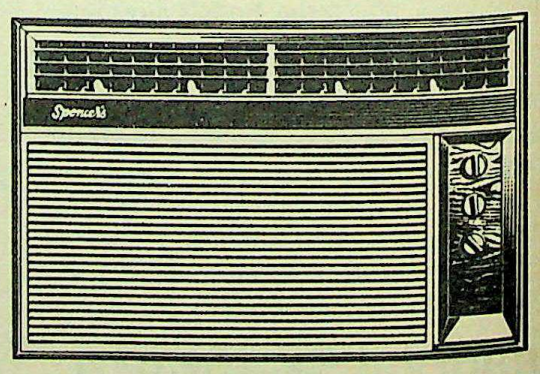

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International Intelligence

New Arms Salesman

PRESIDENT Anwar Sadat of Egypt has a brand-new role to play—that of an international arms salesman. Once the Egyptians take delivery of the huge consignment of American weapons pledged to them under the Camp David agreement, they will be looking for buyers for their vast stockpile of used Soviet military hardware. According to one estimate, Egypt's arsenal of Soviet-made weaponry is worth around $4 billion (Rs 3,200 crore).

The result could be that Egypt emulates Libya in becoming a central supply point for the distribution of Russian military hardware. Sadat thus hopes to convince a number of African leaders that they can now ease out of their current relationship with Russia without forfeiting the right to Russian-made weaponry and spare parts on which their armies are so dependent. Sadat has already found his first customer in Tanzania. Somalia's President Siad Barre has been hinting that he might renew his previous links with the Soviets if he cannot get arms from the West, and Sadat could find him a willing customer as well, if only to deter Barre from rejoining the Soviet fold.

It is likely that Sadat's arms supply will be used to further his own interests, and, by extension, those of the US as well. Apart from that, Sadat's new role as an international arms salesman will prove very lucrative—a significant development now that the oil producing Arab countries have decided to cut off oil supplies to Egypt.

Tremors From Iran

THE growing power and success of Ayatullah Khomeini in Iran has sent significant political tremors through neighbouring Iraq and Afghanistan. In Iraq there have been visible signs of a major movement among the country's Shia community directly inspired by Khomeini's Islamic revolution in Iran. The Shias are the country's largest religious group but ever since Iraq gained its independence, political power has been concentrated in the hands of a Sunni ruling clique. Khomeini's victory in Iran has, however, encouraged Iraqi Shia leaders to demand a larger participation in the economic and political system. They have reportedly also established close contact with Khomeini, who has allegedly agreed to pledge arms and support for a Shia uprising in Iraq.

In Afghanistan, President Tarakki's regime, closely aligned with the Soviets, finds itself threatened by a similar Muslim revolt apparently with the full support of Khomeini's followers in Iran. Ironically, Afghanistan originally served as an important base for opponents of the Shah of Iran's regime, before he was forced to flee the country.

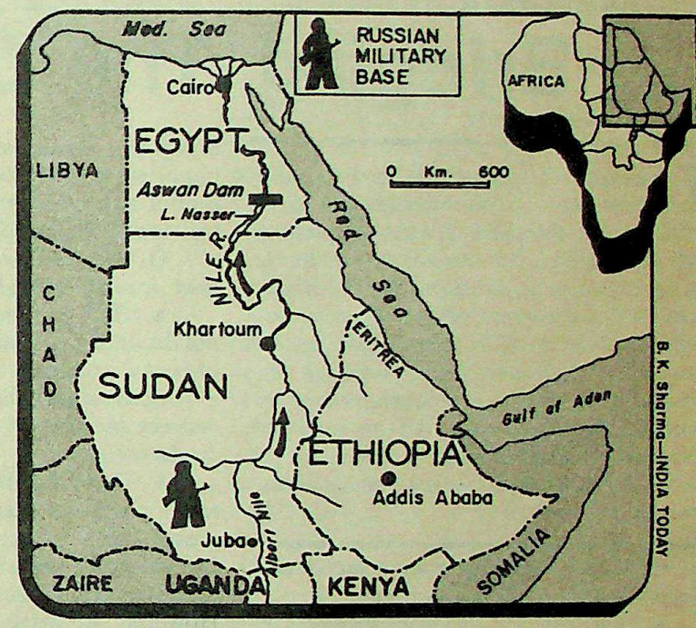
Mysterious Sabotage

INTELLIGENCE sources are convinced that the recent sabotage of French nuclear reactors earmarked for Iraq at the Mediterranean port of Seyne-sur-Mer was the work of the Israeli secret service, though there is no proof to support this theory. On April 5, a massive explosion took place inside the heavily guarded warehouse belonging to France's leading manufacturer of nuclear machinery—Navale Industrielle de la Mediterranee. When security guards rushed inside, they found containers holding reactor components bound for Iraq completely destroyed. Surprisingly, none of the other consignments destined for other countries had been affected by the blast.

The equipment that was being supplied to Iraq was of vital importance to the entire balance of power in the Middle East, as it could have given Iraq the capacity to produce its own nuclear weapons.

The method by which the sabotage was carried out still remains a mystery. That the saboteurs could have gained entry into the heavily guarded warehouse sounds beyond belief. This points to the possibility that the explosives were hidden inside the crates during some stage of their journey from the manufacturers to the warehouse.

Israel seems the most likely culprit. When the French first announced that they were setting up a "nuclear research city" in Iraq, Israel and the US had protested strongly to the French Government. The French ignored the protests since they were being guaranteed an uninterrupted flow of oil for a long period in addition to massive arms sales to Iraq. But the sabotage operation has reduced to nought the possibility of Iraq becoming the possessor of a nuclear bomb in the foreseeable future—an eventuality that could possibly have led to a nuclear showdown with the only regional power with the same capability: Israel.



Sadat's Toppling Game

A large measure of the success of the Tanzanian forces in overthrowing Idi Amin's regime belongs, surprisingly, to Egypt. President Sadat's decision to supply the Tanzanian forces with arms and advisers was spurred by covert Soviet threats to cut off water supply to both Egypt and Sudan. According to informed sources, the Egyptian intelligence service received reports that the Soviets, with Ugandan and Ethiopian help, were planning to take over control of the Nile. In the initial stages, the plan was to control the sources of the Blue Nile with Ethiopian help, and build dams to divert their waters to threaten Egypt's vital Aswan Dam project.

Later, the plan envisaged controlling the source of the White Nile, located in Uganda, and the subsequent setting up of military bases near the Uganda/Sudan border. The Russians then planned to clear the way for a takeover of the region through which the Albert Nile flows. To counteract this threat, Egypt agreed to outfit the Tanzanian army with equipment it required, including MiG-17 fighters. The Egyptians also agreed to supply them with as much ammunition as they would require to topple Amin's Libya-backed army, medium artillery, heavy machine guns and armoured vehicles.

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Vashishta—INDIA TODAY

Bahuguna—proud that petroleum products were not rationed

H. N. BAHUGUNA

Bridging The Gap

The dapper Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna, 59, presides over the troubled Petroleum and Chemicals Ministry. An astute politician with a strong base among the minorities, he has been resilient in weathering the vicissitudes in his political career. After being sent into political limbo by Mrs Gandhi during the Emergency, Bahuguna came back to the national scene as one of the architects of the Congress For Democracy. In an interview with INDIA TODAY, *Bahuguna spoke on the plans of his ministry and the issue of minorities. Excerpts:*

Q. *What are the important achievements of your ministry in the last two years?*

A. Oil exploration was speeded up and the Oil and Natural Gas Commission was restructured. The refineries which were in the red are also now performing better.

Q. *But the supply of oil and petroleum products is erratic. Are you taking any corrective steps?*

A. Considering the adverse circumstances, arrangements for the supply of petroleum products have been to an extent satisfactory. For instance, Bombay port was closed due to strike for 200 days during 1978, and nothing could be moved out of the Bombay refinery. The impact of the continuous strike would have been disastrous but for the fact that production in Bombay High was maintained at a reasonable level through efficient management. I have introduced a monitoring system to daily assess the availability of petroleum products.

Q. *Why is the kerosene and petrol shortage continuing?*

A. It is due to disruption in the movement of supplies in the country and erratic supply from Iran during the last year. Moreover, regular supply of items that are imported, even in other countries like Britain, cannot be guaranteed. We are proud that petroleum products were not rationed here.

Q. *But kerosene, which is used by the poor, is in short supply.*

A. The production of kerosene has not declined. Its demand has gone up because of coal shortage.

Q. *How are you going to fill in the gap between the demand and supply of petroleum products?*

A. We have been able to meet our requirements of petroleum products so far though with great difficulty. During the Iran crisis, we had a shortfall of eight million tonne per year which was not easy to manage. However, we were not starved of petrol because of our friendly relations with the petroleum producing countries. I could manage 45 lakh tonne of petrol from Iraq, five lakh tonne from Abu Dhabi, 20 lakh tonne from Libya and five lakh tonne from Saudi Arabia. The five-lakh-tonne deficit would be covered by producing more in India.

Q. *When do you expect to achieve self-sufficiency in petroleum products?*

A. It will take a long time. India has potential both for on-shore and off-shore petroleum production. Our gas is of superior quality, but its supply is not enough to meet the domestic requirement. We, however, save substantial foreign exchange from five lakh tonne gas production every year.

We have been able to save $10 (Rs 80) per barrel on the petrol imported from abroad. The price in the open market was $24.50 (Rs 196) per barrel before the recent price hike but we got the petrol at $14.50 (Rs 116) per barrel from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). If India had to purchase 80 million tonne of petrol from the open market, it would have spent Rs 200 crore more on the deal. I am happy that my Arab connection has worked.

Q. *When do you propose to increase the domestic gas connections?*

A. While there are over 10 crore families in India, we have been able to give only 25 lakh connections. In the next two years, 20 lakh more connections would be available through increased productions at Bombay High and Mathura Refinery.

Q. *What have you done to improve the drug Industry?*

A. India was without any purposeful drug policy up to 1977. The earlier government appointed the Hathi Committee, but no follow-up action was taken on its report. Now, we have formulated definite policies on the basis of Hathi Committee recommendations in respect of areas of operations of public and private sector including multinational corporations. We have removed the confusion prevailing regarding issue of licences and dilution of foreign equity by multinationals. We have abolished brand names of important medicines like Analgin and given them general names so that there is no possibility of misuse of patents. We have also reduced the prices of 375 formulations which are used in the production of commonly used medicines.

Q. *What is your reaction to the various constituents of the Janata Party talking in terms of reviving their old organizations.*

A. Well, Babuji (Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram) said long ago that the Congress For Democracy (CFD) is the only party which has merged in the Janata Party. I think nothing more explicit could have been said. Various constituents of the party must forget their past affiliations otherwise the Janata Party will collapse under its own contradictions.

Q. *Are you satisfied with what the Janata Government has done for the minorities?*

A. Many steps have been taken to help them. But personally I feel that to protect the interests of minorities, scheduled castes and other weaker sections of the society, we must have a Communal Amity Police Force. This force should comprise men from minorities and scheduled castes and only 25 per cent of the personnel should belong to majority groups. This force should take care of the property of all sections of the community during a communal flare-up. It must also be ensured that no graveyard will be taken over by the Government agencies for any public purpose whatsoever. The educational system which has communal overtones should also be revamped.

Q. *People feel that continuation of RSS elements in the Janata Party is alienating the minorities. What do you think?*

A. The Janata Party leaders should sit together and sort out all the issues rather than giving controversial statements that harm the party.

—PRABHU CHAWLA

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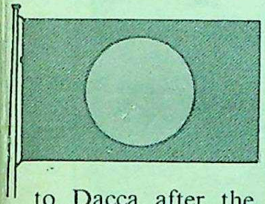
Morarji Desai and Zia-ur Rahman (right) with aides at talks in Dacca on April 16

BANGLADESH

Love And Hate



The fact that Bangladesh President Zia-ur Rahman chose Morarji Desai to be the first head of state to pay an official visit to Dacca after the recent elections, is a significant pointer to current relations between the two countries. Ever since 1971, Bangladesh has regarded India with ill-concealed suspicion. There was some melting of attitudes when the Janata Government came to power, but in the last fortnight's talks during Desai's visit it was obvious that Zia is determined to steer clear of India as far as economic or military dependence is concerned. Zia's main fear is that India's major stake in the economy of Bangladesh will provide New Delhi with a powerful political lever in the future. He was at pains to emphasize his country's dependence on the US, Japan and some South-East Asian countries for technical and economic aid. Significantly, there was no mention of China which indicates that Zia realizes that intensification of relations with Peking could prove diplomatically unwise.

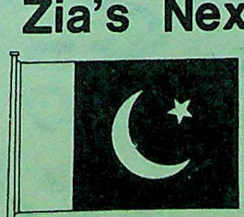
Bias: There is ample evidence that Bangladesh is finally going through an economic revival. Dacca has wide, metalled roads, a more efficient transport system and intense construction activity is in evidence all around. Dacca's Intercontinental Hotel is bustling with Japanese, American, Thai, Malaysian and Filipino economic and technical experts and businessmen. The Bangladesh Government, however, has persistently discouraged Indian businessmen and visas for Indians to visit Bangladesh are extremely difficult to come by.

During Desai's visit, it was evident that the strong anti-Indian feeling of the past four years had abated considerably. There is, however, an undercurrent of fear that India could prove an abrasive neighbour. It is this attitude that led Bangladesh to internationalize the Farakka issue and try and involve Nepal and the World Bank in tapping the eastern water resources.

Inherent differences like sharing the Ganga waters, delineation of the maritime boundaries, ratification of land border agreement signed in 1974 still remain unresolved. In addition, the current flow of refugees from Bangladesh into the northern states of India is one area of potential tension between the two countries.

PAKISTAN

Zia's Next Move



Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's death cell prophecy of a bloodbath in Pakistan if he was executed has failed to materialize. But then he, like a majority of his followers, was guilty of sadly underestimating the political potential of the man who cracks the whip in Pakistan today—General Zia-ul-Haq. Pakistan's plethora of military dictators have been a largely predictable lot and have essentially followed a well-trodden political path. But Zia has emerged as a different kettle of fish, as his supposedly risky gamble in hanging Bhutto has proved.

It is, however, Zia's unpredictability that has painted a massive question mark over the event around which hinges the future of Pakistan—whether Zia will stick to his promise of holding the general elections on November 17. Many people in Pakistan, including senior military officers, feel that Zia will renege on his promise. There are many factors which could provide Zia with a legitimate excuse for doing so, even at the risk of jeopardizing his own future. The collapse of the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) into small constituent parts; pro-Bhutto violence or a deterioration of the situation on Pakistan's border with Afghanistan.

The PNA's decision last month to withdraw from Zia's cabinet, described by its leader Maulana Mufti Mahmood, as "unanimous" was essentially a question of political survival. Always a heterogeneous entity, afflicted constantly by factional quarrels, the PNA's departure from Zia's Government was as unobtrusive as was its entry into it last August.

Political Expediency: Out of the nine constituent parties that originally grouped under the PNA banner, five of the major constituents opted to stay out of Zia's cabinet. Now reduced to a political lightweight, its only path to survival lay in discontinuing its active alliance with Zia's regime. The execution of Bhutto has caused national and international revulsion, and any political group associated with Zia is likely to fare badly at the next general elections, if and when they are held.

There are other signs that the military will be playing a decisive role in the future of Pakistan. Last fortnight, Zia, in an interview with an American columnist, stated that his next step would be to usher in "some constitutional role for the armed forces, which is today the only institution which is stable, which is responsible for the safety, security and guarding the integrity of Pakistan. If we find at a particular stage that political environment is like the one in 1977 or politicians are pulling in different directions then it should be the President of the country who, with the help of the armed forces, should be able to dissolve the National Assembly, take power himself, and run the country. . . ." This, he added, would bring in more stability and would be "much more democratic".

Zia seems to be already gearing himself for that eventuality, by setting stage two of his political purge in motion—the elimination of the Bhutto dynasty. With Bhutto dead, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

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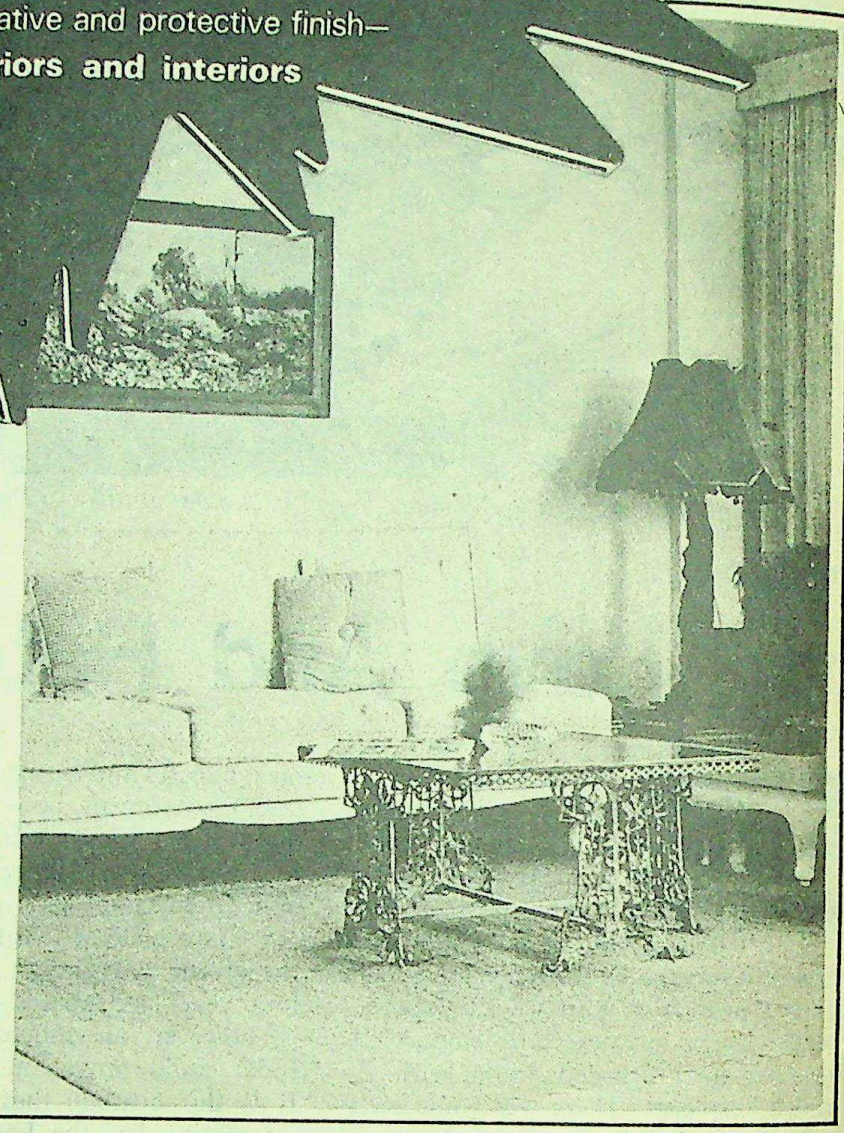

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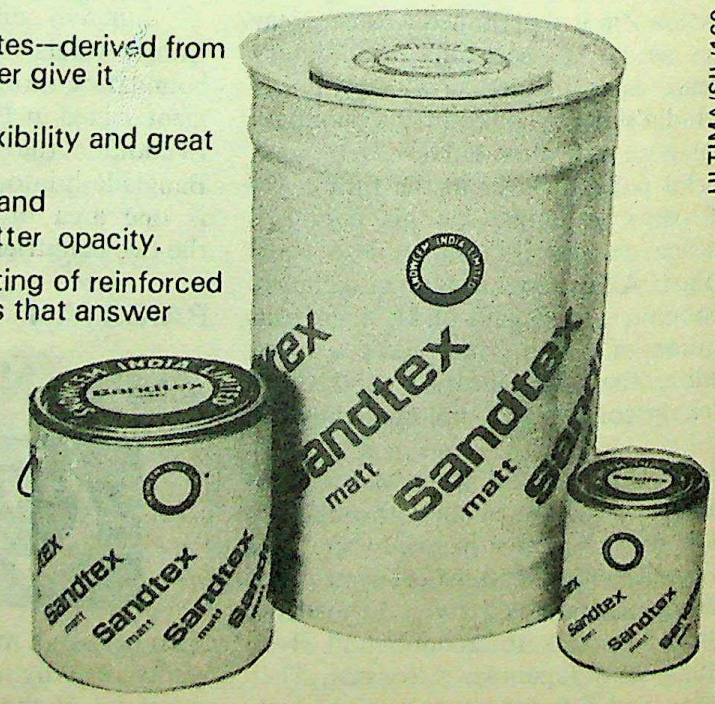

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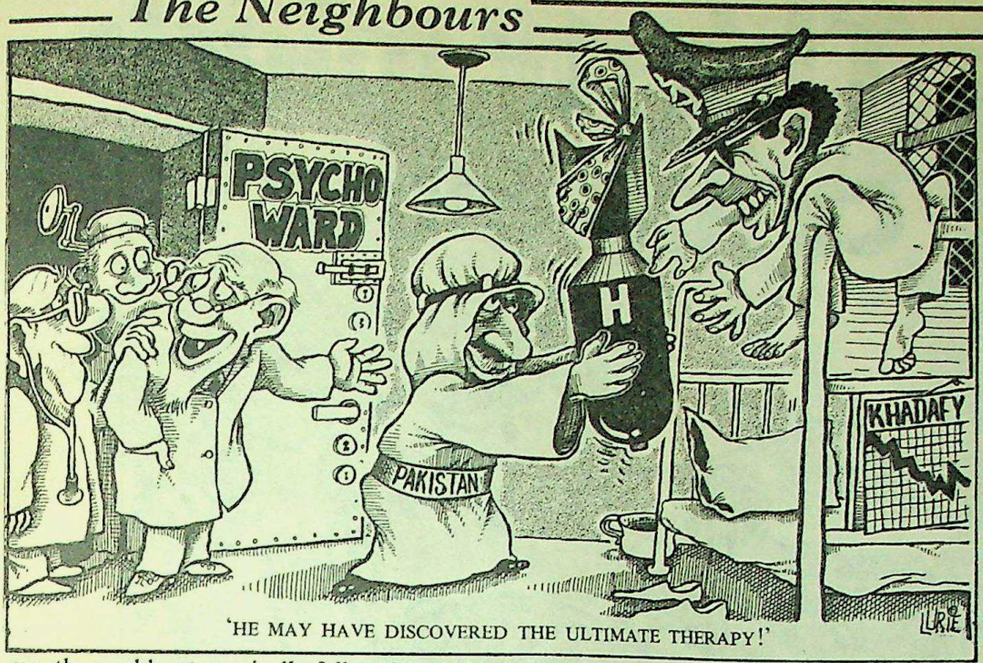

'HE MAY HAVE DISCOVERED THE ULTIMATE THERAPY!'

mantle would automatically fall on Bhutto's second wife, Nusrat and from her on his daughter Benazir.

Next Purge: According to recent reports, Zia is widely expected to bring criminal charges against both of them. In the raid on the Bhutto household on the eve of Bhutto's execution, officials claimed to have discovered secret state documents cencerning Pakistan's foreign and defence affairs. If Zia manages to eliminate Nusrat and Benazir from the political field, the PPP, undoubtedly the party with the best electoral chances, would be leaderless and pose less of a threat to the indefinite extension of Zia's military rule.

But the most significant event, at least as far as India is concerned, was the US offer to Pakistan last fortnight of 50 Northrop F-5E fighters equipped with advanced air-to-ground missiles and diplomatic backing for Pakistan's proposal of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia if Pakistan will accept full nuclear safeguards. The American policy switch, is apparently an attempt to wean Pakistan away from its ambitions to develop nuclear weapons by making a twin offer of fighter planes and help in producing nuclear power if Pakistan agrees to international safeguards. The offer is also an attempt to soothe ruffled Pakistani feathers caused by the US decision to cut off all assistance to Pakistan except food.

Impact: The US also desperately needs a foothold in Pakistan after the upheavals in Iran and to counter the spread of Soviet influence from neighbouring Afghanistan. It is for that reason that the Carter Administration's reaction to Bhutto's execution was relatively mild. But the extent of the US support to Pakistan is likely to have a significant impact on Indo-US relations.

India has always opposed Pakistan's proposal of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. The Indian policy has been to accept full-scope nuclear safeguards only if the same rules apply to all nuclear powers. Pakistan, on the other hand, has already informed the US that it will accept nuclear safeguards only if India accepts the same terms. Pakistan has officially denied that it is pursuing a nuclear path, but in private, Pakistani diplomats say that the Government is determined to keep its nuclear options open.

It would come as no great surprise if Islamabad rejects the latest US offer. By doing so, Pakistan would earn valuable breathing space for perfecting its gas centrifuge project, meant as a substitute for the nuclear reprocessing plant. With the centrifuge, Pakistan could produce enriched uranium—the core material for a nuclear weapon.

In any event, Pakistan is counting heavily on Arab aid—particularly from Libya—to accelerate its nuclear programme. Libya's strongman Colonel Gaddafi has invested heavily in Pakistan's nuclear research. Ironically, he was persuaded by Bhutto's argument that the world had a Christian bomb, a Hindu bomb and a Jewish bomb. The time had come to build an Islamic bomb. If Zia follows the same path, the consequences could be disastrous.

—DILIP BOBB

SRI LANKA

The Dope Boom

Sri Lanka has reportedly become a major link in an international drug-trafficking chain, with international drug-carriers increasing their operations via Colombo.

There was a time when the "Golden Triangle" of Burma, Laos and Thailand took pride of place in narcotics drug-trafficking. But now what is known as the "mini-triangle" comprising Sri Lanka, India and the Maldive Islands is gradually taking over as the centre of international smuggling of opium and ganja (cannabis).

The Sri Lanka Narcotics Bureau (SLNB) estimates that over five tonne of opium "leak" into the country each year. The bulk of this is sent to cities in Europe, England, the United States and Australia. Some of the opium is sold to local addicts, tourists and crews of fishing-trawlers which poach round the coasts. The chief of the SLNB said that ganja was planted illicitly in about 500 acre. With each plant yielding 40 pound of ready-to-use ganja the average produce an acre was 15,000 pound. At the street value of Rs 20 a a pound in Sri Lanka, cultivators could earn Rs 75,000 from one acre.

The Narcotics Bureau chief said that India produced about 1,500 tonne of opium a year on state permits as a raw material for certain drugs, a pound of opium fetching around Rs 225. The five to six tonne that filtered into Sri Lanka yearly through Valvettiturai, Kankesanturai and Talaimannar were adulterated and sold at Rs 2,500 a pound.

Seizures: In the past, opium was transported to Sri Lanka from India in boats or towed underwater in polythene bags by fishing crafts. The main landing point was Valvettiturai, a small coastal fishing hamlet in the north of Sri Lanka, where the chief occupation of the local populace was smuggling. Now morphine, heroin and even LSD are filtering into the country. Although, Singapore has introduced the death penalty for carriers, operators are risking even that as a kilo of heroin which initially costs about $300 (Rs 2,400) ultimately fetches around $75,000 (Rs 6 lakh).

According to the SLNB, smugglers employ couriers to travel to India as pilgrims. Each 'pilgrim' brings back a package of opium weighing up to 15 pound. They pass through Katunayaka International Airport and the airport at Jaffna in the north. Indians travelling on Sri Lankan visas and Sri Lankans who return via Dhanushkodi/Talaimannar by boat are also used for carrying larger quantities as there are no restrictions on the amount of luggage on the overland route.

In recent years there had been a shift in operations from Valvettiturai. Drug and other contraband smugglers now use Pesalai, Mannar, Delft, Nainativu, Kurukadouwan, Kayts, Gurunagar and Karainagar.

New Method: The latest ruse is to send parcels of opium from the Maldive Islands by air and sea. The detection is difficult unless the authorities are tipped off. But even if detected, the real people behind the trafficking remain unidentified.

The Sri Lankan and Indian Governments have agreed on a coordinated plan to curb the drug smuggling. The two countries are not only alarmed at the drug-trafficking but also at the escalating gem smuggling, customs and revenue evasions, which are now intertwined with dope smuggling.

—T.B. PERAMUNETILLEKE

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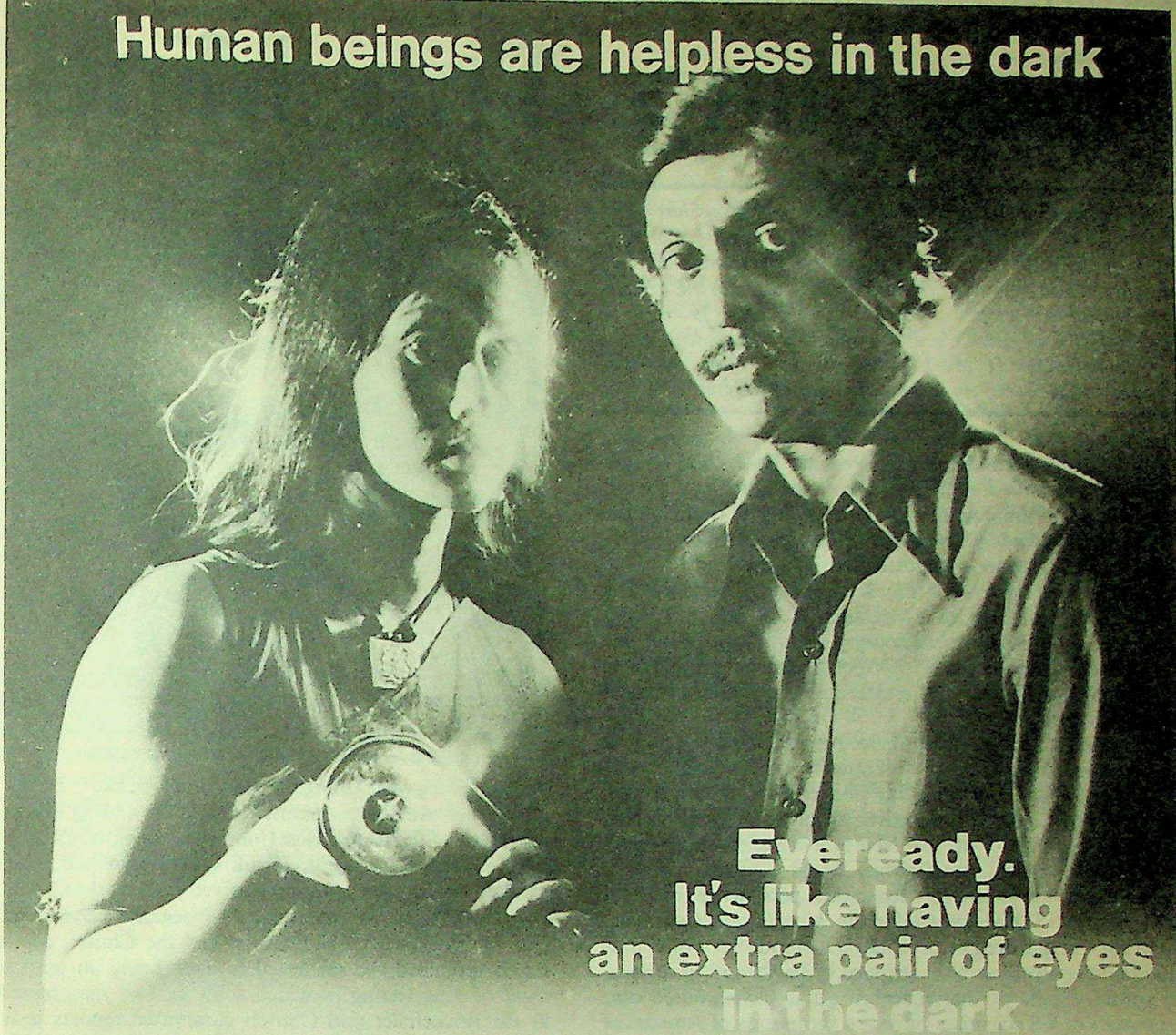

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Boggling The Mind

THE veil of secrecy that shrouds the CIA's operations has often been ripped off but the mystery persists. The latest—and most disturbing—exposé of its notorious activities is in the form of a book, The Search for the Manchurian Candidate. *It deals with the organization's diabolical experiments, from 1950 to the early 1970s, with 'Mind Control'.* INDIA TODAY*'s Washington correspondent interviewed the author, John D. Marks, about the experiment, which if successful, would have been "the ultimate in totalitarian control".*

IT's sold more than 20,000 copies in less than three months. It is going into its second printing. Penguin Books has bought rights to it. Yugoslavia and France have bought the rights to translate it. A daily London newspaper is going to serialize the entire thing. And *Playboy* magazine's prestigious book review section had dubbed it the most important book of the year.

The book, *The Search for the Manchurian Candidate*, has jolted America with the fury of a Muhammad Ali punch. It's got the nation's secret intelligence community scrambling around like a bunch of headless chickens. And it's got Americans from Maine to Iowa shaking their heads and muttering: "It couldn't happen here. It couldn't happen here."

But the point is, it *did* happen here. And for all one knows it still may be happening. What we do know, thanks to this remarkable book, is that from 1950 until the mid-1960s and early 1970s, the CIA, in concert with various government agencies as well as independent US scientists was involved in a massive, super-secret experiment with diabolical ramifications: Mind Control.

Magic Drug: Thanks to the tenacious persistence of John D. Marks, author of *The Search for the Manchurian Candidate*, CIA's hunt for a magic drug or psychiatric method that would produce total mind control has been stripped of its shroud of secrecy, and the sordid details of that macabre quest have poured out.

Thousands of US scientists subjected thousands of Americans and unknown numbers of foreigners to these experiments under the 'Big Brotherly' control of the CIA.

Author John Marks, 36, a former intelligence officer with the State Department, told INDIA TODAY during the course of a two-hour interview: "What I uncovered is probably one per cent of what really went on. I'm not sure we'll ever know all the details. I suspect the CIA has destroyed most of the really damaging documents." The very idea of using "psychiatrists, surgeons, hypnotists, physicians to control the human mind is repugnant," he said. "It's the ultimate in totalitarian control. It's what Orwell talked about in *Nineteen Eighty-Four.*"

Other governments—including, of course, the Soviet Union—have tried experimental mind control in one degree or another, says Marks. "If you achieve mind control the possibilities of what you can do with it are endless. Most governments can't resist it." Marks obtained his information—16,000 pages of original, albeit heavily censored CIA documents—through a unique American institution—the Freedom of Information Act under which ordinary citizens can go to court to compel the government to release information that does not affect national security or the privacy of individuals.

Official Secrets: "Other countries," Marks says, "have followed in the footsteps of their former colonial masters such as Britain in adopting official secrets acts." Official secrets acts, he says, "are a bureaucrat's dream of non-accountability to the public." Initially, Marks says, he did not know quite what he was getting, and he did not even have the idea for a book, when the CIA grudgingly began to release him information in small driblets in 1976.

Marks—uncovering CIA's experiments to control the human mind

The following year, things began to jell. Senator Frank Church's intelligence oversight committee had been holding hearings following release of the Rockefeller Commission report in which there was mention of a CIA agent, Frank Olsen, who had jumped to his death from a window after being given LSD by the CIA.

Marks says the documents he began receiving showed him that the Rockefeller Commission and the Church committee had barely scratched the surface. Far from being an innocent experiment of drug testing in which a life or two may have been lost, as the Rockefeller and Church committee reports indicated, the CIA's 20-year programme, as Marks was to discover, was a heavily financed and tightly orchestrated effort to find fool proof methods of governing human behaviour.

Advanced Research: Government as well as private scientists and researchers, in an ethics-be-damned orgy jumped willingly into the heart of the CIA experiments which spread from coast to coast and used major American college campuses—Columbia, Harvard, Stanford—as fertile grounds for research. "This programme," Marks says, "was the cutting edge of the behaviour modification and change field. It represented the most advanced research in this field. It was the ultimate form of government research and the scientists who agreed to be part of the programme were promised secrecy, pay, and full support. It was hard for them to resist."

Marks said he decided to write his book after his perusal of thousands of documents convinced him that the CIA's continuing experiment was, indeed, aimed at searching for a Manchurian Candidate. "Manchurian Candidate" is the title of a 1959 novel by Richard Condon which suggests that a person can be brainwashed into becoming an assassin on a pre-arranged signal. The CIA experiments, Marks notes, were designed to determine if a Manchurian Candidate could actually be created experimentally. The CIA's experiments had the express purpose of determining whether unwitting victims can be made to commit involuntary acts such as assassinations and then not be able to remember these acts or what prompted them to commit them. A successful experiment of this sort would establish the ultimate form of mind control.

Collaborators: The CIA found willing allies for its experiments not only among US government agencies but also in the pharmaceu-

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tical industry which provided CIA with dangerous drugs which had been rejected for use for humans because of undesirable side-effects.

Marks's documents show that since the 1950s the CIA was obsessed with experimenting with poisons, drugs, hypnosis, psychosurgery, electroshock treatments at home and abroad. And acts committed by victims whose minds had been altered by these methods could include the killing of not just foreign politicians but also American officials.

The importance of mind control through various devices such as concussions induced from afar was that such traumas "are always followed by amnesia for the actual moment of the accident", a CIA document shows.

"If a technique was devised," the same document says, "to induce brain concussion without either giving advance warning or causing external physical trauma, the person upon recovery would be unable to recall what had happened to him." These methods, the memo says, could be established as "tools in brainwashing therapy". And they include—in addition to drugging—subjecting unknowing victims, such as people driving cars, to sudden, special horn blasts tuned to the resonant frequency of the head, blast waves propagated in the air, and to tuned sound waves concentrated on the victim with the help of accoustical lenses and reflectors.

The Origins: Names given to these CIA experimental programmes were CHICKWIT, and OFTEN. And they apparently grew out of a secret project named ARTICHOKE in the 1950s. The "essential element" of ARTICHOKE was to study the feasibility of whether "an individual of (*deleted*) descent, approximately 35 years old, well-educated, proficient in English and well-established socially and politically in the (*deleted*) Government could be induced under ARTICHOKE to perform an act, involuntarily, of attempted assassination against a prominent (*deleted*) politician or if necessary, against an American official . . ." (The *deletions* represent words blanked out by the CIA).

In other areas, CIA operatives were asked to cooperate with Tanzanian witch-doctors in order to obtain information from them about the various mind control uses of poisons obtained from the gall bladders of sick Tanzanian crocodiles of the Nile variety.

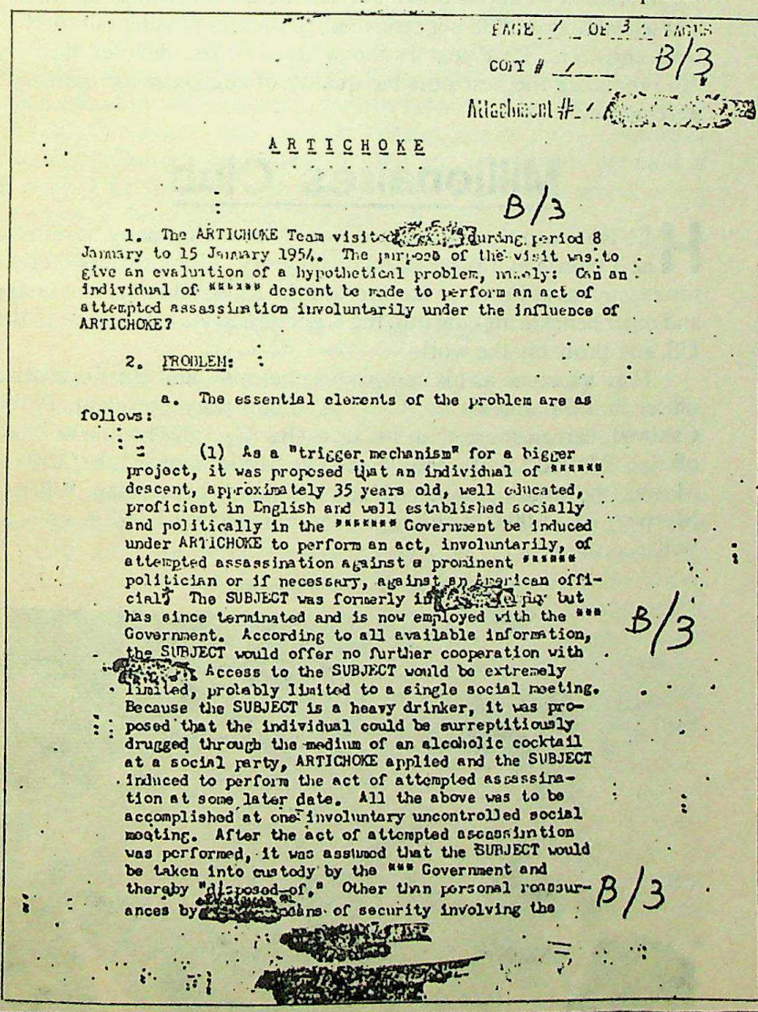
Marks is not sure whether—so far—CIA's experiments on thousands of students, mental patients, prostitutes, prison inmates, foreigners, ever produced a Manchurian Candidate. He knows for sure that the CIA's psychological experiments on San Francisco prostitutes—dubbed "Operation Midnight Climax"—in order to use sex in espionage yielded negligible results.

Symbol of Defiance: But the CIA experiments, Marks says, led to the "democratization of the drug LSD", over which the CIA had maintained a complete monopoly. The drug could not be produced, imported or exported without CIA knowledge and control, so important was its place in the CIA's secret armamentarium of mind control devices.

But the CIA's use of LSD in campus experiments was the way LSD "got out" of the CIA's hands in and into the mouths of America's flower children in the 1960s. Use of the drug became a symbol of defiance of authority, opposition to the Vietnam war, and *karma* trips designed to wipe off the memory of materialistic *Amerika*, as the cultural revolutionaries of those days spelled the word.

Marks thinks that LSD which slipped out of CIA's control in the 1960s and became the mind-expanding drug of the campus movement may have served a "counter-revolutionary purpose", in that it focused the energies of the youth revolt away from economic and political issues and into purely cultural ones.

"But you've got to remember," Marks says, "the cultural revolution was very anti-authoritarian. CIA may not have found the Manchurian Candidate but its experiments certainly helped usher in the Dawn of the Age of Aquarius."



PAGE 1 OF 3 PAGES
COPY # 1 B/3
Attachment #1

ARTICHOKE

B/3

1. The ARTICHOKE Team visited [redacted] during period 8 January to 15 January 1954. The purpose of the visit was to give an evaluation of a hypothetical problem, namely: Can an individual of [redacted] descent be made to perform an act of attempted assassination involuntarily under the influence of ARTICHOKE?

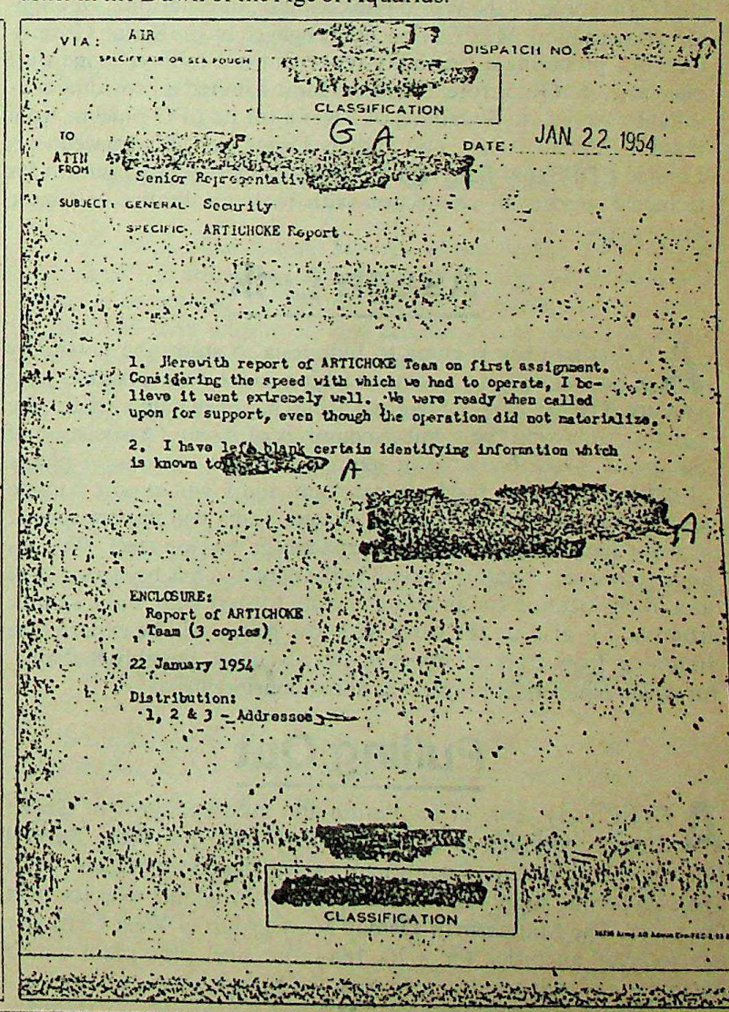
2. PROBLEM:

a. The essential elements of the problem are as follows:

(1) As a "trigger mechanism" for a bigger project, it was proposed that an individual of [redacted] descent, approximately 35 years old, well educated, proficient in English and well established socially and politically in the [redacted] Government be induced under ARTICHOKE to perform an act, involuntarily, of attempted assassination against a prominent [redacted] politician or if necessary, against an American official. The SUBJECT was formerly in [redacted] employ but has since terminated and is now employed with the [redacted] Government. According to all available information, the SUBJECT would offer no further cooperation with [redacted]. Access to the SUBJECT would be extremely limited, probably limited to a single social meeting. Because the SUBJECT is a heavy drinker, it was proposed that the individual could be surreptitiously drugged through the medium of an alcoholic cocktail at a social party, ARTICHOKE applied and the SUBJECT induced to perform the act of attempted assassination at some later date. All the above was to be accomplished at one involuntary uncontrolled social meeting. After the act of attempted assassination was performed, it was assumed that the SUBJECT would be taken into custody by the [redacted] Government and thereby "disposed of." Other than personal reassurances by [redacted] means of security involving the

B/3

B/3



VIA: AIR
SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH
DISPATCH NO. [redacted]
CLASSIFICATION
TO: [redacted] G A
ATTN: [redacted]
FROM: [redacted] Senior Representative
DATE: JAN 22 1954
SUBJECT: GENERAL: Security
SPECIFIC: ARTICHOKE Report

1. Herewith report of ARTICHOKE Team on first assignment. Considering the speed with which we had to operate, I believe it went extremely well. We were ready when called upon for support, even though the operation did not materialize.

2. I have left blank certain identifying information which is known to [redacted]

A

A

ENCLOSURE:
Report of ARTICHOKE Team (3 copies)

22 January 1954

Distribution:
1, 2 & 3 - Addressee

CLASSIFICATION

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Business International

Exit Ironing

THE "Sanforised" people whose process to control cloth shrinkage revolutionized the cotton textile industry have now come out with a no-iron anti-wrinkle process called "Sanfor-Set". The process is being marketed by Chiet, Peabody and Co, the firm that is responsible for marketing the "Sanforised" process the world over.

Sanfor-Set shirts are now being tested in USA and the initial response is said to be favourable. According to an executive of a man-made fibre company, the abrasion resistance, easy-care and wrinkle-resistance properties of Sanfor-Set are quite good but not as comfortable as polyester-cotton blended shirts which make up 71 per cent of the shirt market in the US and Europe. In India the proportion is low because of the lower initial costs of cotton shirts. However, the new process is expected to give a tremendous boost to the shrinking cotton textile industry everywhere, particularly India, which has a large cotton surplus.

Consultancy Services

INDIAN consultancy firms are slowly making their mark in the export market. Fertiliser (Planning and Development) India Limited, which, for some reason has been kept out of new fertilizer projects in the country, is taking up a study of fertilizer marketing and distribution for Afghanistan Fertilizer Company, Kabul. The study is financed by the World Bank affiliate, International Development Association. MECON has been engaged by the Syrian Government for preparing a feasibility report for a 1-million tonne steel plant at a fee of Rs 5 crore. Engineers India Limited is providing consultancy services to Sonatrach of Algeria for its LPG pipeline from Hassi R'Mel to Arzew and Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited (IDPL) has been retained by the Algerian Government for technical services in connection with their antibiotics and basic drugs plant.

Asean Link

AN Indian team is going to Indonesia to study the possibility of setting up an alumina smelting plant as a possible joint venture. The Ministry of Steel and Mines has drawn up a scheme for collaboration with the member-countries of Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in setting up metal conversion plants at either end of the production stream. India will export bauxite and import alumina. In the case of steel, India will import sponge iron for feeding it into electric furnaces for making steel. With its huge resources of natural gas and oil, Indonesia has been identified as a likely location for an alumina plant to start with, but a sponge iron plant is also on the cards. Iron ore pellets will be exported to Indonesia from Iron ore mines on the east coast, possibly Bailadila, for which a pelletization plant is under consideration.

Pulling Out

AFTER sixty years of revolution and industrial growth, Soviet Russia continues to buy technology from the West. Several European and Japanese contractors have signed agreements with Moscow for the supply of two heavy industrial plants over the next few years. The Mannesman-Demag Meer group of West Germany has received an order for a Rs 184-crore steel pipe plant which Mannesman is expected to split with the French Steel and nuclear-technology group, Creusot-Loire. Moscow is also placing an order for a Rs 56-crore tyre manufacturing plant to be supplied by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries of Tokyo. The plant, to be ready by 1982, will manufacture heavy-duty tyres for bulldozers and tractors.

Meanwhile, Mansfield Tire and Rubber Company, a US tyre manufacturer that has not been doing too well lately, is pulling out of India and is selling its 20 per cent interest in Madras Rubber Factory in Madras for about Rs 1 crore. The Madras company was also not doing well for some time but has now recovered. Its Rs 10 equity share is quoted around Rs 20. Mansfield Tire is apparently following in the footsteps of Kaiser Aluminium which is also selling its interest in Hindustan Aluminium, a Birla group company.

Engineers In Japan

THE main factor behind the success of Japanese industry is the effort put into high quality and reliability and the close cooperation between engineers and marketing men. Japan regards technology as the foundation of its prosperity and considers its engineers as its most precious industrial asset. According to a recent survey, engineers hold 67 per cent of board seats in the major Japanese manufacturing firms. In some high technology areas like electronics and chemicals, all board members are engineers.

This emphasis is also reflected in the Government. In the Ministry of Science and Technology, one third of the top officials are engineers and in the Agency for Industrial Science and Technology (which has no counterpart in India) only one of the top officials is not an engineer.

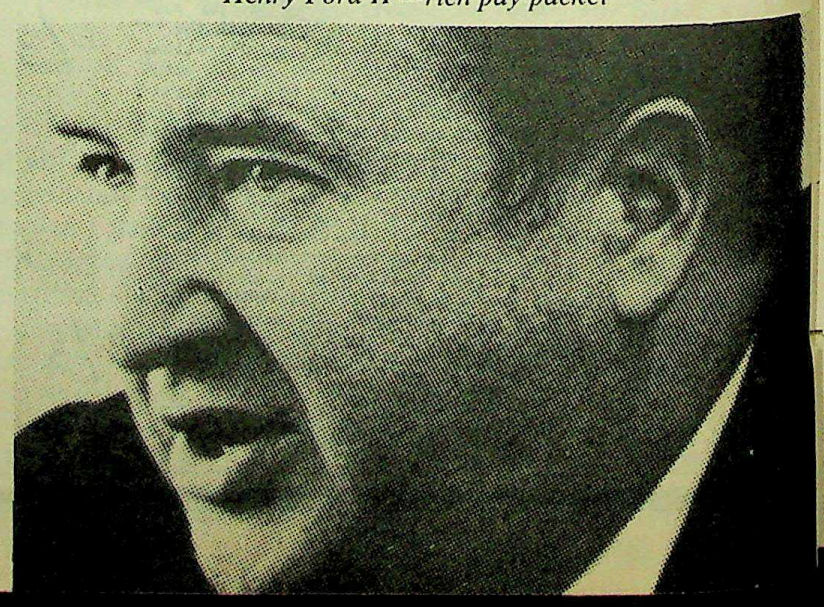
Over half of Japan's 601 universities are dedicated to science and technology and 38 per cent of all graduates passing out in 1977 were engineers. Last year two new universities, devoted entirely "to producing the best possible quality of engineers for industry" were opened.

Millionaires' Club

HENRY Ford II, chairman of Ford Motor Company, is retiring next month in a blaze of financial glory. Along with two other top executives at Ford, he has crossed the Rs 80 lakh mark in salary and other benefits making him the highest paid auto executive in the US, and probably the world.

Ford's income as his company's chairman and chief executive officer in 1977 was Rs 80,90,680. The company president, Philip Caldwell, earned more than his boss (Rs 83,21,024) while another official, Edward Lundy, also joined the Millionaires Club. General Motors, the largest company in the US, paid its chairman, William Murphy, Rs 78,00,000 although GM outstripped Ford in sales as well as profits.

Henry Ford II —rich pay packet



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trade winds

Gassing Games

Petroleum Minister Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna is planning to take Bombay Gas all the way to Lucknow, his home town and political base, and has turned down Gujarat Government's request to have a slice of the gas-based petrochemical empire. Bahuguna's argument is that Gujarat already has a petrochemical complex at Baroda but Morarji Desai's home state is not prepared to take 'no' for an answer. Bahuguna's men in Delhi say that Maharashtra has a stronger claim on Bombay High than Gujarat which can always fall back upon its onshore dry gas fields in the Tapi basin. Gujarat Chief Minister, Babubhai Patel, is so miffed at Bahuguna's attitude that he refused to attend the inauguration of the Baroda complex by the prime minister in March.

CBI Probe Bhel-Siemens

The Bhel-Siemens tie-up is now in the hands of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), not the collaboration proposal itself which the Cabinet is looking into, but the disclosure by Communist Party of India-Marxist member of Parliament P. Ramamurthi who has mounted a one-man campaign against it. CBI inspectors raided a printing press in Madras last month and took away bits of manuscript and galleys. Apparently, the Ramamurthi version differs from the original in many respects, but the Industry Ministry is so secretive about the deal that even the official Janata Party Committee headed by Sunder Singh Bhandari has not been able to get hold of a copy. CBI suspects that Bharat Heavy Electricals officials were involved in passing the information to Ramamurthi.

More Power

The additional power generating capacity 'really' added to the country's power system is only 1,522,000 kilowatt and not 3,022,000 kilowatt, according to power engineers in the know. Power from eight plants with a total capacity of 1,500,000 kilowatt will be available only nine months from now as the plants are now on "barring gear", which is one stage before 'rolling' them and putting them on actual power production. This stage, which is quite crucial, takes anything between nine to 12 months and makes all the difference between installing a plant and extracting power from it. Government's own power engineers are saying that the Energy Ministry is involved in a fiddle and is merely inflating figures to impress Parliament. Incidentally, all the eight plants included in the ministry's claim are located outside West Bengal.

Master's Voice ?

CBS Records, a subsidiary of Columbia Broadcasting (CBS) of New York, is planning a joint venture in India for manufacture and export of gramophone records and pre-recorded tapes. The proposal, if it goes through, involves the setting up of manufacturing facilities in Bombay in collaboration with a non-resident Indian from London who will hold 60 per cent of the authorized capital of Rs 60 lakh. The balance will be held by CBS in exchange for the supply of complete plant and equipment. The new venture will have a capacity of 640,000 gramophone records and 150,000 pre-recorded tapes.

There are three record manufacturing companies in India including two foreign companies, HMV (a subsidiary of EMI) and Polydor. The only Indian company in the field is Indian Record Manufacturing Company Limited (IRMCL) which has been trying to get CBS franchise in this country. But will now be left out in the cold.

Birla Turns To Leyland

Birla-owned Hindustan Motors is negotiating with British Leyland of UK for technical collaboration to replace its outdated Ambassador model. Hindustan Motors is aiming at a lighter, cheaper car with improved fuel economy and reduction of its present use of heavy steel auto components. The company began operations in 1954 with a tie-up with British Motor Corporation which was the manufacturer's name before its merger with Leyland and its more recent nationalization by the Labour Government. British Leyland, now known as BL Limited, is fully owned by the British Government and has been passing from crisis to crisis ever since the takeover. It has an Indian subsidiary, Ashok Leyland, which is doing quite well and has just announced an ambitious expansion programme. But Ashok Leyland makes trucks, not cars.

Rolls-Royce's Tank Deal

Rolls-Royce of UK is discussing a proposal with the Defence Ministry for setting up design and manufacturing facility in India to produce high-power engines for tanks, and eventually, civil aircraft. Rolls-Royce engines have been fitted to the latest series of Chieftain tanks that were originally destined for Iran but are likely to be purchased by India at a discounted price which could be as low as Rs 40 lakh per tank. Iran had agreed to buy 1,300 tanks for Rs 1,170 crore but the order was cancelled in February before the revolution. New Delhi is interested in the deal provided Rolls-Royce, which is wholly owned by the British Government, is willing to use some of the money to set up shop in India.

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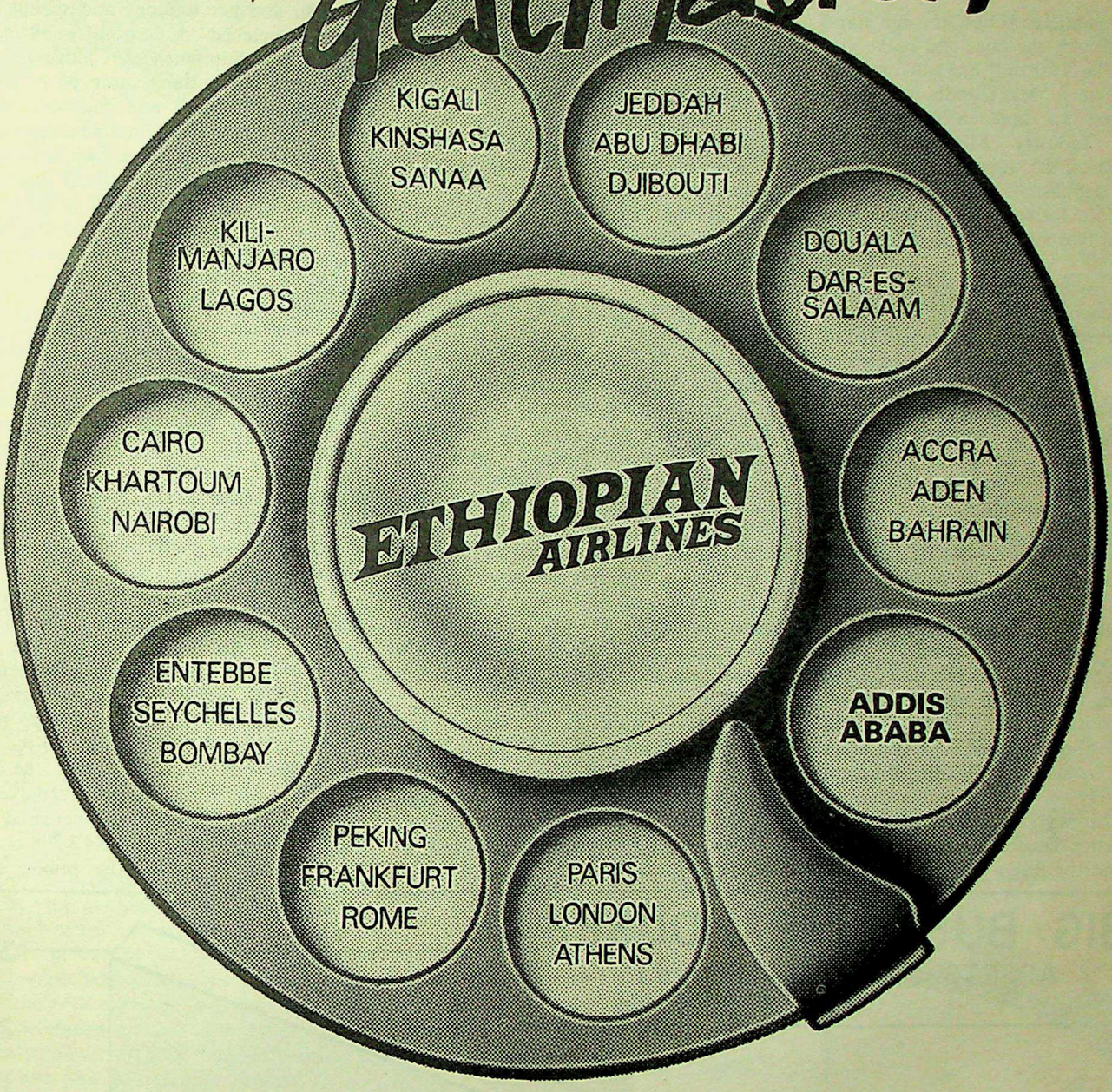

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NATIONALIZATION

Confusion Prevails

A skilful politician is one who can stand up and rock the boat and make you believe he is the only one who can save you from the storm. Mrs Gandhi was such a politician and so apparently—and surprisingly—is Industry Minister George Fernandes. But if the wages of sin is death, the wages of populism is chaos, as happened in the case of the former prime minister who was the first casualty of the storm she created.

The George-Biju axis, forged in the wake of the Chikmagalur disaster for the Janata Party, has blossomed into what is referred to in some ruling party circles as 'Fernandes and Patnaik Pvt Ltd Co'. "I don't know what keeps these two gentlemen together," says a pipe-smoking member of the party's nine-member committee on big business houses. "They have very little in common except overweening ambition."

The George-Biju combine was literally on the carpet last month when at a stormy meeting of the committee, Fernandes is said to have pleaded for more time to justify his plea for the takeover of large business houses The industry minister is apparently under attack from a number of quarters. His proposal for a long-term tie-up between Bharat Heavy Electricals (Bhel) and Siemens of Germany is also embroiled in party politics and is being looked into by three different bodies, namely, a cabinet subcommittee consisting of Morarji Desai and H.M. Patel; a party committee headed by Sunder Singh Bhandari; and the Rajya Sabha, which will soon take up a motion tabled by CPI-M member of Parliament, P. Ramamurthy and others.

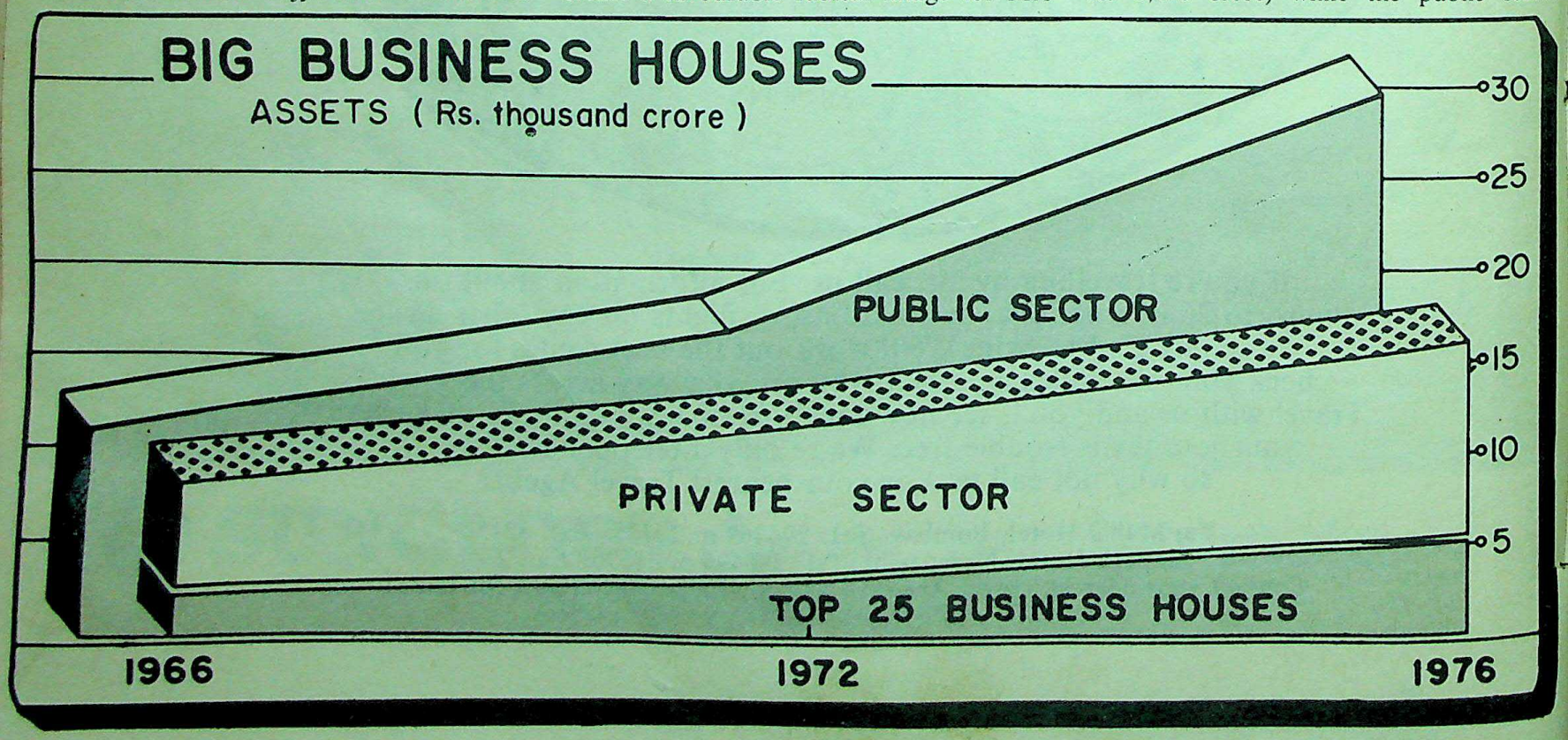
Initial Stratagem: The anti-big business lobby in the Government has a long history going back to Mrs Gandhi's salad days in 1967 when big businessmen—working mainly through the Swatantra Party—made a concerted attempt to dislodge big politicians (mainly Congressmen) from power and nearly succeeded in doing so in most of the northern states.

The anti-business lobby was carefully put together by P.N. Haksar and R.C. Dutt with men like M. Kumaramangalam bringing up the rear. Since the front required intellectual respectability, economists R.K. Hazari H.K. Paranjape were roped in from convenient government-financed institutions like the Indian Institute of Public Administration, and they dutifully prepared reports criticizing the rapid growth of big business houses like Birlas. Chandra Shekhar, who was at that time a Congress backbencher—after a short spell as a socialist—was a leading man behind the scenes. He too had his dutiful economists in tow, some of whom have now jumped over the fence to join the Janata bandwagon.

However, while P. N. Haksar and Kumaramangalam went on to bigger things and the economists got their crumbs, Birlas themselves got off scot-free. They knew right from the start that the whole exercise was only a public relations gimmick designed to create a favourable radical image for Mrs Gandhi and her minions and would leave them untouched. A committee of inquiry headed by a Supreme Court judge was duly appointed but nothing came of it. By the time the Emergency was imposed, Haksar was in the doghouse, Kumaramangalam was dead and Chandra Shekhar who had done so much for Mrs Gandhi's radical image was unceremoniously bundled off to Tihar Jail. And the person nearest to Mrs Gandhi was no other than industrialist Krishna Kumar Birla, son of the godfather of Indian big-business, G.D. Birla.

Surprising: Against this messy background, it is not clear why George Fernandes should have disinterred the rotting corpse of a dead horse, unless he too was advised, possibly by the same clique of intellectuals, to refurbish his image *à la* Indira Gandhi. The facts, if anything, are against him. The big houses [illegible] bigger but so has everything else. They are growing much slower than the public sector, or even the industrial sector as a whole.

Between 1963 and 1971, a period of rapid industrial expansion, the top 25 business groups doubled their assets from Rs 1,820 crore in 1963 to Rs 3,680 crore in 1971. During this period, the corresponding assests of the public sector shot up nearly three-fold from Rs 1,600 crore to Rs 4,690 crore. Between 1972 and 1976, the latest years for which figures are available, the same big houses (*see chart*) increased their assets by 61 per cent (from Rs 3,398 crore to Rs 5,476 crore) while the public sector



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Lokesh Bhargava

assets grew by 132 per cent (from Rs 5,606 crore to Rs 13,044 crore).

Thus, while the public sector expanded 1.9 times as fast as its private counterpart between 1963 and 1971, it grew 2.2 times faster during 1972 and 1976. The net result was that by 1976 the public sector accounted for 43 per cent of total assets in industry as against its share of only 32 per cent in 1972.

In terms of turnover also, the public sector has gained steadily on the 25 big houses. In 1972, the turnover of the public sector was Rs 3,325 crore against Rs 3,870 crore in respect of the 25 big houses. Four years later in 1976, the position was reversed: Rs 8,050 crore in the case of the public sector against Rs 7,065 crore of 25 big houses. The boot is now actually on the other foot and it is the Big Babudom that is swelling—and more than twice as fast as Big Business.

Political: Dr Raj Krishna, a member of the Planning Commission who submitted a note to the committee, seems to have realized this but the compulsion of cosmetic image-making is apparently irresistible. Actually the question of how to deal with concentrations of economic power, whether in the hands of the state or the private sector, is a political rather than economic issue, since it is nobody's case that Birlas and Tatas ought to be curbed because they are inefficient.

Economists are competent to deal only with questions of economic efficiency and utilization of resources. No wonder that the only concrete suggestion made by Raj Krishna is so outlandish that one is amazed it was made at all. He has suggested that as soon as a business group has reached the stupendous—to Raj Krishna and others—figure of Rs 100 crore in assets, the surplus funds should be placed in bank deposits "which then can be recycled to both the private and public sectors", whatever that means. The assumption is that the assets of a company are stored safely away at the end of the year, every bundle of notes counted twice!

As things are, the nine-member committee is impressed neither with the economists nor with George Fernandes and is unlikely to oblige them. Biju Patnaik seems to have realized this, for he told a reporter of the *Business Standard* in Bhubaneshwar that "he never pleaded for nationalization of Tisco", but all he wanted was that the Government should decide whether to give away Rs 400 crore straightaway to Tatas for modernization or "the same amount of money should be spent through the public sector". What he meant, but did not say so, was that Tisco should be nationalized before giving the undertaking the money for modernization, but he is now obviously backsliding.

Patnaik also said that the Government's stake in the equity of Tisco was 45 per cent against Tatas' four per cent. If so, it would be wrong to bracket Tisco along with other companies in the Tata group and lump all assets together, since the assets are not all owned by Tatas. Either a company belongs to Tatas or it does not. If the companies not owned by Tatas—or Birlas—are excluded, it is doubtful whether the assets of Tatas or Birlas, or any other business group, can add up to the figures computed by the Government. There should actually be two lists for each group: companies with majority or substantial group interest and those only managed by the group. If only the first category of companies is taken into account Tatas are probably worth around Rs 150–200 crore which is nowhere near the Rs 1,000-crore mark they are supposed to be.

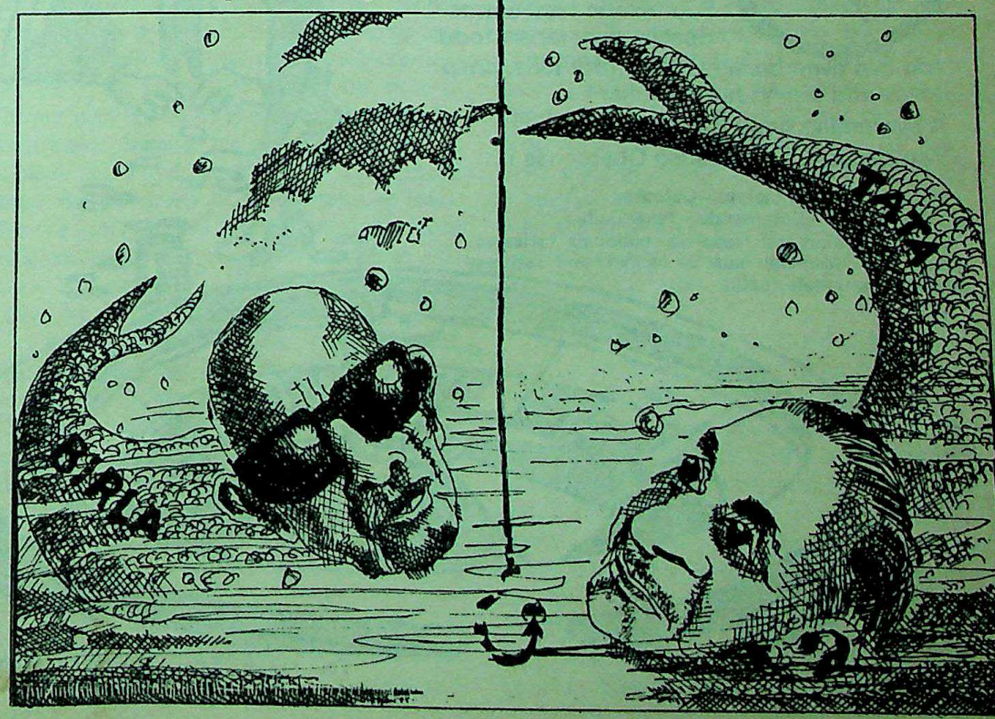
Wrong Thinking: And since it is management rather than ownership that is at issue, let the shareholders decide who should manage the company for them, J.R.D. Tata or G.D. Birla, or some faceless bureaucrat in the Industry Ministry and his political bosses. George Fernandes, as a socialist, should be the last person to object if the voting is done on one-shareholder-one-vote basis unless, like all capitalists, he too thinks that a man with a hundred-rupee stake is worth 10 times as much as a man with a ten-rupee stake. He would not be much of a socialist if he does.

Actually, if the Government is really serious about economic democracy, it should open up the public sector for public participation by offering a portion of the equity for sale to the public. The manifesto of the party calls for action against concentration of power in the hands of the state as well as private business. If workers can participate in the management of a public undertaking—though few do—there is no reason why the man in the street cannot, since he is the ultimate owner of the public sector. And when the equity is distributed among the public, let the new shareholders decide whether, for instance, they want the ailing Steel Authority of India to be run by Patnaik's men in the Steel Ministry or by Tatas' men in Tisco. The outcome of such a poll could be devastating.

There are at least three members of the committee who are thinking on these lines. The committee has five members from Congress (O) and Bharatiya Lok Dal (Hegde, Asoka Mehta, H.M. Patel, Viren Shah and S.N. Mishra), two are socialists (George Fernandes and Surendra Mohan), one is from Jan Sangh (Bhai Mahavir) and one from Chandra Shekhar group (Krishan Kant). Only two (including himself) are supporting George Fernandes, and Krishan Kant is apparently sitting on the fence—he clashed with Fernandes in the other committee (Bhel-Siemens tie-up).

The division at the moment is six to three but in the Janata parliamentary party itself, it may be nearer 10 to one. As of now, therefore, George Fernandes and his friends are fighting a losing battle.

—JAY DUBASHI



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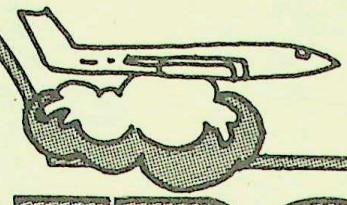

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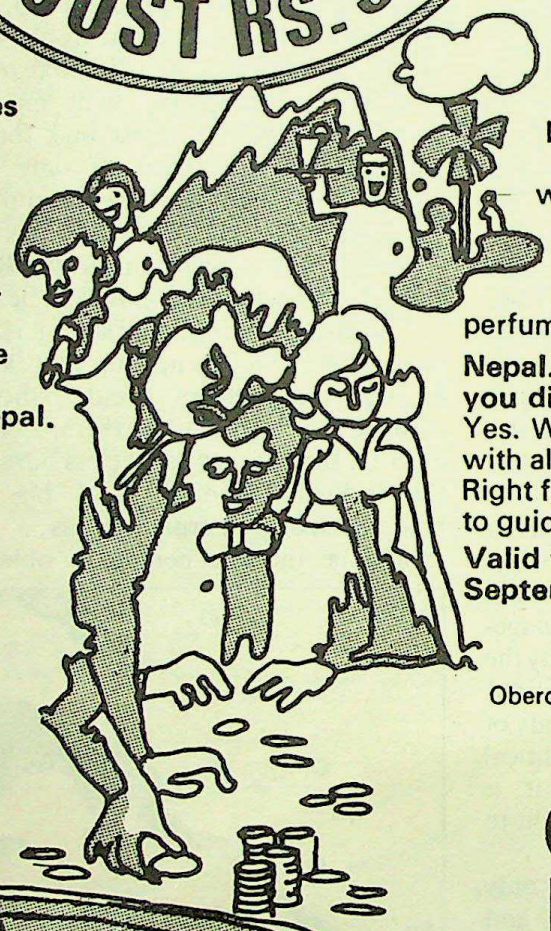

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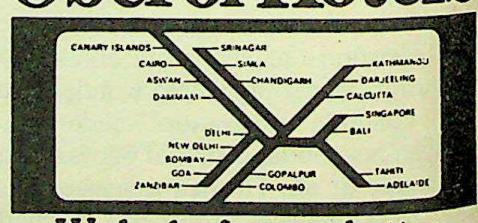

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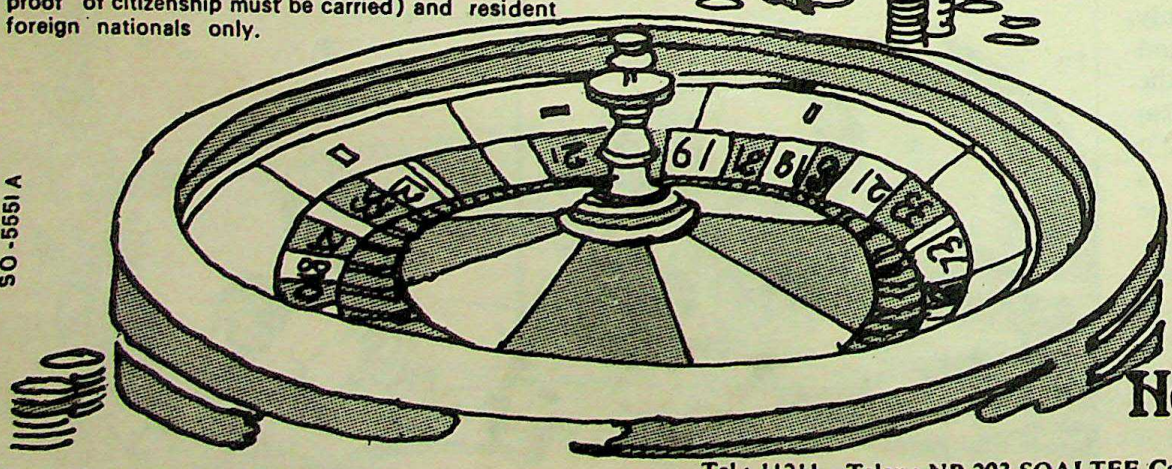

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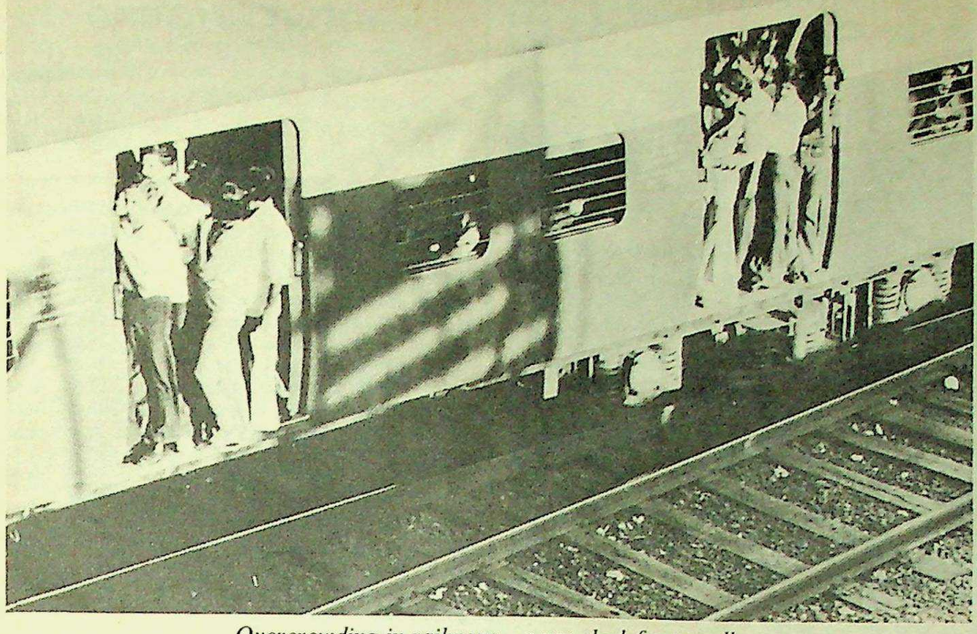

Overcrowding in railways—a raw deal for travellers

RAILWAYS

On The Wrong Track

MADHUKAR Sawant lives in Dombivli, a suburb of Bombay, and catches the 8.10 special to his office in Crawford Market every day. Fifteen years ago when he started, his Central Railway train was punctual and Sawant could nearly always manage to get a corner seat for himself, even on Mondays when the rush was heaviest. Not any more. The train is unpunctual as well as crowded and Sawant has become the most reluctant commuter of Dombivli.

Ever since Independence, railway passengers in India, particularly short-distance travellers, have been at the receiving end. Railways consider themselves essentially as a bulk carrier of goods and look upon passengers as a social liability and have consistently squeezed and downgraded them. This is clear from the niggardly increase in seating capacity compared to the number of passengers. According to M. B. Lal, a former member of the Railway Board, the seating capacity has increased by 113 per cent since 1931 while the number of passengers has gone up by 173 per cent.

What is worse, says Lal, echoing Madhukar Sawant and others, is that the railway administration has become elitist in its approach and fusses over the so-called long-distance travellers who constitute a small fraction of the passenger traffic—probably not more than five per cent of the annual 3,500 million rail commuters. More than half the passengers (55 per cent) travel short distances, about 20 km per passenger. The average trip of the remaining 45 per cent is just over 80 km.

Short-Sighted: The Rajdhanis and the air-conditioned expresses cater to a tiny proportion of the traffic, most of which originates outside the four metropolitan cities. It is easier to get a reservation on a Rajdhani between Delhi and Bombay than, say, between Baroda and Bombay, although the traffic between Baroda and Bombay is much heavier than that between Delhi and Bombay.

In 1960, the railways handled nearly 60 per cent of the passenger traffic. Today they carry about 35 per cent of the total estimated traffic of around 10,000 million passengers. By the end of the century, the proportion may be brought down to 30 per cent, leaving the roadways to carry the remaining 70 per cent, a vast proportion that may take our oil import bill to 60 per cent of all exports. Actually, the proportion should be reverse: 70 per cent by railways and the balance by roadways. In the metropolitan areas of Tokyo and Paris, the railways carry more than three-quarters of the commuter load, for the simple reason that it is six times more efficient—in terms of oil consumption—to carry a passenger by rail than by bus and 30 times by private car.

Indian railways make much of the fact that they are the only profit making railways in the world. They should be, since they carry passengers as if they were cattle, and cattle are often better looked after by them than humans. The fact is that the railways do not think they are a part of the mass transit system and have done little over the years to develop their mass transit capacity.

Slow Growth: The route mileage of Indian railways has grown very little since 1873—a century ago—when the present railway network was completed by the British. Since Independence, only another 5,000 km have been added to the 55,000 km that the British left behind. This works out at less than 200 km per year, not much to write home about. The basic structure of the railways has also remained unchanged for over a century during which period the human and industrial landscape has undergone vast changes. The population itself, let alone anything else, has trebled.

But the railways behave as if they had no other obligation except to carry coal and grain and limestone while the hapless Sawant and others have a trying time getting to office and back every day and take it out on the railways by burning them down every few months. And the railway authorities wonder why they have such a big communication gap with their customers.

COMPUTERS

Filling The Vacuum

WHEN it comes to computers, every silver lining has apparently a cloud tagged on to it. It is now nearly two years since IBM was asked to pull out of the country but the vacuum left by the giant multinational has not yet been filled. The majority of IBM's former employees have joined the two firms formed out of the IBM rump—Computer Maintenance Corporation (CMC) and International Data Management (IDM). CMC is apparently having more than teething troubles and has not yet settled down. IDM is busy with bread-and-butter matters—punch card manufacturing and computer services—and it will be some time before it ventures, if it does so at all, into IBM's main business—assembling and leasing of computers.

With IBM's departure, there are only two computer manufacturers left in the country—Britain's International Computers (ICL) and India's own Electronics Corporation of India (ECIL). With its lacklustre marketing, ICL was never able to compete with IBM but now that the latter is out of the way, the British plodder may show some gumption and push ahead, but, on the face of it, this seems unlikely. Incidentally, the company is waiting to go Indian under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), after which perhaps things may improve.

ECIL is one of those rarities, a government undertaking that has done really well, with a vast range of electronic goods from TV sets to oscilloscopes and aircraft instruments but its sorties into the computer field have been none too successful. It has concentrated on "minis" which it sells at "maxi" prices: its TDC-316 costs a staggering Rs 25 lakh for a basic system while a similar machine from a US company might cost less than Rs 2 lakh.

New Firms: This leaves the field open to the microprocessor which promises to

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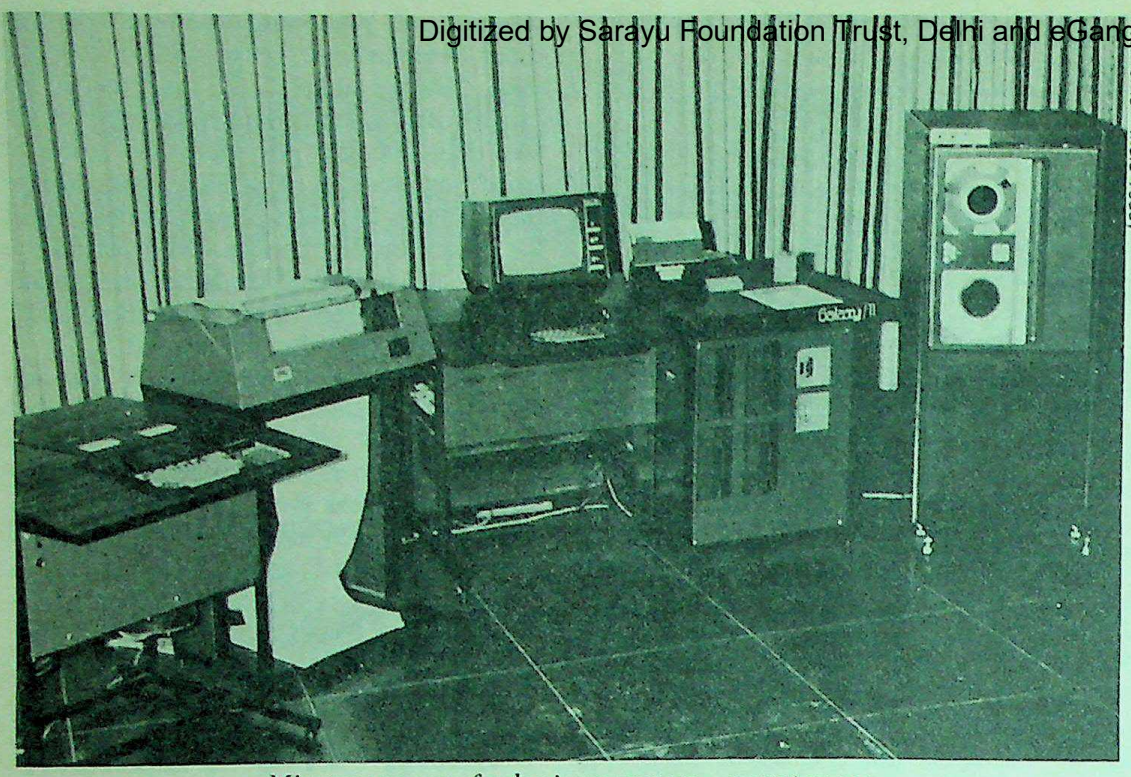

Pushkarna—India Today

Microprocessors for business system—a vast scope

revolutionize the computer industry in India. According to an expert, while Indian computer usage and hardware is typically 10 years behind Europe, Indian companies are no more than a year or two behind their European counterparts in the area of business systems built around microprocessors. Two companies lead the micro field—DCM Data Products, a unit of Delhi Cloth Mills, and a small company called Hindustan Computers. Between them they have a turnover of around Rs 12–15 crore, a substantial amount, considering that they began their marketing operations just over a year ago.

DCM Data Products entered the electronics field in 1972 with desk-top electronic calculators but quickly expanded its research and development department to have a go at the micro field, then an unknown quantity. The company markets two series of microprocessor-based machines—Spectrum, an eight-bit processor with memory up to 32k bytes, and Galaxy, a 16-bit processor with floppy disk and cassette tape drives. The company has sold 101 units in its very first year and employs 550 people, including 70 on research and development. Last month it received from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) the award for research in science and technology. Imports account for only 12 to 15 per cent of the cost of the machine.

Large Field: Hindustan Computers, a slightly smaller outfit, employs 400 people including about 50 on research and development and has developed, besides the usual range of microprocessor-based systems, a considerable body of system software. The company was master-minded by a young group of technocrats who first cut their teeth in the DCM organization and went on, in the fashion of computer companies all over the world, to set up their own outfit.

According to Vinay Bharat Ram, executive director of DCM Data Products, data processing devices have considerable scope in India. The relatively low cost of the processor systems—around Rs 7 lakh for the Galaxy range—brings it within the pockets of medium-sized business firms with sales turnover of around Rs 2 crore a year. The machines are used by all sorts of people, from garment exporters who wish to keep close tabs on costs and prices—"a few paise this side or that can make a hole in your pocket"—to iron-ore exporters whose inventories cover over 10,000 items. The only snag, according to Ram, is the Government's policy which has been hanging fire for the last seven years. "Let them make up their mind one way or the other," he says, "but this suspense is killing."

—DIPA JAYWANT

THE MARKETS

On The Brink

Was it a flash in the pan? INDIA TODAY had asked last month when *The Economic Times* index had just scaled a fresh peak of 184.4 on March 1, a rise of seven points from the pre-budget level of 177. Apparently it was not for the index has been rising ever since and on April 10, it crossed the sound barrier of 200 which many thought it wouldn't until the end of the year, if at all. The rise of 23 points or 14 per cent in 40 days is extraordinary, to say the least, particularly when seen against the background of the worsening situation on the industrial front. History will record—if it does record such things at all—that the index touched 200 on the very day all business including industry came to a dead halt in Calcutta in the wake of yet another power crisis in that melancholy state.

Marketmen think that the stock market is on to a good thing and the apparent lull after scaling 200 is only a lull before the storm. It is true that there are not too many

ACTIVE STOCKS

High 1979	*Low 1979*		*Close 17.4.79*	*Change on fort. night*
		BOMBAY		
335.00	270.00	Ahmedabad Advance	317.50	45.00
171.50	137.00	Associated Cement	165.00	–3.50
153.00	114.00	Bombay Dyeing	153.00	14.00
33.75	25.75	Cadbury	28.25	–4.75
761.50	622.00	Century Rayon	755.50	24.00
121.25	97.00	Dawn Mills	115.00	10.00
27.00	22.00	Garware Nylon	26.00	–0.25
26.00	20.00	Goetze	26.00	2.00
20.25	16.75	Greaves Lombardini	17.50	–0.50
558.00	458.00	Gujarat Fertiliser	547.00	–10.00
80.00	57.50	Hindustan Dorr-Oliver	70.00	–4.00
38.25	30.50	Hindustan Lever	32.75	0.25
350.00	267.00	Indian Rayon	350.00	14.00
262.55	225.00	Kirloskar Cummins	250.00	1.25
39.00	34.25	Larsen & Toubro	37.50	0.75
31.50	21.75	Mahindra & Mahindra	29.50	–1.00
57.50	44.00	Nirlon Synthetics	56.00	1.00
67.00	47.00	Premier Automobiles	61.00	–1.00
46.25	40.75	Siemens India	46.00	0.25
29.00	22.00	Tata Chemicals	29.00	2.75
113.25	95.25	Tata Steel	111.00	0.25
370.00	245.00	Telco	363.00	10.00
175.00	129.00	Voltas	168.00	22.00
		CALCUTTA		
36.45	30.50	Ballarpur Industries	35.00	1.10
33.00	27.50	Bata India	31.50	0.25
17.30	13.50	Brooke Bond	16.70	–0.20
43.75	39.00	Chloride India	43.75	0.15
27.00	23.20	Dunlop India	25.65	–1.35
26.50	22.15	Guest Keen Williams	26.10	0.15
35.10	23.50	Hindustan Aluminium	34.40	4.80
27.80	22.85	Indian Aluminium	27.40	–0.30
28.50	22.40	Indian Cable	28.50	1.30
26.25	20.90	Indian Explosives	25.75	nil
25.80	19.45	ITC	25.80	1.75
53.35	43.90	J.K.Synthetics	52.80	3.70
18.12	13.44	Metal Box	18.12	0.87
32.25	27.75	Philips India	32.00	0.10
30.25	22.37	Remington Rand	29.75	–0.25
21.90	17.50	Shaw Wallace	21.90	nil
27.30	19.40	Straw Products	27.30	4.25
24.44	19.40	Texmaco	24.37	nil
30.10	25.60	Union Carbide	29.30	–0.70
23.90	19.90	Usha Martin Black	23.50	0.70
		DELHI		
15.00	11.75	Bharat Gears	15.00	0.38
13.50	7.56	Bharat Steel Tubes	13.31	–0.19
44.50	36.16	Delhi Cloth Mills	44.03	0.78
50.44	42.37	Escorts	49.16	–0.28
12.05	9.00	Hindustan Motors	11.95	–0.05
27.62	20.28	Modi Spinning	27.12	–0.13
7.50	6.19	Mohan Meakin	7.50	0.25
18.50	13.50	Punjab Anand Batteries	18.50	4.19
25.75	21.00	Ranbaxy	25.00	–0.75
19.12	14.50	Sriram Fibres	18.25	–0.87
21.62	15.75	Swadeshi Polytex	21.00	–0.62
		MADRAS		
23.37	15.75	Ashok Leyland	19.25	0.50
26.25	19.25	Best & Crompton	26.25	nil
66.50	46.50	Binny	61.00	1.75
37.25	31.25	Consolidated Coffee	34.25	1.25
14.50	10.20	Madura Coats	13.75	0.25
14.25	7.50	Mangalore Chemicals	14.00	0.13
14.00	10.20	Mettur Chemicals	13.65	–0.10
276.00	212.00	S. I. Viscose	275.00	19.00
9.05	7.00	SPIC	8.90	0.20
137.00	82.00	Textool	134.00	14.00
13.00	9.80	United Breweries	12.85	nil

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good scrips in the market as a result of the finance minister's withdrawal of the capital gains tax relief, and since more investors than usual are crowding the floor after developing a taste for the market following the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) issues, the sky is the limit for whatever blue chips are available. If the finance minister relents and the relief is restored, the punters who are holding back will be tempted to unload their stuff and bring prices down. If he doesn't, and chances are that he will not, the bulls will be back in their pens and another upward swing is on the cards.

However, whatever the short-term prospects, there are signs that the market has reached the top and may be in for a big fall, especially if the overall price situation gets out of hand. The theory that inflation is good for the stock market was knocked off long ago, though inflation in small doses may not be harmful. The rosy flush on the face of the market reflects the high performance of the corporate sector during a period of zero inflation. Prices have already gone up by about three per cent since the budget levies were announced. Prices of most industrial raw materials—steel and chemicals among others—have also gone up and this is bound to affect profits. On the other hand, there is also the other side: investment has picked up which means demand is bullish.

For investors who are not speculators, the best bet are scrips which are still quoted below or around par and which should pack a lot of power. There is, for instance, East Anglia Plastics, a never-do-well company that has been on the sick list for the last 15 years or so and never paid a paisa in dividends. The company has now changed hands with Excel Industries of Bombay in control. The share is quoted around Rs 6 but is worth much more and a flutter is indicated. Mangalore Fertilisers, just above par, has announced an ambitious expansion programme which is rather surprising, considering that its plant went on stream only recently but which also shows that it is on to a good thing.

Shipping shares have been in the doldrums for the past two years but the depression is apparently lifting and the market is looking up. Most shipping company shares are quoted very much below their worth, which is as good a reason as any for adding them to one's portfolio.

A couple of issues back, INDIA TODAY indicated that a bonus issue from Hindustan Aluminium was on the cards. It also mentioned Mahindra & Mahindra as another likely candidate in that department. There are quite a few scrips in the same happy situation, including one in Delhi, which is going for around Rs 50. Although they look over-priced, it is worth holding on to them, just in case.

WORLD VALUE OF RUPEE

Country	Unit and Currency		TT Selling rates (Rs)	TT Buying rates (Rs)
Australia	As $	1	9.2136	9.1219
Austria	As Sch	100	59.8662	59.1596
Bahrain	Dinar	1	21.6890	21.3383
Bangladesh	Taka	100	55.4483	55.4483
Canada	Can $	1	7.2929	7.2258
Egypt	Egp £	1	20.0748	20. 07
France	Fr Frc	1	1.9231	1.8726
Hong Kong	HK $	1	1.6117	1.5953
Indonesia	Rupiah	100	1.3062	1.2951
Iran	Rial	100	11.5660	10.9267
Italy	It Lira	100	0.9858	0.9764
Japan	Jap Yen	100	3.8774	3.7566
Kenya	K. Shilling	1	1.1013	1.1013
Kuwait	Dinar	1	30.0090	29.5209
Malaysia	ML $	1	3.7455	3.7061
Mauritius	Rupee	1	1.3626	1.3511
Nepal	Rupee	1	0.6803	0.6745
Netherlands	D Glde	1	4.0516	4.0144
Pakistan	Rupee	1	0.8433	—
Singapore	Sing $	1	3.7784	3.7386
Spain	Sp Pt	100	12.2717	12.1043
Sri Lanka	Rupee	1	0.5425	0.5236
Sweden	Sw Kr	1	1.8971	1.8792
Switzerland	Sw Frc	1	4.8547	4.8073
Tanzania	Tn Shilling	1	1.0214	1.0214
Thailand	Baht	100	40.9214	40.0733
UK	£	1	17.2295	17.0853
USA.	US $	1	8.3700	8.2300
UAE	Dihram	1	2.1689	2.1338
USSR	Rouble	1	12.3435	12.3435
W Germany	DM	1	4.4843	4.2735
Zambia	Kwacha	1	NA	NA

These are the rates supplied by The Bank of Tokyo Ltd, New Delhi, and quoted on April 24, 1979 (They are only indicative).

ECONOMIC TRENDS

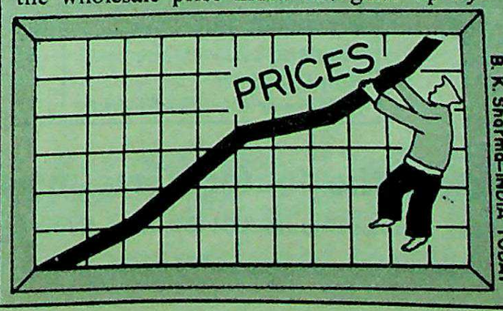
	Latest	Change on Last Month
PRICES		
Wholesale Index, Mar 10 (1970–71 = 100)	188.1	2.8 pc
Cereals	156.6	0.1 pc
Sugar	138.8	4.3 pc
Edible Oils	153.5	2.7 pc
Cigarettes, Bidis	209.9	10.9 pc
Drugs & Medicines	133.8	–2.8 pc
Gold, standard, Apr 6 (Rs per 10 gm)	951.00	37.00
Silver, Apr 6 (Rs per kg)	1655.00	–100.00
SHARES		
RBI Index, Mar 31 (1970–71 = 100)	146.1	6.3 pc
Aluminium	74.9	10.5 pc
Cement	155.0	10.0 pc
Shipping	116.1	15.3 pc
MONEY		
Money Supply, Mar 23		1.5 pc
Credit to Government		2.2 pc
Credit to Commerce		1.2 pc
Bank Deposits—demand		0.5 pc
Bank Deposits—time		1.1 pc
Foreign Exchange Assets		3.2 pc
Call Money Rate	8.5 pc	—

Playing With Figures

"ARE you sure about the genuineness of the figures?" asked member of Parliament Purushottam Ganesh Mavalankar when Industry Minister George Fernandes was rattling off figures in the Lok Sabha last week in support of his contention that industry was doing pretty well under his leadership.

Statistics, like boiled eggs, should always be taken with a pinch of salt, particularly when they come, as they often do in this country, from official agencies. They are not always wrong but they are not 100 per cent right either, for in skilled hands they can always be bent to suit one's convenience.

A case in point is the unbelievable accuracy with which Finance Ministry officials tried to estimate the rise in prices following Charan Singh's budget at 0.95 per cent. Charan Singh, a seasoned politician, did not say anything at the time. Now that the wholesale price index has gone up by more than three per cent, he says that the rise is not wholly due to his new taxes. Had the price rise been less than 0.95 per cent, he and his officials would have been the first to pat themselves on the back for the correctness of their calculations. Actually, the price effect of the budget is such a complex matter that all the computers in India would not be able to measure it. And 0.95 per cent sounds more impressive than a bald one per cent.



Ridiculous: The worst offenders in this respect are the national income estimators who compute income to the last thousand rupees. In a country of India's size, this is ridiculous. A man who says that India's national income in 1977–78 was Rs 73,130,52 lakh is either a statistical prodigy or a fool. National income calculations are correct, if at all, within no more than plus or minus 10 per cent since nearly half the gross national product (GNP) originates in villages and is largely a matter of guess work. All that can be said is that India's GNP is between Rs 70,000 and Rs 80,000 crore and is steadily improving.

However, statistics are always impressive, particularly when they are the kind no one can find out for himself. And ministers rattling them off are even more impressive, although the louder the rattle, the bigger the credibility gap.

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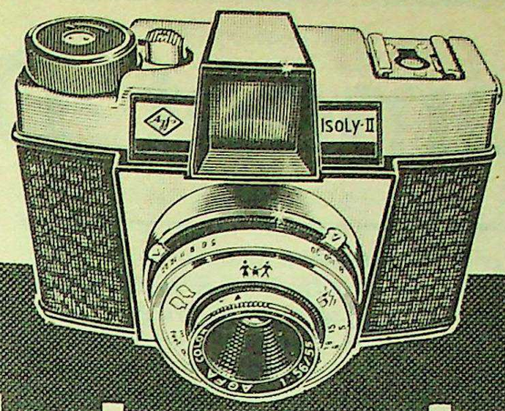

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Development Dilemma

PETER F. Drucker, 69, Clarke Professor of Social Sciences at the Claremont Graduate School in the US, is one of the big names in management today. When he visited India last year, no one could tell him what the Government's economy policy was. In strong contrast to Nehru's belief in heavy industry, Prime Minister Morarji Desai preached to Drucker about the suitability of small industry and rural development. But this, says the author, is the same rhetoric, heard in many developing countries and one which led to Maoist China's disastrous "Great Leap Forward". Much as it pains the Government economist, it is the bicycle, transistor radio, gasoline pump and motor scooter rather than the spinning wheel that are "appropriate technology" for India. In this article published by arrangement with the Asian Wall Street Journal *Drucker discusses concepts of economic development and suitable technology for India. He also examines the applicability of two popular slogans in planning: "Small is Beautiful" and "the Bigger the Better".*

"THE big mistake Gandhi made was to advocate the spinning wheel," said one influential Indian government economist. "It's much too efficient. With the unemployment and underemployment we have in our villages the truly appropriate technology is the hand-held spindle, the distaff." Yet this is hardly how the Indian villagers define "appropriate technology" for themselves.

What struck me most when travelling for several weeks through rural India was not the pervasive poverty or the palpable unemployment; I had expected both. What I had not expected, however, were the four or five brand-new bicycles standing outside every one of the miserable hovels—and not one of them chained or locked. There may still be more bullock carts in rural India than bicycles; there surely are still more bullock carts than there are small tractors. But what powers India's "Green Revolution", what has given the subcontinent a food surplus for the first time in its thousands of years, is not the digging stick or the wooden plough. It is the gasoline pump in the tubewell and the irrigation ditch of an arid land.

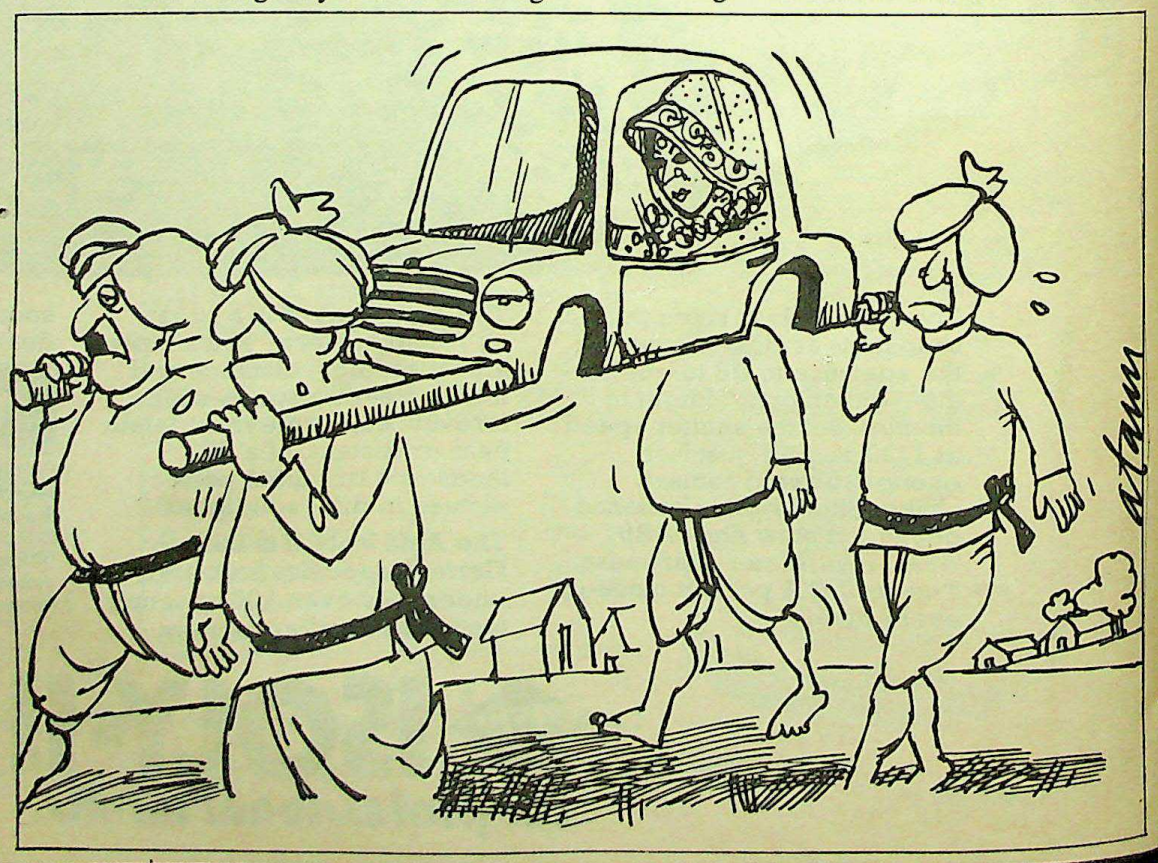
From every bullock cart, every camel cart, every pedicab and every howdah on the back of an elephant there issues the strains of the transistor radio. And the most crowded stand in every one of the countless village markets is the one that sells motor scooters on the instalment plan.

Much as it pains the Indian Government economist and his boss the prime minister, the bicycle, transistor radio, gasoline pump and motor scooter—rather than the spinning wheel, let alone the distaff or the spinning whorl—are indeed the "appropriate technology" for India and for most developing countries. They create jobs and purchasing power—the distaff would destroy both.

No one in India could tell me what the economic policy of the Government is. The only governmental actions are expansion of already large government enterprises, unchecked growth of an already obese bureaucracy and more bureaucratic regulations. The Cabinet cannot agree on anything and has no policy whatever. Substantial sums are being allocated to "the villages" but without programme let alone goals. But there is a pervasive rhetoric of smallness and of antitechnology.

India's Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, 84 years old but looking 55 (which he attributes to his eating only raw mashed vegetables and drinking his own urine) preached to me "small is beautiful", "rural development" and "appropriate (that is, pre-industrial) technology". It is this rhetoric that his economic adviser echoes when he counsels a return to the distaff. And pretty much the same rhetoric can now be heard in many developing countries, for example in Indonesia or from the Islamic fundamentalists in Iran. It is very much the same rhetoric that underlay the disastrous "Great Leap Forward" in Maoist China 15 years ago, with its emphasis on the "village" and on backyard steel furnaces.

As a reaction to the delusion of "the bigger the better", which enthralled earlier Indian governments, especially Nehru, Desai's emphasis on rural India is overdue. Earlier governments neglected the village, where 90 per cent of India's 550 million people still live. But "small is beautiful" is just as much a delusion as "the bigger the better". What is "appropriate" is not what uses the most capital or the most labour, it is not what is "small" or "big", "pre-industrial" or a "scientific marvel". What is "appropriate" is quite simply what makes the economy's resources most productive. What is appropriate in a country of huge population and rapid population growth is what multiplies productive jobs. What is "development" in a country, which like India has sizeable resources of managerial and entrepreneurial skill and at the same time huge unfulfilled consumer needs is



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whatever creates purchasing power.

Steel mills, those prestige investments of the '60s into which earlier Indian governments poured very large chunks of the country's scarce capital resources, are becoming the white elephants of the late '70s. Steel mills are "inappropriate technology" for a country like India. They are highly capital-intensive rather than labour-intensive. They supply a commodity which is in ample supply on the world market and available everywhere at a low price. Above all they create practically no jobs beyond those in the mill itself.

But the automotive industry—passenger cars, motor bikes, trucks and tractors—is probably the most efficient multiplier of jobs around. Its own plants have a fairly high ratio of labour to capital, and the industry generates about four to five secondary or tertiary jobs throughout the economy for everyone in the manufacturing plant. It creates jobs in road building and road maintenance, in traffic control, in dealerships, service stations and repair jobs. And it creates enormous purchasing power with these jobs.

Similarly, making transistor radios and bicycles requires both a large manufacturing base and a large dealer system; and both multiply jobs and create purchasing power. And like the automotive industry, both create human capital, that is, skills accessible to the unlearned. The same might be said for the manufacture of synthetic fertilizer or pharmaceuticals or pesticides—all require big enterprises and national distribution and service (moreover these products, together with the gasoline pump, underline the two great successes of India since Independence: the rapid increase in food production and the rapid decrease in infant mortality).

> ***"What struck me most was not the pervasive poverty or the palpable unemployment: I had expected both. What I had not expected were the four or five brand-new bicycles standing outside every one of the miserable hovels."***

Equally appropriate as a creator of productivity, jobs and purchasing power is the cosmetics manufacturer, who may be quite small. I saw a highly efficient and highly successful "multinational" cosmetics firm in Bangalore which, with 20 employees, produces five times as much foreign exchange per rupee of investment or sales as any of the huge state-owned Indian enterprises.

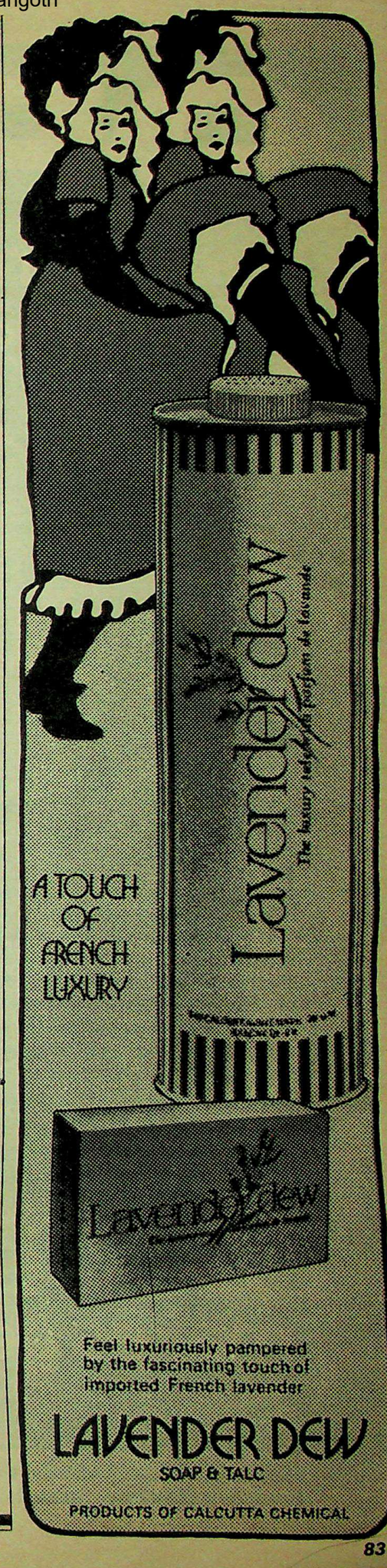
The development decades of the '50s and '60s worshipped capital investment. The best testament to this superstition is "The Stages of Economic Growth", which Walt W. Rostow, later President Johnson's foreign policy adviser, wrote in the early '60s and which then became the bible of the developing countries. Rostow proclaimed that development is an automatic and direct function of the size of capital investment. But that is not productivity; it is waste and incompetence. Today there is a tendency to define productivity as whatever uses the most labour—especially in the developing countries, with their huge, unemployed, young populations.

But that too is incompetence. Productivity is whatever generates the highest overall yield from an economy's resources of capital, labour, physical resources and time. This will also give the largest number of jobs and the maximum of purchasing power. It will even produce the lowest possible inequality in the distribution of incomes attainable to a given stage of economic development. And surely poor countries cannot afford to support unproductive people—that is, people who appear busy winding a few yards of cotton around a distaff. Rich countries may be able to afford to keep unproductive people gainfully unemployed, but poor countries have no surplus to distribute.

Above all the troubadours of "small is beautiful" forget—as does so much of official Washington—that a healthy economy and society need *both* the large and the small. Indeed the two are mutually interdependent, in both a developed and developing country. There can be no small manufacturer in a large market—whether that of the US or of India—unless there is a large assembler or a large retailer, an IBM, a GM, a Sears Roebuck. It is only in their products or their stores that the small man's output can reach the market. But there would also be no GM except for the existence of a multitude of small autonomous tool-and-die shops and a host of small parts suppliers, or local dealers, service stations and repair shops.

Pharmaceutical research requires big—if not very big—enterprises. But pharmaceutical sales depend on some 200,000 drug stores and 200,000 physicians—each of necessity decentralized, and indeed autonomous. "Rural development" in India not only means national marketing organizations for village products and national credit and banking institutions. It means huge power stations. Above all—something the advocates of "small is beautiful" always conveniently overlook—it means centralized government bureaucracies, which surely could not be called "small" whether or not they deserve to be called "beautiful".

None of these arguments, I am afraid, made much impact on the Indian government economist—nor I realized would they have made much impact on his prime minister. But once Indians have the bicycle, the motor scooter, the transistor radio and the gasoline pumps, are they really going to go back to the distaff?



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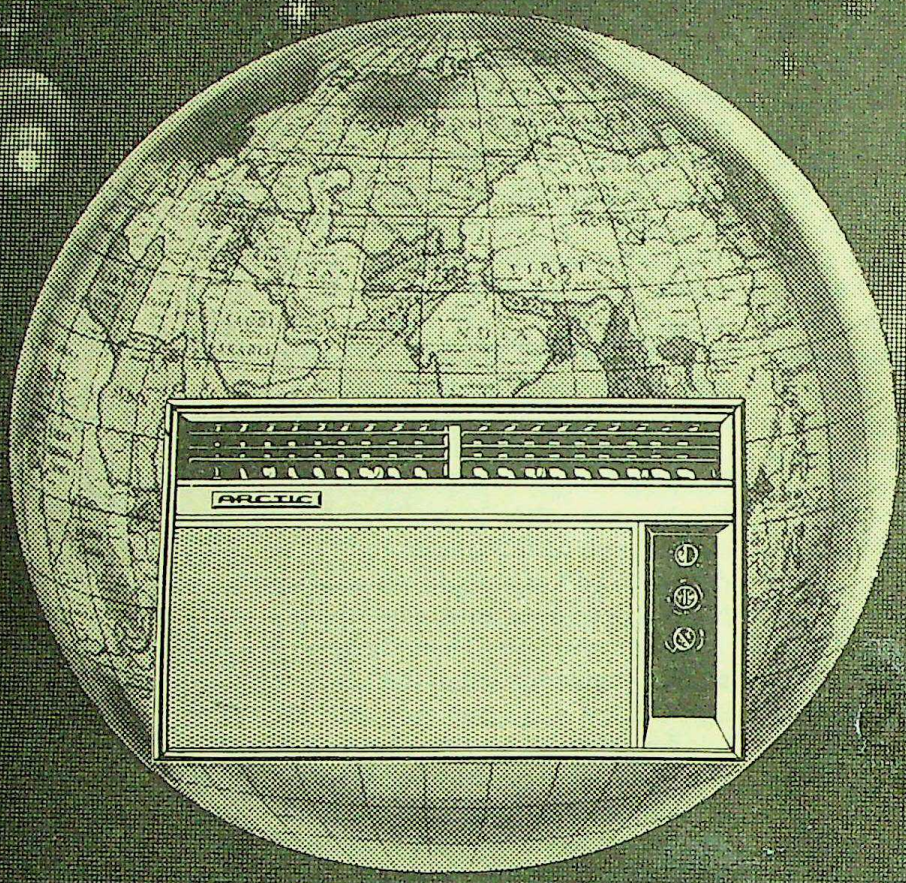

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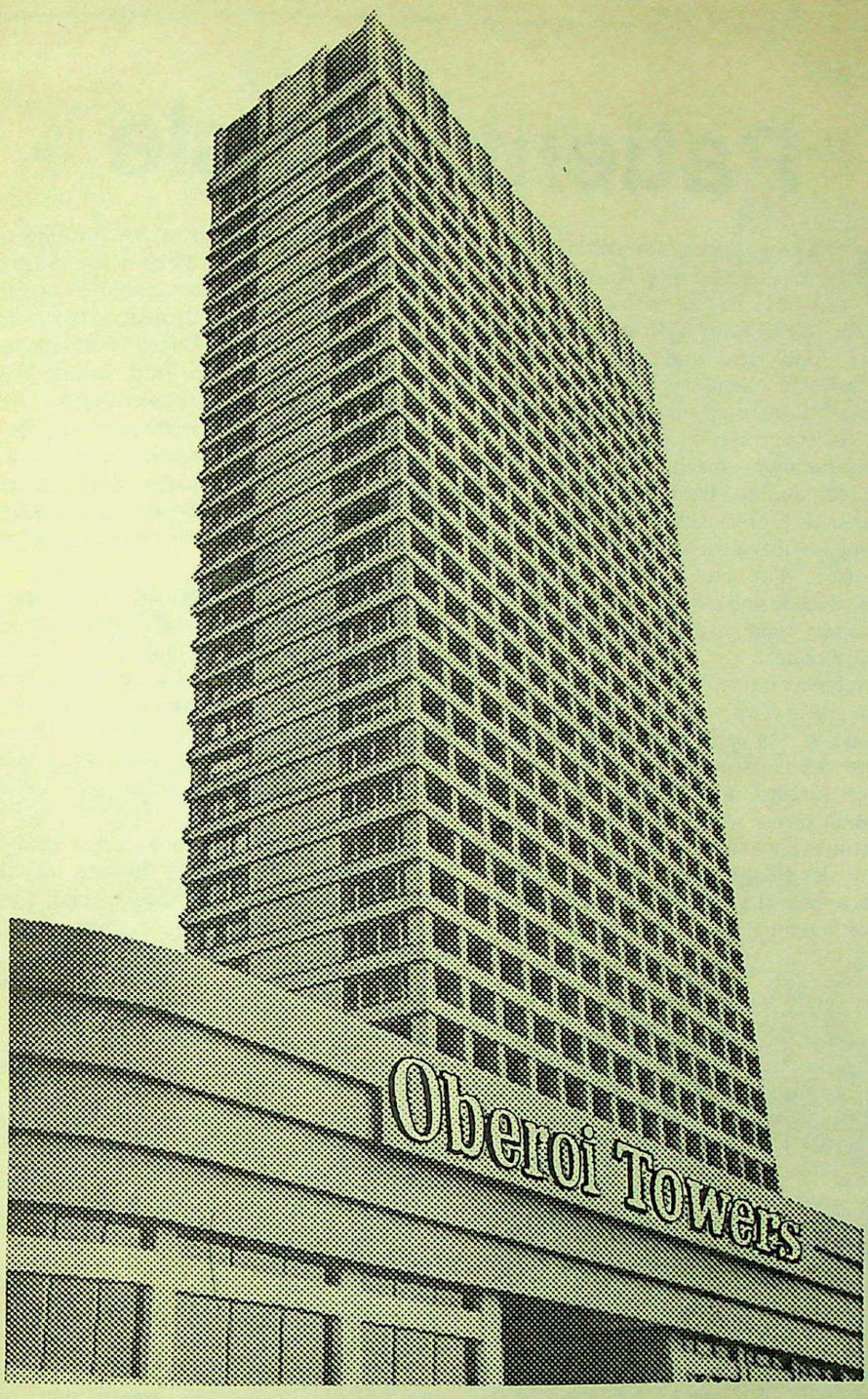

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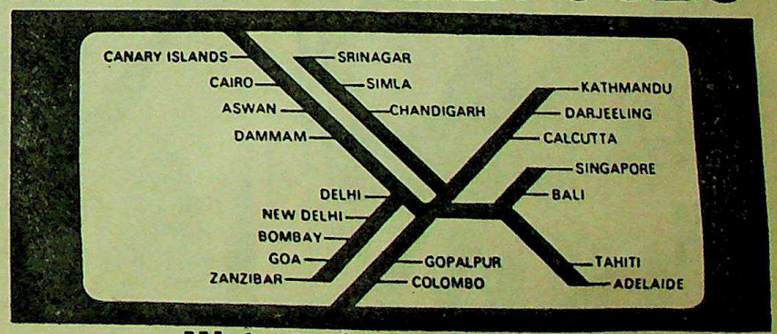

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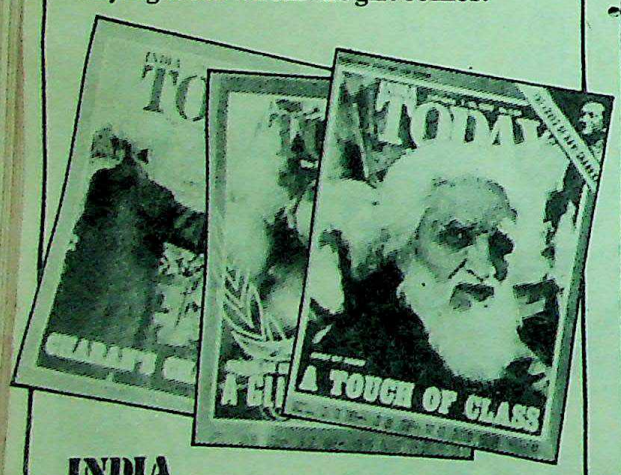


INDIA TODAY
The Fortnightly Newsmagazine

CRICKET

Patient Tussle

ON a muggy, cloudless day in Madras 14 years ago, a mop-haired, 20-year-old boy playing in his first cricket Test came on to bowl against New Zealand Captain John Reid and veteran batsman Bert Sutcliffe. Sending down innocuous floaters off a four-step run-up, the youngster, much to everybody's surprise—and very possibly his own—managed to unsettle the famed New Zealand batting duo. He finished that series with 21 wickets at 19 runs apiece—emerging as the most successful bowler on either side. The boy was to have, over the next decade and a half, a more chequered Test career than any other contemporary Indian cricketer.

Today a mature 34, Srinivas Venkataraghavan has a Test record that is hardly as imposing as his early performances would have led one to expect. He has been captain, reserve, discard and matchwinning off-spinner in turns; with yo-yo like regularity, his fortunes have fallen and risen.

But all things considered, Venkataraghavan appears the best choice as captain for the forthcoming tour of England. With the ageing Prasanna out of the running for the off-spinner's berth, Venkat for the first time in 14 years is an automatic choice for the Test team. As a strictly neutral bystander in the All-India Cricket Board versus players tussle he is acceptable to both camps. And purely as a leader, he has showed himself to be a cut above his two immediate predecessors—Gavaskar and Bedi. He master-minded South Zone's victory over North Zone in the Deodhar Trophy recently and undoubtedly possesses one of the finest cricketing minds in the country.

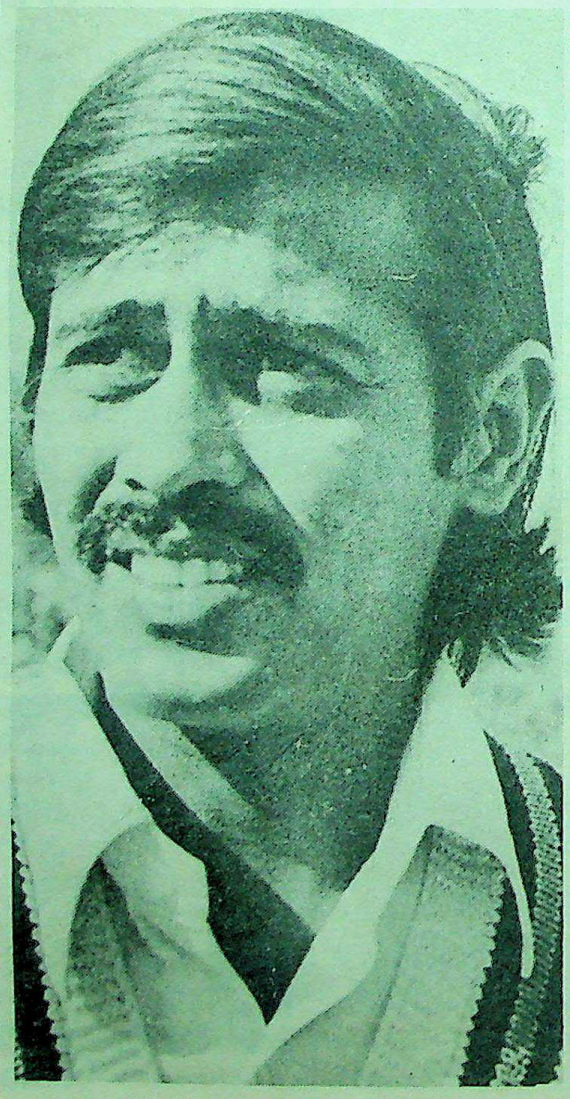
Competition: Perhaps the most important but under-rated quality necessary for a cricketer is perseverance—and Venkat has plenty of it. Otherwise he would have quit the game a long time ago. Till 1970, Venkat had the unenviable task of competing with the world's number one off-spinner, Prasanna, for the one vacant spot in the Indian team.

The only time he could get a look-in was when Prasanna was injured or the selectors felt that playing two specialist off-spinners (particularly on turning Indian wickets) was justified. When Pataudi was axed as Test captain in 1970, 25-year-old Venkat leap-frogged over several older and more experienced players to become vice-captain of the Indian team against the West Indies.

Subsequently, however, he failed to hold his place in the team and was sidelined for much of the time in the home series against England. He fought his way back, this time to the captaincy, in 1975 during the inaugural Prudential World Cup in England. India's disastrous performance, which had little to do with his captaincy, probably resulted in his being sacked.

But Venkat has trudged along, accepting philosophically the rough with the smooth. His patience has now paid off and though critics are already predicting that Indian cricket's *enfant terrible*, Sunil Gavaskar, will be back as captain against the Australians this winter, Venkat is unlikely to get fazed.

A man of few words with a deep cricketing insight, Venkat has declined to make any predictions about India's chances in the World Cup or the Tests against England. He, however, is the first to realize that on soft, dewy English wickets under a moist atmosphere, his batting technique against the moving ball will be severely tested. So will his ability as a leader of men, two of whom in the present team have captained India in the last 12 months.



Pana-India

Venkat—chequered career

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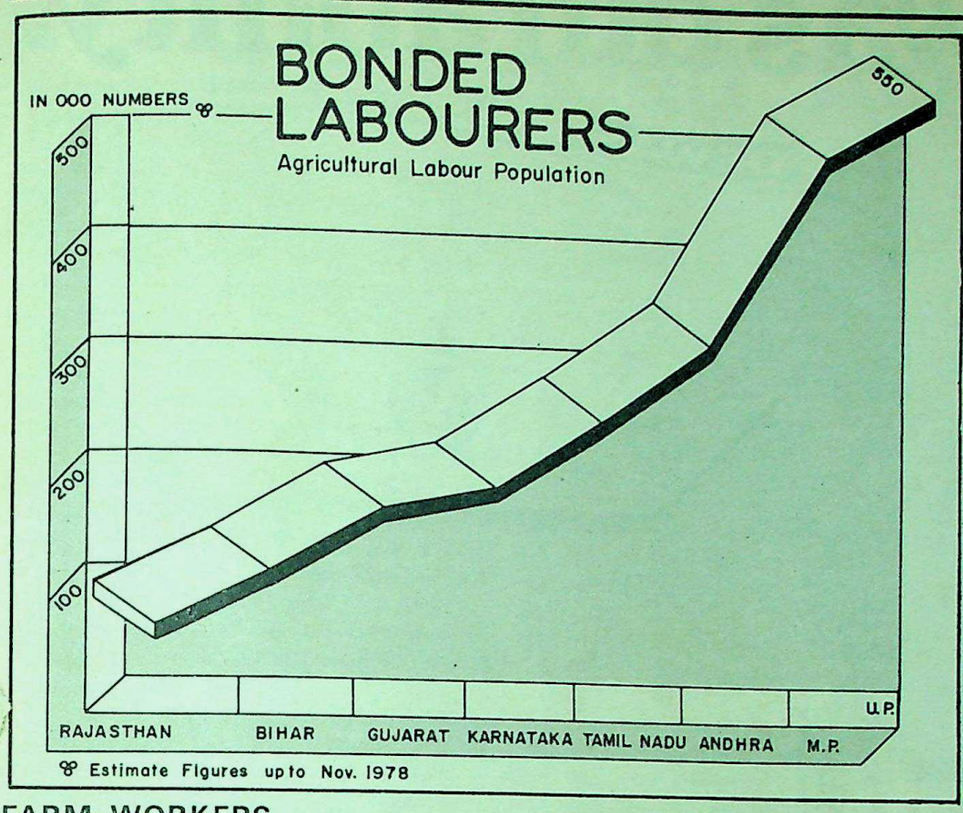

FARM WORKERS

Inhuman Bondage

Bonded Labour, wherever it exists, will be declared illegal.

20-Point Economic Programme of the Emergency

ONE in every 20 agricultural workers in India is a bonded labourer, more than three and a half years after this declaration was made to the orchestrated fanfare of the Emergency and the enactment of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act in 1976. Called by a plethora of local names—*padiyal* (Tamil Nadu), *jeetam* (Andhra Pradesh), *sagri* (Rajasthan) and *lagua* (Madhya Pradesh)—the bonded labourers are little more than commodities to their masters. They have lost their constitutional right to freedom to choose and move to new jobs.

A joint survey of Bonded Labour published recently by the Gandhi Peace Foundation and the National Labour Institute paints a despairing and grim picture of their miserable condition. The report estimates that in eight states—Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh—there are at least 2.17 million bonded labourers (*see chart*). This is about 6.1 per cent of the 37 million agricultural labourers in these states. In Orissa and Maharashtra, the surveys are yet to be completed. The report estimates that the final tally may be 2.7 million. A preliminary survey report by two social scientists, V. Sarma Marla of the Gandhi Peace Foundation and R. N. Maharaj of the National Labour Institute, states that the findings show the incidence of bonded labour to be higher than the Government estimate of 4.2 per cent. When the proportion of bonded labourers to the total agricultural labour population in the country is calculated, the figure is around five per cent.

Maximum: The incidence of bonded labour is the highest in Madhya Pradesh where 11.8 per cent of the agricultural workers are bonded. However, the populous Uttar Pradesh has the largest number—550,000.

The survey has demarcated seven areas with a high incidence of bonded labour and it has identified 12 districts as "bonded labour districts"—each with over 40,000 labourers.

Rural poverty with incomes below the subsistence level is at the root of the system. When a loan is taken, a man pledges himself or a member of his family against the loan. The one who is pledged has to work for the creditor for nominal wages until the creditor declares the loan repaid.

Contrary to the commonly held belief that peasants and labourers borrow mainly for unproductive purposes, the survey shows that domestic expenditure is the most common reason for taking loans. On an All-India level, 47.5 per cent stated that they obtained the loans to meet household expenses. In the case of the *jeethas* of Karnataka, 79.8 per cent of the instances of borrowing was for this reason. Marriage and other social obligations were given in only 33.7 per cent of the cases.

Caste Basis: The survey, also revealed that 13 per cent of the labourers were in bondage because they belonged to a particular caste or their family had a tradition of bondage to the family of the 'master'. The survey explodes the myth that usurious rates of interest were responsible for bonded labour. According to the report, 45 per cent of the bonded labourers do not pay any interest. Only 11.6 per cent of them pay at the rate of more than 40 per cent. In fact, 92.3 per cent in Tamil Nadu and 78 per cent in Madhya Pradesh do not pay any interest. Apparently, in most cases the value of their labour is pegged so low that they can barely pay back during their lifetime the paltry loans. The report says that 58.1 per cent of the bonded labourers were being held against loans of less than Rs 500, 19.9 per cent against loans between Rs 500 and 900 and 21 per cent over Rs 900.

The report also says that bonded women labourers are used for prostitution in the Jaunsar Bawar area of Uttar Pradesh. The women are Harijans belonging to the *Kolta* caste who are taken into bondage by Brahmins and Rajputs. They sent them to brothels in towns or set them up in their own villages and appropriate their earnings.

No Hope: Most of the bonded labourers have despaired of any liberation. Sixty per cent of them feel that they have to work for an "indefinite period". They do not, says the report, "see any possibility of freeing themselves from bondage except to wait with the faint hope that the master may some time reconsider their case and release them."

Ten per cent of the bonded labourers have been working for more than 10 years or since their childhood and 10 per cent for more than 20 years.

A shocking revelation of the survey is that 84 per cent of the bonded labourers belong to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes while only 11.6 per cent of them are caste Hindus. Of the 'masters', 84.2 per cent are caste Hindus. Says the report: "The phenomenon of bondage can be identified where there is a distinct social encounter between the landed high-caste Hindus and the poverty stricken Scheduled Castes and Tribes."

Mocking the democratic and egalitarian pretensions of the political leadership, Marla and Maharaj conclude: "Two million bonded labourers is a considerable source of cheap labour which is being expropriated by the farmers and that contributes substantially to the prosperity of the ruling rural elite. . . . By releasing the bonded labourers the free flow of cheap labour force will be disconnected and the agricultural profits will go down and the prosperity of the neo-rich peasants will experience a serious setback."

—ARUL B. LOUIS

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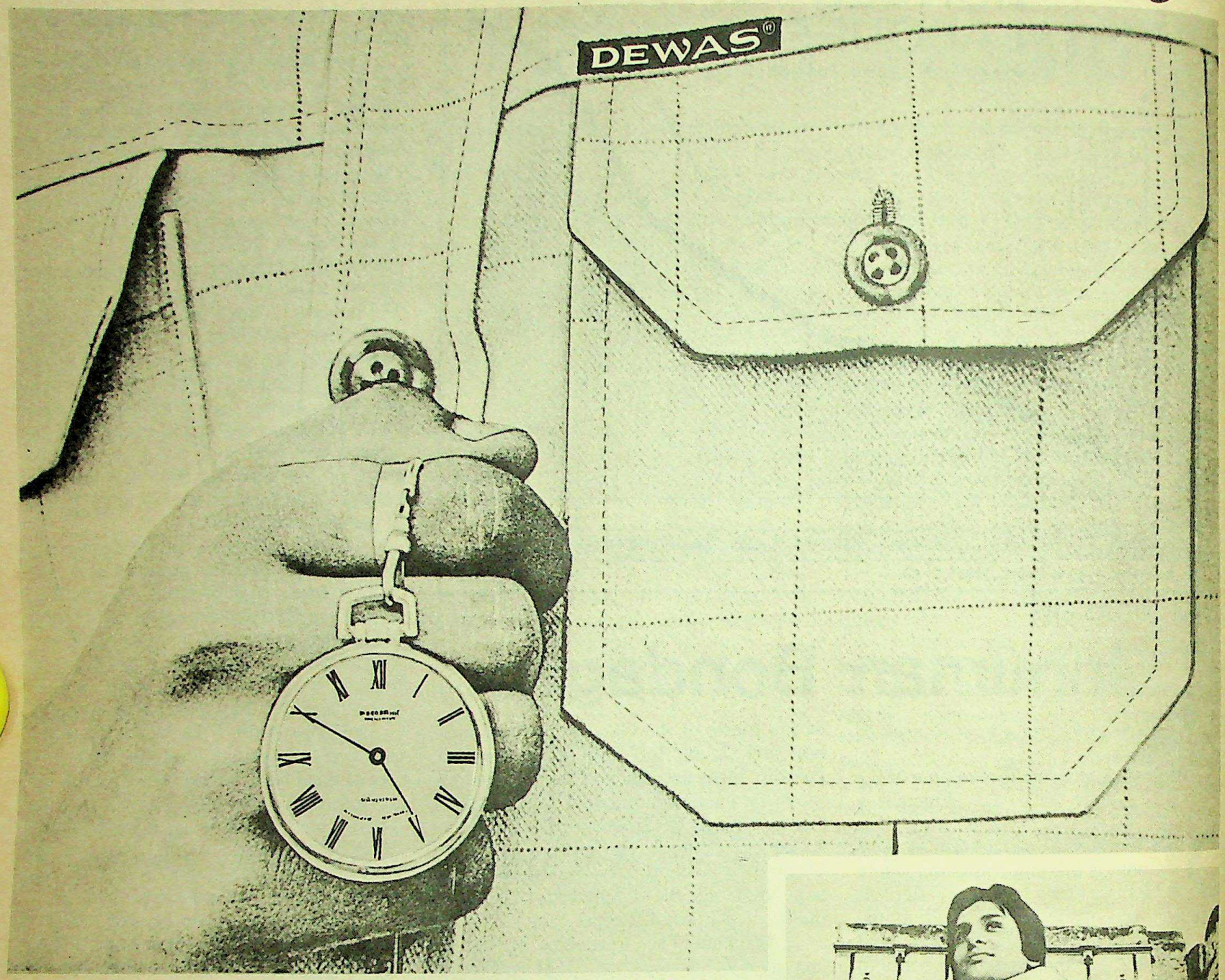

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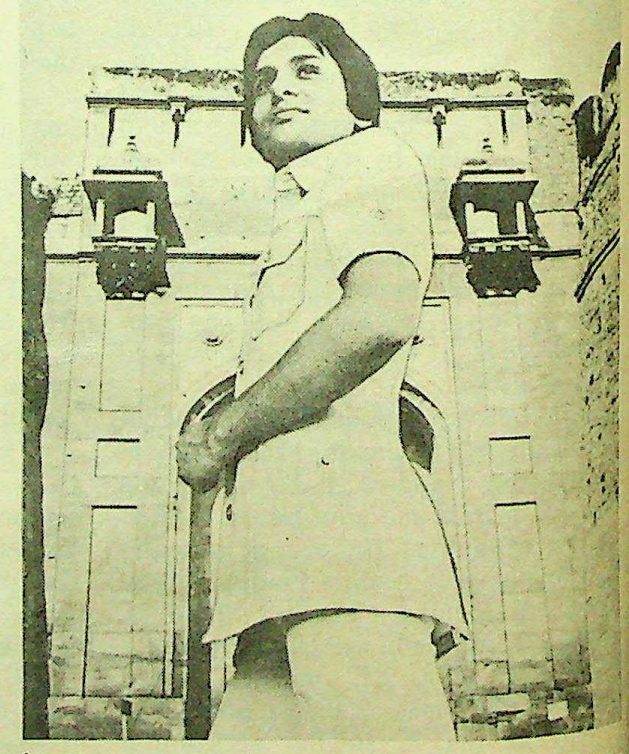

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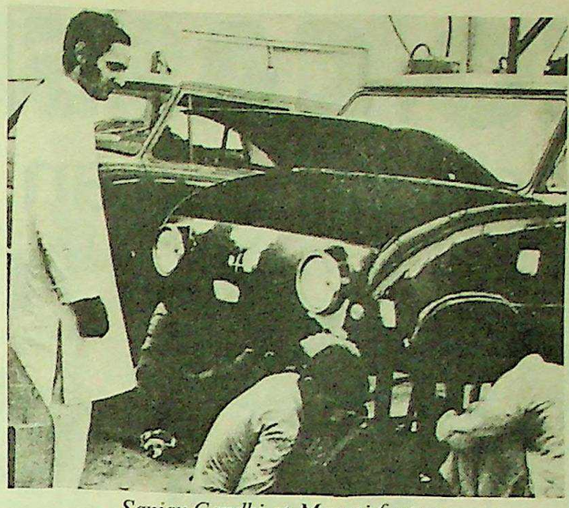
The Commissions

Suspended Animation

"ONE of the cardinal principles of trial is that it should start and conclude early," said Justice Jaganmohan Reddy in his report on the inquiry into corruption charges against former defence minister Bansi Lal, one of the feared minions of the Emergency. The Government should therefore take prompt action against anyone when a *prima facie* case is established, the judge suggested.

It is seven months since the **Reddy Commission** report was submitted but the Government is still "considering" it. Like the report of the Shah Commission (INDIA TODAY, April 16–30), the findings of the other Commissions of Inquiry into the various aspects of the Emergency also seem to have been lost in the never-never land of the bureaucracy.



Sanjay Gandhi at Maruti factory

Gupta—sensational revelations?

In his report on Bansi Lal, submitted on September 29, 1978, Justice Reddy held him responsible for the purchase of 50 heavy recovery vehicles from the West German firm, MAN, with a view to helping Sanjay Gandhi.

Favouritism : The report also says that Sanjay Gandhi was favoured by Bansi Lal with contracts to his notorious Maruti Ltd for building bus bodies for the Haryana Government. His involvement in the purchase of two Boeing aircraft for the Defence Ministry was also established.

Justice Reddy had also inquired into the Nagarwala episode which had taken place, before the Emergency, in 1971. He had ruled out any foul play in the death of R. S. Nagarwala, a former defence official, who made the chief cashier of the State Bank of India's Parliament Street branch in Delhi take out Rs 60 lakh from its vaults and hand it over to him by imitating the voice of the then prime minister, Indira Gandhi.

In his report Justice Reddy concluded that the Rs 60 lakh was taken out for "some secret use" and that unaccounted money was kept in the bank. But he disagreed with Prime Minister Morarji Desai that a part of the money belonged to Mrs Gandhi.

But Justice Reddy did find enough evidence to believe that Mrs Gandhi had not ensured proper investigation of the case and some officers in her secretariat had even tried to hamper it. Justice Reddy also criticized some senior doctors for not giving timely and proper treatment to Nagarwala when he was admitted in the Irwin Hospital (now Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan Hospital) with a heart ailment. The report was submitted to the Government last October, but it has not yet decided whether to accept it or not, let alone take action on it.

Worse : The **Grover Commission** which inquired into the allegations of misuse of authority by Karnataka Chief Minister Devraj Urs is on a stickier wicket, though not because of the fault of the Union Government. The final report was submitted to it on March 15 and is likely to be under consideration for two months.

In its first report submitted in January 1978, when there was President's rule in the state, the Commission headed by Justice A. N. Grover, had said that at least four of the 60 allegations it was asked to probe were found to be substantially true. But then in the March 1978 state Assembly Elections the Congress (I) won with an overwhelming majority and Urs once again became the chief minister. This has put the Centre in a fix. The state Government, naturally, is not inclined to pursue the Commission's recommendations and Urs has withdrawn the jurisdiction granted to the Central Bureau of Investigation over the state and the Bureau cannot follow up the cases.

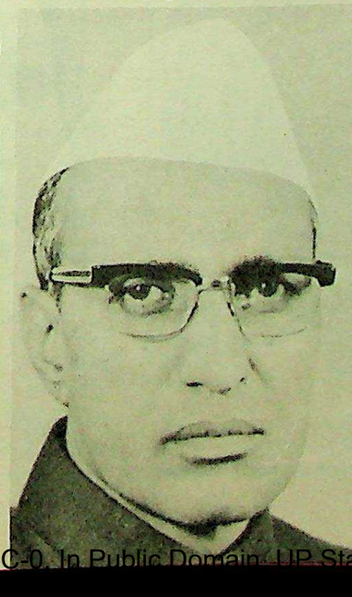
The **Gupta Commission,** headed by Justice A. C. Gupta, which has tried to unravel the mysteries of Sanjay Gandhi's Maruti Ltd, has also, it is learnt, submitted its report to the Government before its term expired on March 31. The Government will place the report before Parliament after processing its findings. The report is likely to make some sensational revelations.

—BRAJ MOHAN

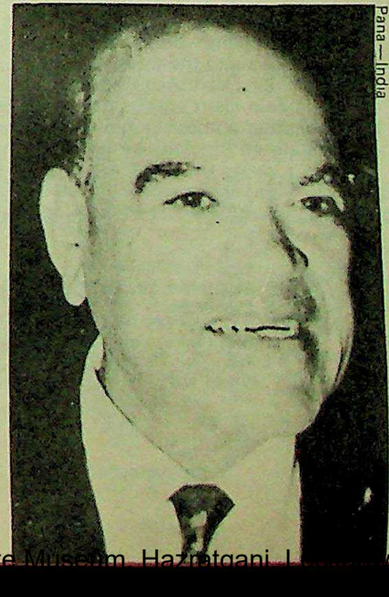
Reddy—disagreed with Desai

Pana—India

Bansi Lal—favoured Sanjay



Grover—report submitted



Pana—India

Urs—playing tough

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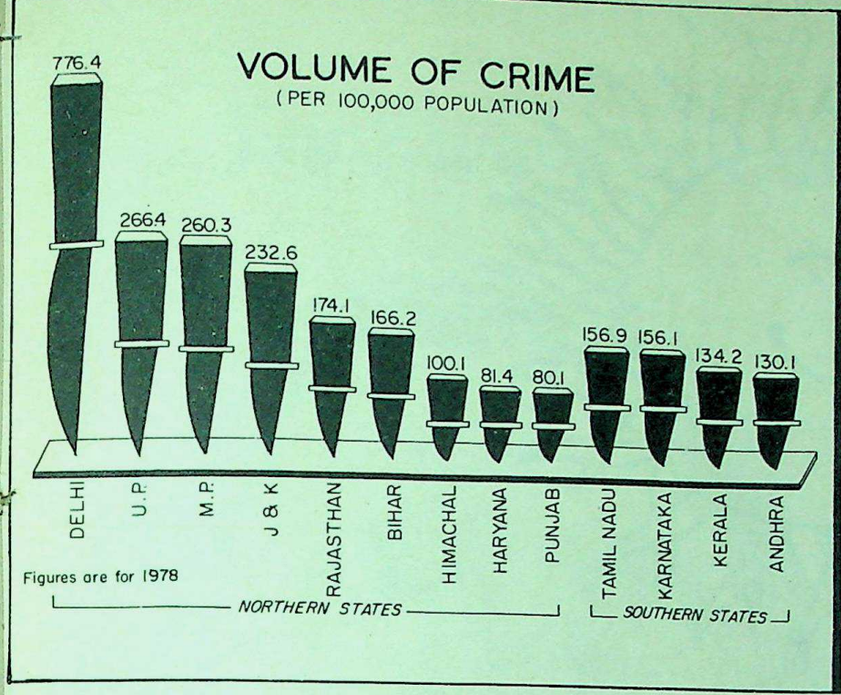
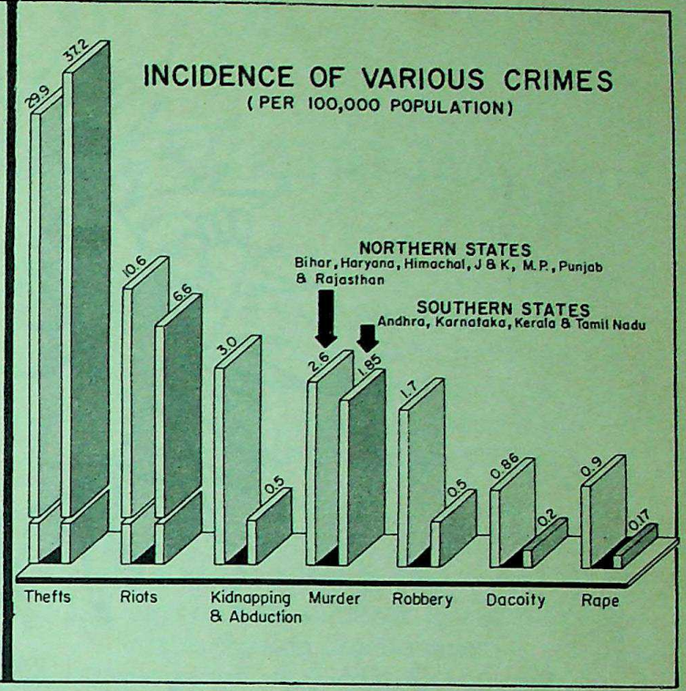




NORTH AND SOUTH

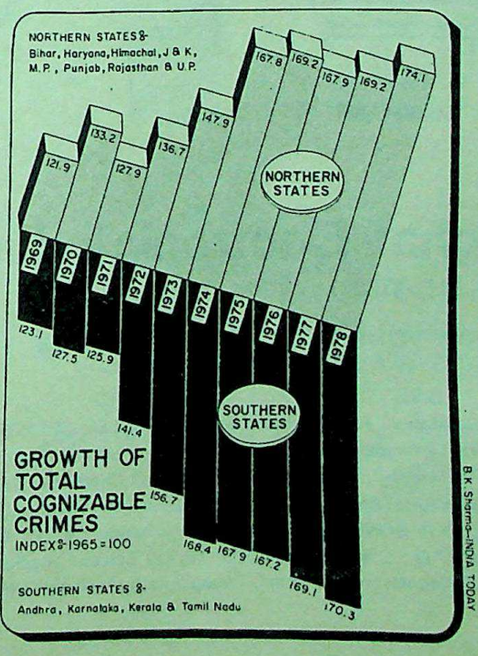
Disturbing Trends

THE south has fortuitously escaped the surging crime wave sweeping the rest of the country in the past two years. During 1978, 7.5 lakh cases were reportedly registered under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in the eight northern states—Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh—and the union territory of Delhi. But in the four southern states—Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka—only three lakh cases were registered. These four states which comprise a fourth of India's 63 crore population, account for 20 per cent of the total crimes reported every year, whereas the eight northern states and Delhi with 40 per cent of the national population register around 50 per cent of the reported offences. In effect, three crimes are committed in the north every two minutes as against one in the south.

The north also makes a larger contribution to the list of serious crimes. Sixty per cent of murders and rapes, 80 per cent of kidnappings and abductions, 70 per cent of dacoities, 30 per cent of robberies and 60 per cent of riots in 1978 occurred in the north. In fact, incidence of all kinds of crimes—except thefts—per lakh population is much higher in this region (*see chart*).

The north also outnumbers the south in the number of crimes involving property—the national average for one lakh population is 130. But the frequency of riots is the same in both regions. Bihar with 25 riots per lakh of its population (7 crore) leads in the north and Kerala (population: 3.1 crore) with an average of 23 riots annually tops in the south.

Reason: Explaining the reasons for less crimes in the south, a senior police official said: "Dravidians who constitute over 95 per cent of population are more religious and orthodox. And because religious sanction is more effective than the fear of legal prosecution, people are more disciplined." The system of penal action by the community itself prevalent in the south also acts as a deterrent. In the north on the other hand modernization has dented the hold of religion and tradition and consequently the official said "the accepted social norms have gone haywire".



The authorities in the south however, have no reason to be complacent, for if the crime rate continues to rise as at present, it would soon catch up with the north. The index number of crimes (base 1965 = 100) in peninsular India rose from 123.1 in 1969 to 170.3 in 1978 while in the north it increased from 121.9 to 174.1 during the same period (*see chart*).

It is the smaller states that have contributed most to the rising rate of crime. For instance, in Kerala, the total number of cognizable offences have almost doubled in the past 10 years whereas in the north, in Himachal Pradesh (population: 34 lakh) the number has shot up by 80 per cent. According to a sociologist the intensive industrialization undertaken by the smaller states recently is responsible for the increase in crime. The United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of offenders held in 1970 said: "As any area begins to open up, it outgrows its transitionalism and responds to outside influences or new ideas by modernizing, industralizing and concentrating people in certain areas. Its people, and particularly its younger generation, seize the many new opportunities. In doing so an increasing number of them succumb to temptations and seek satisfaction through crime."

The cultural differences between north and south, however, are disappearing fast. An official of the Andhra Pradesh home department commented wryly: "The increasing interaction between the north and the south is not only resulting in the intermingling of their cultural values but also leading to a mixing of their crime cultures."

—PRABHU CHAWLA

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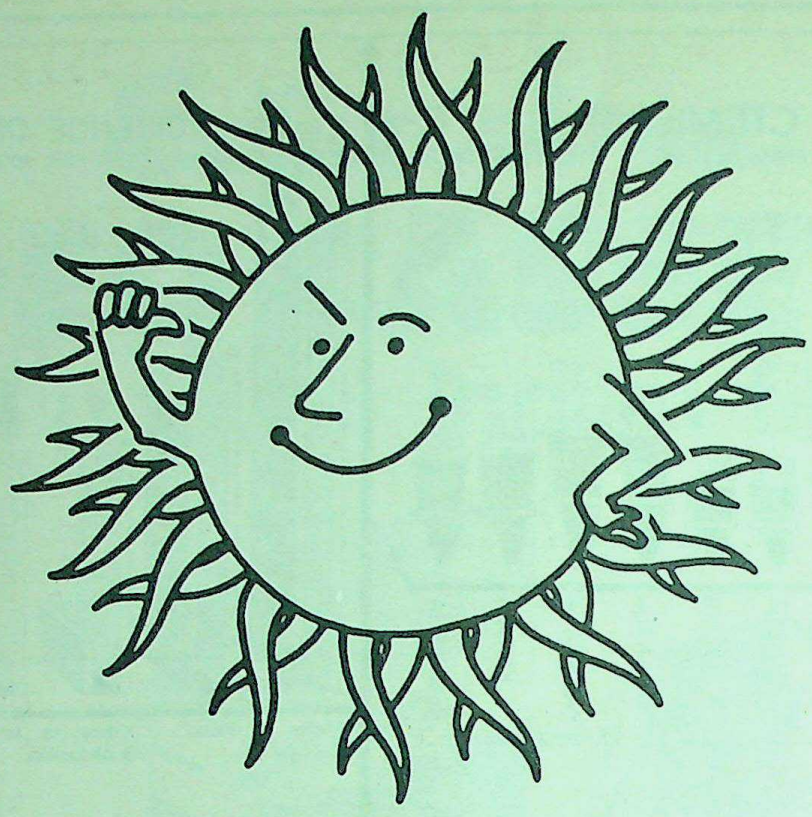

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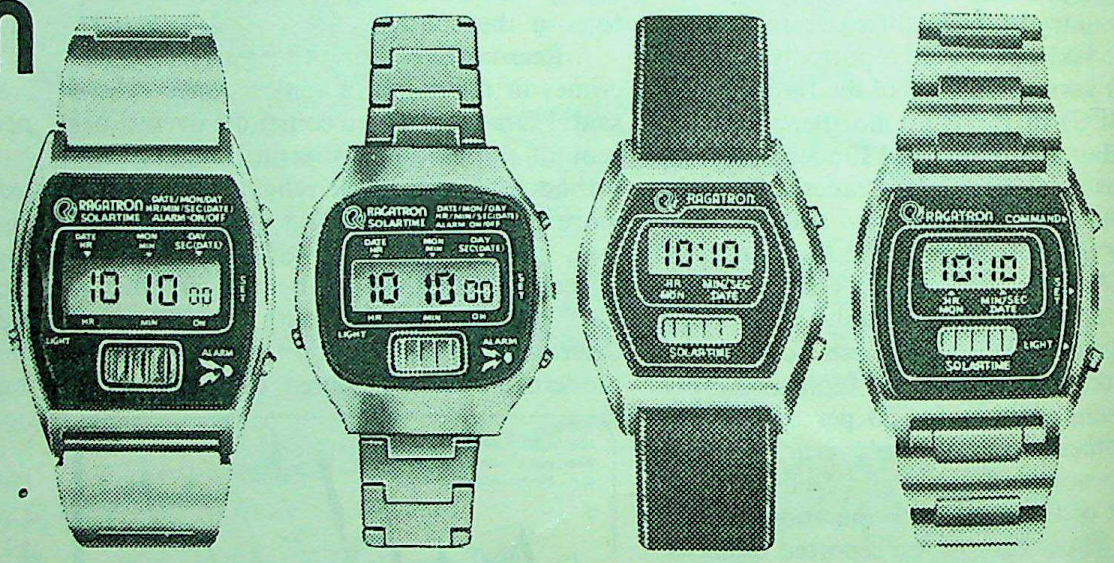

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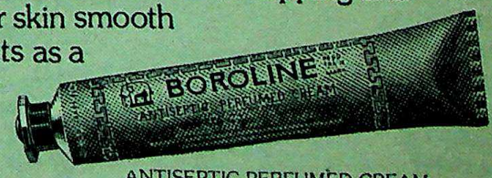

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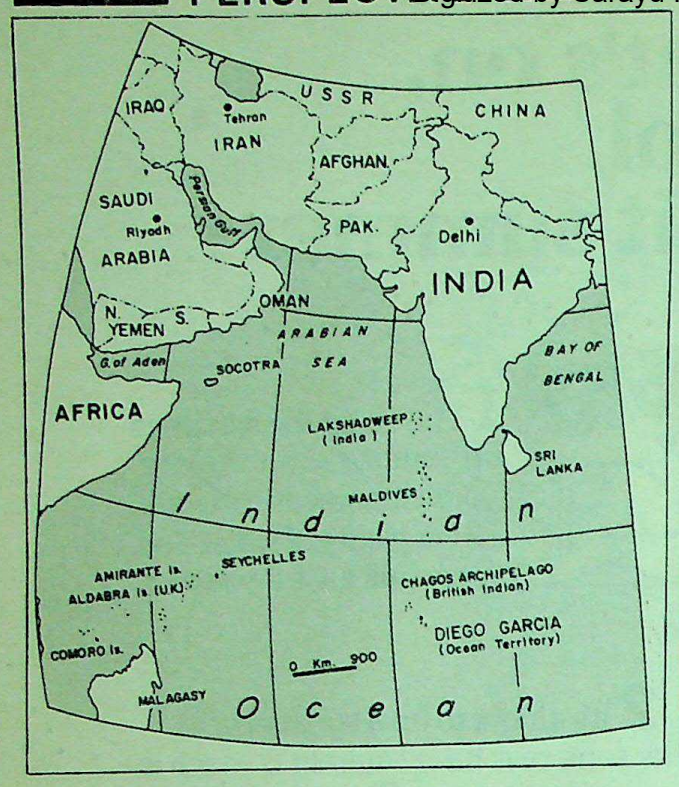
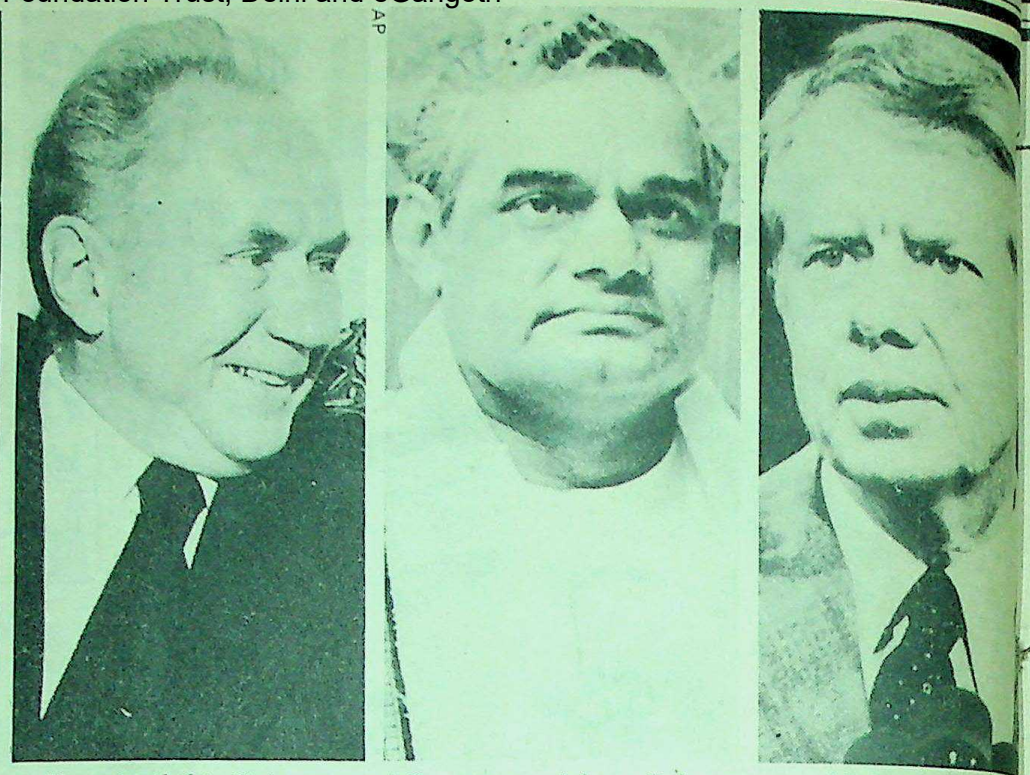




Kosygin (left), Vajpayee and Carter—need for a dialogue to establish a peace zone

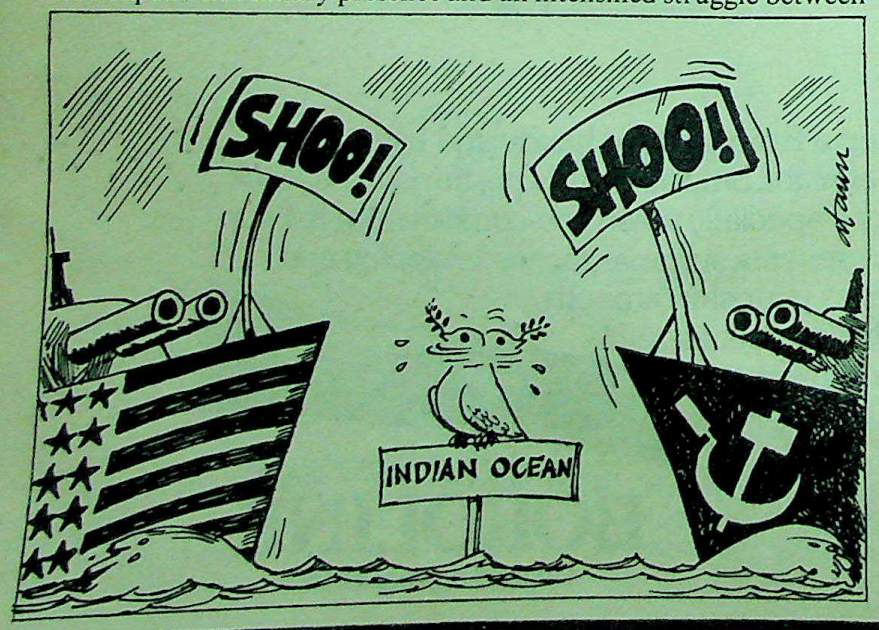
INDIAN OCEAN

Theatre For Super Power Rivalry

POLITICAL and military developments in the western Indian Ocean are causing ferment in the region. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on March 20, 1979, Foreign Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said: "...increased military and naval strength in the area and enhanced super power presence could have adverse consequences, and add to tensions in the region..."

US activities in the western Indian Ocean include dispatch of a four-ship naval task force: the ostensible reason for this deployment being the events on the Arabian peninsula. A permanent naval presence in the form of a separate fleet, involving an expansion of base facilities in Diego Garcia is also contemplated. Other options before the US Defence Department are deployment of US Air Force F-15 fighters in Saudi Arabia, and the acceleration of arms supplies to North Yemen.

Pravda has warned against US interference in the region, and the danger of "conspiracies which can only aggravate the destabilization of the situation in this explosive part of the world..." It could be anticipated, however, that the Soviet Union would also expand its military presence and an intensified struggle between the super powers in the western Indian Ocean would result.



This heightened rivalry is part of the global interaction between the super powers, which has elements of cooperation, as in the SALT-II dialogue, and rivalry, as in the Middle East. Present strains in détente are related to a deterioration in that total relationship, largely occasioned by the way the United States is playing its 'China card'.

Reasons: More specifically, their rivalry in the western Indian Ocean proceeds for two other reasons. Firstly, Soviet influence in the Middle East was seriously eroded by Kissinger's successful step-by-step diplomacy. Soviet activism in the Arabian peninsula and Afghanistan is partly motivated by a desire to compensate for influence losses elsewhere. This Soviet policy is being resisted by the United States. Secondly, the strategic importance of the western Indian Ocean region is largely related to its being the major supplier of oil to the Western bloc. Consequently, western interests lie in securing these oil supplies, whereas Soviet interests are served by disruption of these supplies, revealing a basic asymmetry of strategic interests.

It is evident that super power intervention could not succeed if conflict situations did not prevail in the region. The changes in Iran have thrown into relief the latent contention between Islamic fundamentalism and secular radicalism. Different guerilla groups have also surfaced, and must be accommodated in the power structure. And the armed forces—divided as they are today—may not wait patiently on the sidelines.

In fact the Iranian armed forces could become more powerful if they are needed to control a Kurd revolt. Iraq has, so far, adopted a low profile. But she could support Kurdish autonomy demands. A certain restiveness is also evident among Iran's other ethnic minorities—Turkomans, Azerbaijanis, Arabs and Baluchis—who comprise almost 50 per cent of Iran's population. The likelihood of instability continuing in Iran, which may be aggravated by external powers is a real possibility.

Tension: In Afghanistan, the Tarakki regime has consolidated its position, eliminated its rivals, and moved firmly into the Soviet orbit. Despite denials, persistent reports of rebel activity—Islamic

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and pro-monarchical in character—suggests that the regime is not in full control of the situation. Moreover, its accusations of Pakistani and Iranian interference reveal an option available to these countries to encourage Afghan dissidence.

Nearer India, the situation in Pakistan has taken a dramatic turn with the execution of former prime minister Z.A. Bhutto. However, there is little likelihood of a large-scale revolt in support of Bhutto. The factors foreboding instability in Pakistan lie elsewhere, and include the failure of her rulers to balance Punjab's dominance against the aspirations for autonomy in the other provinces, inability to evolve an acceptable political system or a consensus regarding the optimal degree of Islamization.

To the west of the Gulf, the Dhofari insurgency in Oman, competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran for regional dominance, and other tensions add to prevailing instabilities. The broader asymmetric forces within the region are delineated by contention between Shias and Sunnis, traditionalists and progressives, pro-monarchical and radical elements. The prevailing situation, therefore, offers opportunities for extra-regional powers to intervene in the region.

Demilitarization: This is evident in the Yemens. US military aid to North Yemen, along with Saudi credits, is designed to stem the tide of radicalism in the Gulf. Soviet military and economic assistance to South Yemen is intended to retain control over the straits of Bab-El-Mandeb, and establish a springboard for extending Soviet influence into the Arabian peninsula.

Cognizant of the escalatory dangers in this situation, India has suggested a conference of littoral and non-littoral countries to convert the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. India has also urged the two super powers to resume negotiations for demilitarizing the Indian Ocean. (These negotiations started in 1977 but were suspended some months later, due to strains following the Ogaden war.)

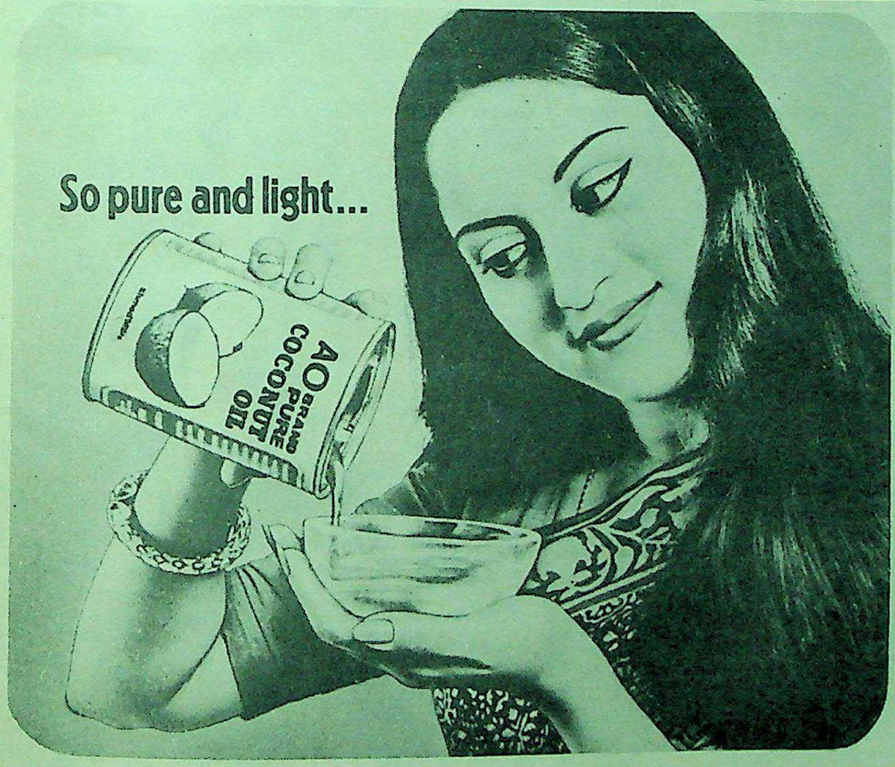
Difficulties in establishing a peace zone in the Indian Ocean are, however patent. First, besides China, no other super power has joined UN resolutions calling upon them to halt expansion of their military presence in the Indian Ocean, and eliminate it thereafter. Second, the littoral countries are divided by historical and ethnic animosities. These are aggravated by territorial disputes, chauvinist ambitions and so on—all clearly visible in the Gulf region. Weaker littoral countries are naturally tempted to invite intercession by external powers to redress the regional balance.

Divergences: On the other hand, there are profound differences in the basic approach of the super powers to demilitarizing the Indian Ocean. The Soviet Union favours a radical approach—elimination of foreign bases, non-creation of new bases, and mutual reduction of military presence by non-littoral states. But the United States prefers a gradualist approach, beginning with freezing, and leading up to limitation of military presence. These divergences reflect the non-symmetrical situation of the super powers in the Indian Ocean. Both have navies, and enjoy varying influence over littoral countries. But only the United States has truly identifiable bases like Diego Garcia. The United States is therefore unwilling to forego its present advantage; the Soviet Union, however, wishes to neutralize its present disadvantage.

The joint communiqué issued after Russian Premier Alexei Kosygin's visit reiterates firm support by India and the Soviet Union to the concept of a peace zone in the Indian Ocean. Further, they favour resumption of talks between the Soviet Union and the United States to achieve this objective. It would be realistic to assess, nevertheless, that the Indian Ocean region in general, and western Indian Ocean in particular, has become a theatre of conflicts which are likely to exacerbate in the near future.

—P. R. CHARI

DR CHARI *is Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis*



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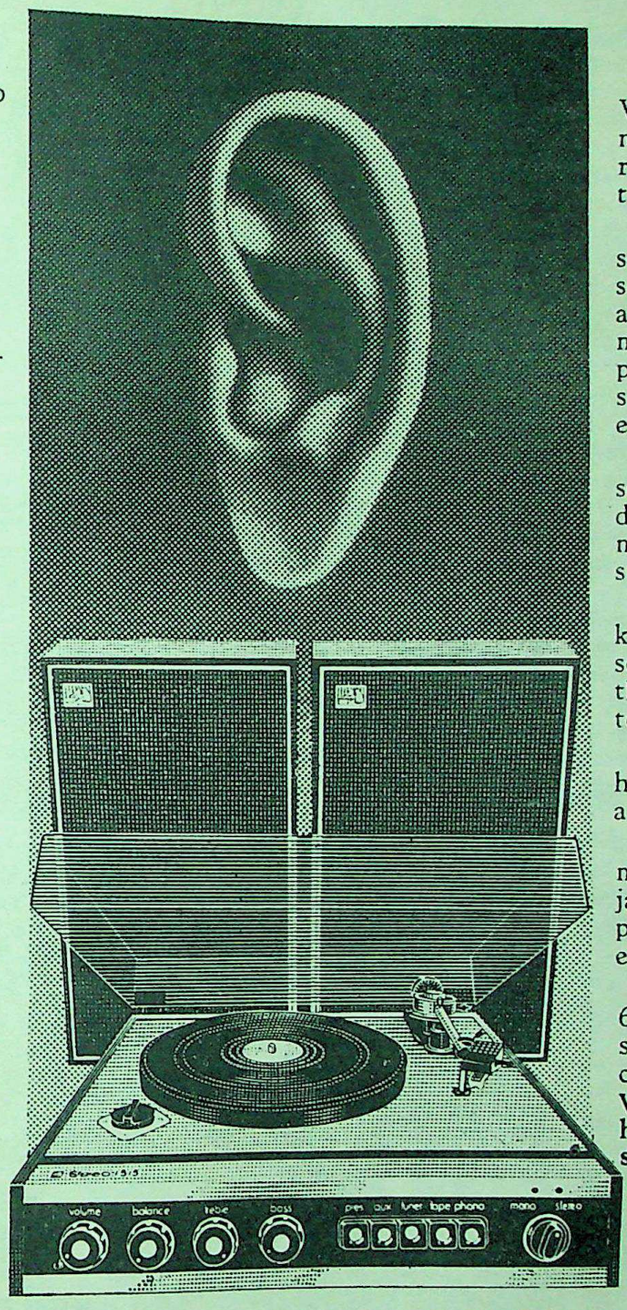

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THEY are innocent, economical, unassuming and submissive. They work everywhere. In dingy roadside dhabas, *in the mushrooming small industries in narrow and stinking lanes—hell houses of pestilence—tens of thousands of children earn their bread without butter. Over 30 million children—about 10 per cent of India's child population—of which 7 million are girls hover around the numerous commercial establishments to earn a few pennies and supplement their family's meagre income. In urban areas every second child works on pavements, and every fourth child gets a job in industrial units where employment of children below 14 is prohibited. And over 1,50,000 children who could not get a job have become beggars or have swelled the ranks of vagrants. While 12 out of 100 children die before they complete the age of five, two out of 10 children die at work.*

A bookbinder in Old Delhi employs seven-year-old Rajpal (bottom left), for pasting file covers. He is on trial and in return for a 9-hour day, he gets a measly 75 paise. Son of a slum-dweller, Rajpal has one shirt and a pant. His father, Ramjilal, 39, is a labourer who earns Rs 15 a day which is not enough to support his six-member family.

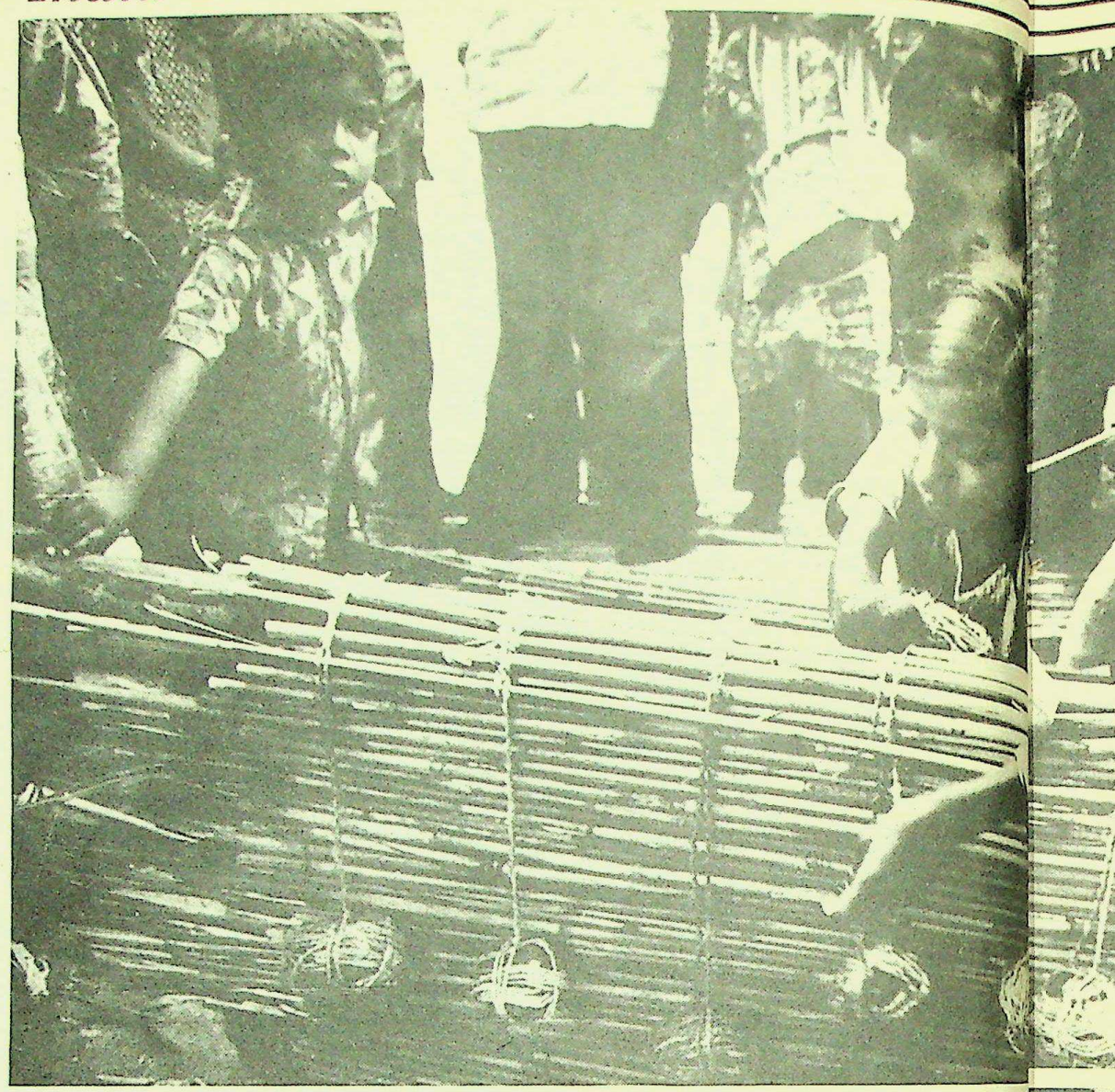
Ten-year-old Akhtar (bottom right) pulls a thela *(hand-cart) loaded with carpets and cloth in Delhi's Chandni Chowk. Strong and dark, Akhtar earns Rs 4 for a full day's work. He lives in a thatched house in Jehangirpuri with his family of seven. His father Anwar, 40, a labourer earns only Rs 8 daily. Says Akhtar: "I have a lot of responsibility. I have to earn for my three younger sisters, otherwise they will have no food. I have my meals twice a day—chapatis and potatoes in the morning and chapatis with* achar *(pickles) in the evening."*

Laxmi, 9, (top left) a handicapped girl works for a contractor who makes bamboo curtains in Old Delhi. For eight hours she is paid Rs 2. "I earn for myself," says Laxmi proudly. She chose work instead of school because she did not want to be a liability on her parents. "Life will be easier when I am a little older and start earning more," says Laxmi optimistically.

Jai Prakash, 9, (top right) works for a shoe-maker in Delhi's Chawri Bazar. He does odd jobs like cutting the leather and fixing nails into shoe soles. The eldest in the family, Prakash, earns about Rs 7 a day. He dropped out of school because his father could not afford to lose the money Prakash brought home. "I enjoy working. I do not have to carry books or get up early to go to school," says Jai Prakash.

Rajpal, Akhtar, Laxmi and Jai Prakash are meticulous and honest in their working. Yet they are ill-paid and quite often go without a meal. But they cannot get out of the well-entrenched system, which lets the privileged exploit the poor with impunity.

—PRABHU CHAWLA



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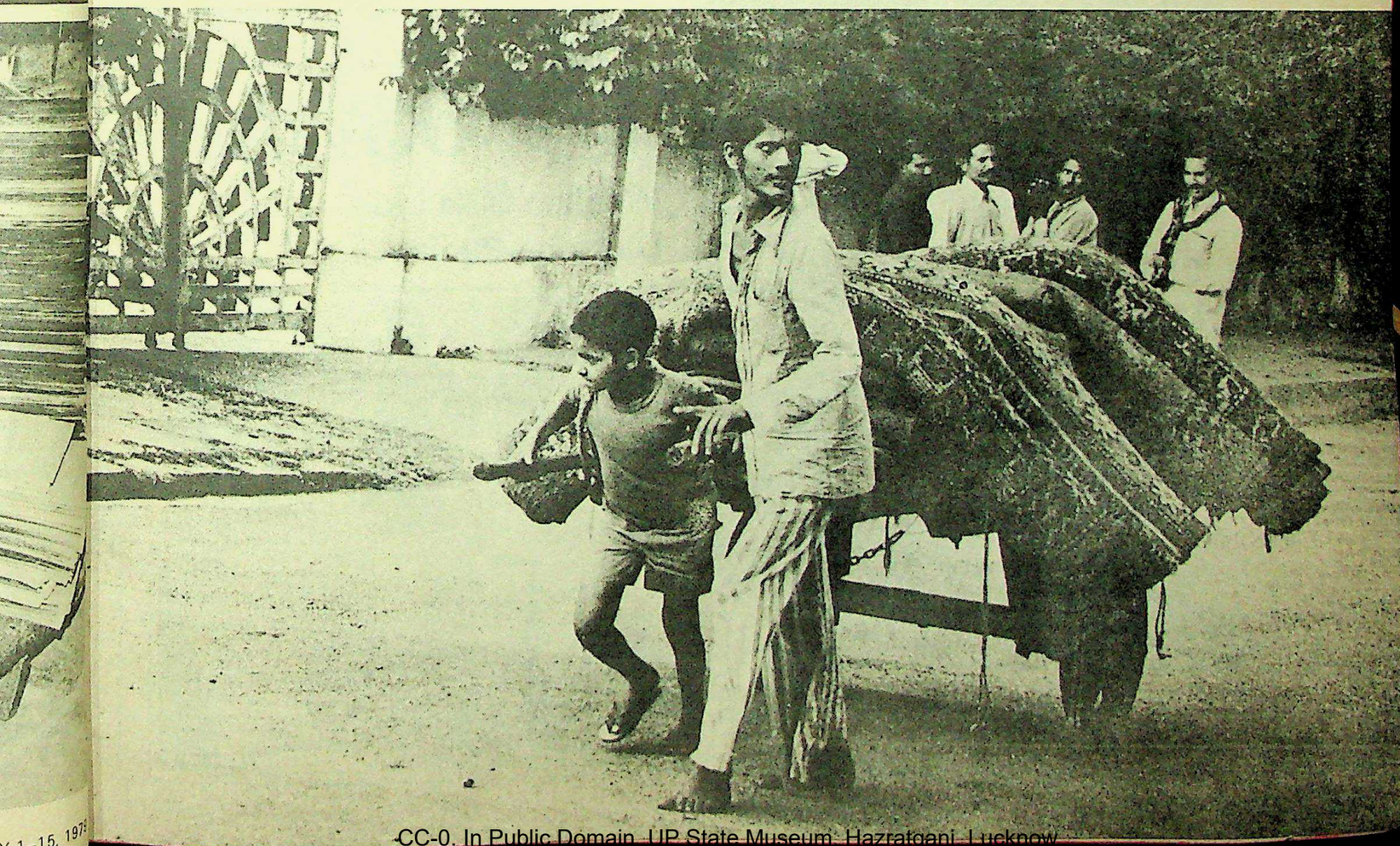

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S. K. Sharma

The painting Animal Being *by Manjit Bawa (inset)*

PAINTING

Mystical Fantasies

AT Dhoomi Mal's last show of the season in Delhi, Manjit Bawa, 38, unfurled his work. Many colours, both brilliant and muted, comprised the body of work, but none was predominant. The gallery walls stood together like a box of crayons thrown open at noon. They flashed at first glance, but then the box was able to contain them.

The creatures on the canvases had different ancestries: human, animal, mythological and the purely fantastic. The mythological borrowings were not acknowledged. The obese Ganesh and the flying Hanuman were titled *Falling Yellow* and *Flight in Green*. The idea was perhaps to suggest, not enumerate.

Irrespective of the subject, Bawa's figures had originated from a common seed. None of them stood upright, taking definite postures. They swelled and gangled as water seemed to soak into their beings. The great sphinx sat in a grey lagoon, spineless as a water balloon. A white horse climbed a stair, his bloated limbs exhausting his effort. A tiger lay listless as a six-armed deity hovered in sky.

Double Edge: In the catalogue to Bawa's show, Swaminathan, the eminent painter of nature's mystical images wrote: "Manjit's world is somewhat like the world of Alice, inconsequential, menacing, inexplicable yet inexorable." And true enough, the fantasies of the artist managed to create a double edge. The whole construction of the beings remained protoplasmic as opposed to muscular, but their open stance in a spaceless vacuum did not reduce them to passivity. Always, a detail or two remained disturbing, though sometimes only in colour. A yellow crescent moon against a green sky; the horse's mane descending like ranges of snow-clad mountains; the two tongues of a double mouthed monster; the fingertips that ended as phalluses. But the purpose of the details was not always clear. In a children's book of fantastic monsters, explanations may not have been necessary, but to the adult who sought the answers, they came slow—if they came at all.

It seemed that Bawa's silk screens had blown themselves into canvas spaces, retaining their flawless serigraphic finish. To interpret beyond the image remained a subjective story.

—AMAN NATH

SCULPTURE

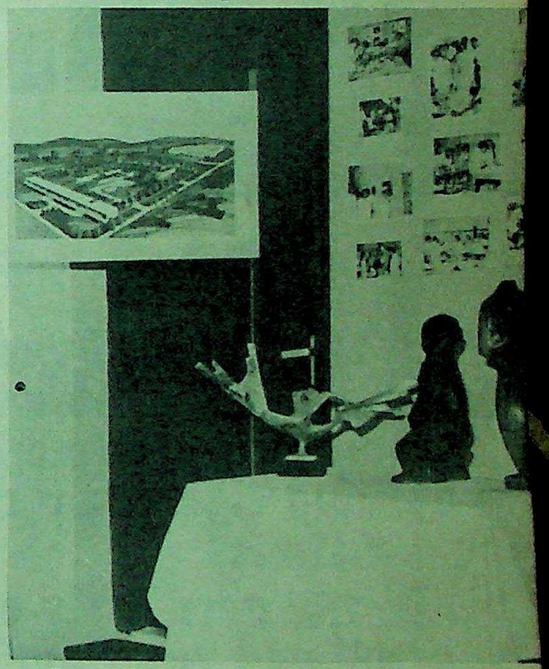
Novel Venture

YOUNG sculptors in the country will soon have the opportunity for self-expression in the backdrop of famous Chandela temples in Khajuraho. A Rs 1.25 lakh sculpture centre is being established there by Shyam Sunder Poddar, 60, managing director of Hotel Chandela, to provide 'guidance' to selected students.

A seat of culture and art during the rule of powerful Chandela kings, Khajuraho (597 km from New Delhi) in Madhya Pradesh was slowly forgotten and lost in the anonymity of tiny villages in the country. "Ten years back you could never locate it on the map," says Poddar. "Today it is a popular tourist destination and linked by air."

Poddar's efforts in the past few years have been directed towards the "resurrection" of Khajuraho. "Now I visualize it once again as a seat of art and culture." His sentiments were echoed by eminent art critics and sculptors who participated in the symposium Poddar had organized to mark the laying of the foundation stone of the centre on April 11. Said an art critic: "Sculpture has been the least supported of the plastic arts. It is good that sculptors will be able to work in the sylvan surroundings of Khajuraho."

Initially the centre will comprise four studios, an exhibition hall and a small administrative office. It shall have facilities to train six to eight students. Their stay and meals will be arranged free by the centre which will also supply the sculpting material. The students during the six-month course will also be given a stipend for personal expenses. A senior resident sculptor will be available to guide the trainees, but "not to instruct them", emphasizes Poddar. "The students will be free to choose their own medium."



Some of the exhibits at the symposium

Poddar believes that intrinsic talent can flower anywhere given the opportunity. He is optimistic that "the exquisite beauty of the temple sculptures will inspire the new generation of sculptors, in spite of the changed times and new forms of expression."

—SUNIL K. ROY

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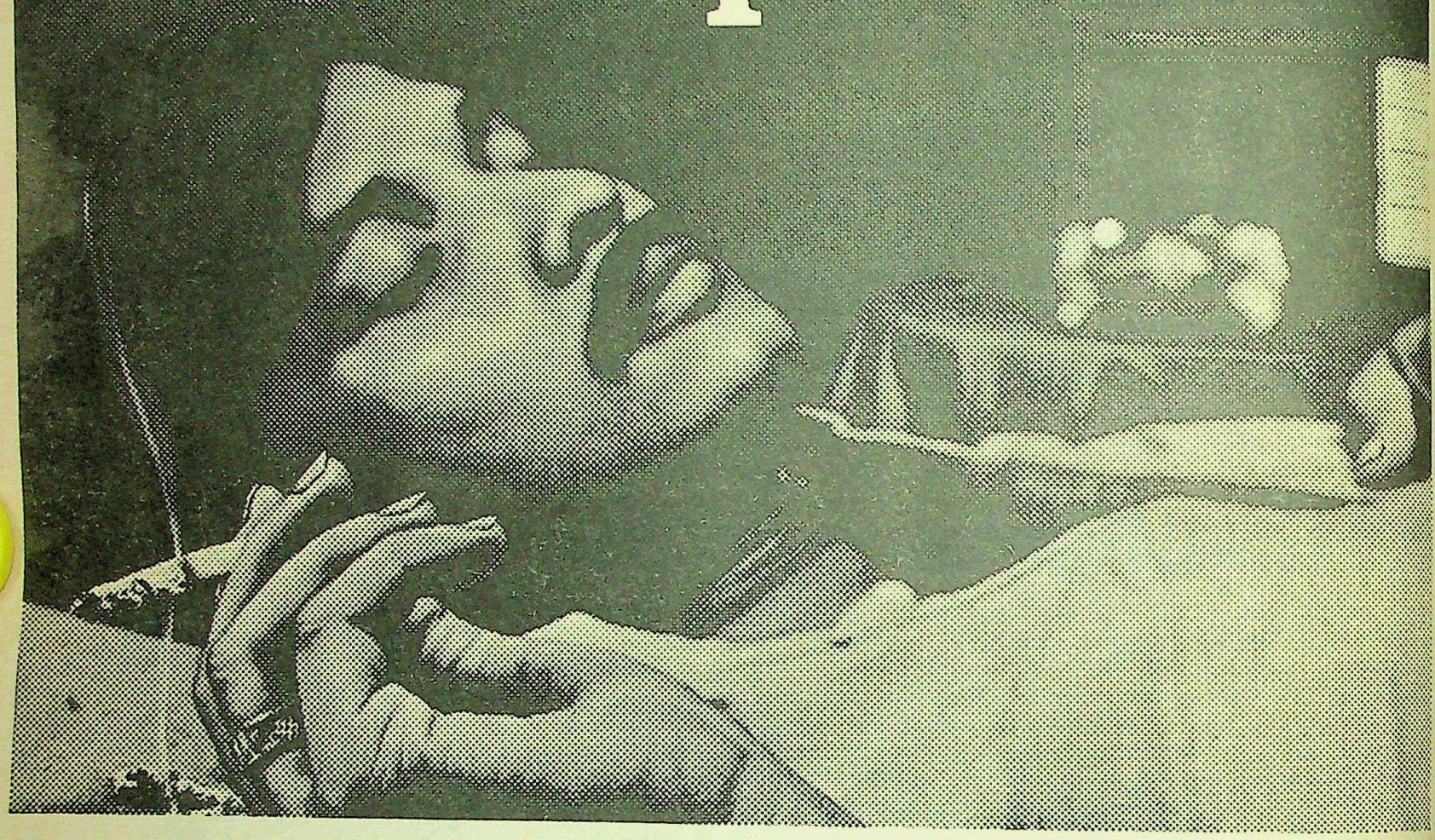

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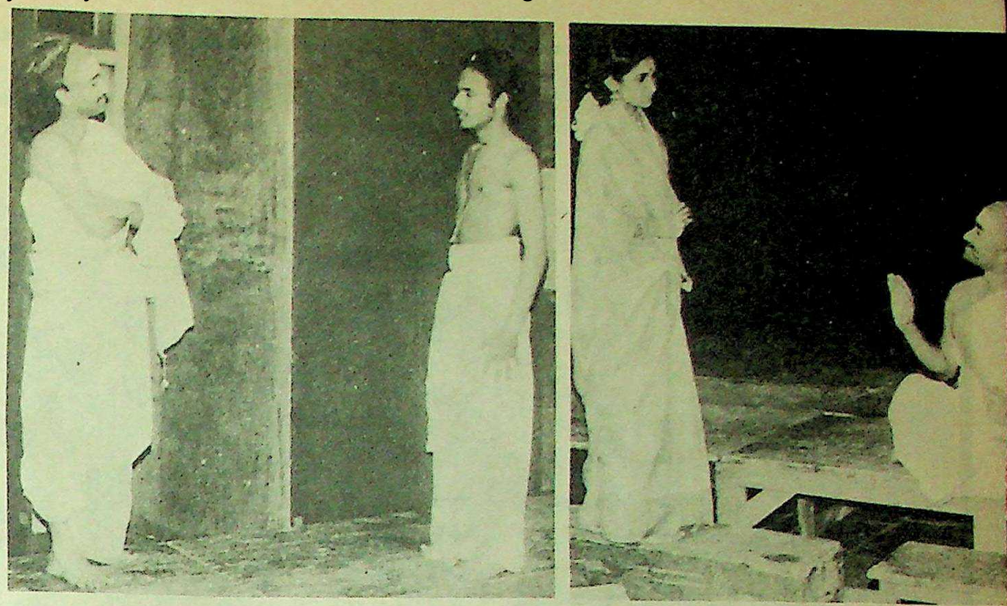
Intimate Touches

JAYAKANTHAN, the renowned Tamil novelist is known in literary circles for his radicalism. Recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award for his *Sila Nerangalil Sila Manithargal* (People at Different Times) he has become a box-office draw. Bombay's Amateur Dramatic Club recently staged a play based on Jayakanthan's novel, *Brahmopadesam*. In fact, the stage version came off better than the book.

In dramatizing *Brahmopadesam*, Bombay's young amateurs improvised considerably. Verses from the *Sankhya Yoga* and the *Bhagwad Gita* have been incorporated effectively. For example, the answer to the question, "Who is a *Sthitapragna?*" is: "A man who is untouched by the happenings around him, a man who is emotionally free from all worldliness, a man who does not rise to the heights of ecstasy or plunge to the depths of despair if anything happens to him." Rendered in Sanskrit the effect is telling. It is heightened by touches of the 'intimate theatre' with the actors occasionally addressing themselves to the audience.



Scenes from Brahmopadesam *based on Jayakanthan's Tamil novel*

Exacting Standards: The story of *Brahmopadesam* in simple. Sarma, a Brahmin cook, feels a person cannot be adjudged a Brahmin by his birth but by his actions alone. While he is looking for the ideal Brahmin husband for his daughter Maitreyi, she decides on marrying her neighbour Seshadri, a Brahmin by caste. Sarma does not consider Seshadri to be a true Brahmin as he is an atheist and spouts communism. Meanwhile Sarma comes across a young man of a low caste, Sadananda Odhuvar, and finds in him all the qualities he is looking for. At the time of Maitreyi's wedding to Seshadri, Sarma declares that Sadananda has measured up to his high standards, declares him to be a Brahmin and whispers to him the *Brahmopadesam mantra*, as does every Brahmin father to his son.

The presentation brings out what is characteristic of Jayakanthan's brand of revolution. By pointing out what the Brahmin should be, he raises Brahminism to a level that very few Brahmins by birth can even conceptualize, let alone live at.

—RAJA RAMANATHAN

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$ Diplomacy

A DANGEROUS PLACE
by DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN
Allied Publishers
Pages: 297; Price: Rs 30

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the outspoken 52-year-old former US envoy and now a Senator, has been at the centre of controversy wherever he has been. At the United Nations he courted unpopularity among the group of Seventy Seven by having to battle against the Arab attempt to equate Zionism with racism. In India, where he served as his country's ambassador between 1973–1975, he alienated the Indian elite and became disillusioned about his country's foreign policy towards the subcontinent. Now the flamboyant former Harvard professor narrates some of his experiences in various diplomatic postings as well as at the United Nations in an equally eloquent style. The book is his testimony to those fateful events in the Third World and the General Assembly.

What he calls the "innocent enough affair of the heart" soon turned into "great bitterness in India". Besides, it seems he had little to do in India. He writes: "In my two years there, from 1973 to 1975, I gave four speeches, two of them lectures... I held no press conference until my next to last day. Within the channels of the Indian Government I sought to state what American policy *was* rather than, what I wished it to be. The affair of the heart, surely, was over."

Obviously, besides little labour, there was little love lost between him and the Indians. Says Moynihan: "It was my hope that now that we perhaps like each other less, we might respect each other more." Then comes the admission of his failure in India. "I had no great success."

Washington could partly be blamed for his lack of success. The other factor was Mrs Gandhi. Moynihan notes with a tinge of sarcasm: "Under the rule of Nehru's daughter, the world's largest democracy had, in foreign affairs, become bound to Soviet policy. Worse, it was drifting into an authoritarianism all its own. With my own government collapsing at home, the most I could do was to set about liquidating the extraordinary demi-Raj that the United States had established in India in the mid-'50s and '60s. Rather as the British had, I hoped to march out rather than be driven out."

Foresaw: Moynihan had seen the signs of the Emergency but he left India "in silence. But I was onto something, and I knew it. I was sure she would do what indeed she did do." What Moynihan failed to do for democracy was to speak out before the event rather than record it proudly afterwards.

What irked Moynihan most during his spell in Delhi was Mrs Gandhi's constant harping on Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)'s threat of subversion in India. It appears that he lost a great deal of sleep over the subject and finally decided to press his embassy to go back over the whole quarter century of America's link with Independent India to find out "just what we had been up to".

Mrs Gandhi and Moynihan—thank you

The result: "I was satisfied we had been up to very little. We had twice, but only twice, interfered in Indian politics to the extent of providing money to a political party. Both times the money was given to the Congress Party, *which had asked for it* (italics added). Once it was given to Mrs Gandhi herself, who was then a party official. Still, as we were no longer giving money to *her*, it was understandable that she should wonder just to whom we *were* giving it. It is not a practice to be encouraged."

Bad Luck: Moynihan's disclosures could not have come at a worse time for Mrs Gandhi who is fighting a losing battle for her political survival. It has come at a time when she is being attacked from within her party by those who feel that her son Sanjay should keep away from politics, and should not meddle with the affairs of the party or the country. Moreover the Special Courts Bill is before Parliament and once it becomes law, which should be sometime this month, those accused of excesses during the Emergency will be hauled up before it. Mrs Gandhi and her son Sanjay would probably be the prime candidates for these courts. Furthermore her Congress Party is in total disarray at the Centre as well as in the states. Coming on top of all this Moynihan's disclosures have confirmed that Mrs Gandhi's holier-than-thou posture in Indian politics was a farce. She is shown to be as corruptible as any other two-bit politician in India.

Mrs Gandhi, according to Moynihan, had not only accepted slush funds to bolster up her election campaign, but also invited the Americans to spy on China (*see excerpt*). Has not someone written a book titled the *Two Faces of Indira Gandhi?*—CHHOTU KARADIA

EXCERPTS

Of the various joint Indian-American enterprises, none survived the strains of 1971 more successfully than those directed against China. Indian fear of the Chinese was palpable. As much as the Gandhi government may have desired American defeat in Vietnam, once that became inevitable they could see it would not really be to the advantage of India, and in private became ever more explicit on this point. And so we continued, jointly, to spy on the Chinese from the tops of the Himalayas.

These were routine exercises, but not without drama. In 1965 we had sent a climbing expedition to the top of Nanda Devi a mountain of 26,645 feet in the northeast, near the border with China, to put in place nuclear-powered instruments which would record Chinese rocket telemetry and atomic tests. A storm came, the instruments, including the power pack, were cached, and the party returned to base. The climbers returned in the spring to find that an avalanche had swept everything away, and the plutonium was lost in the snow pack at the headwaters of the holy Ganges. Our then-Ambassador Chester Bowles went back to Mrs Gandhi, and the next year a second Indo-American expedition successfully put instruments in place atop Nanda Kot, the 22,400-foot mountain adjacent to Nanda Devi.

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Pushkarna—INDIA TODAY

A woman at the Kisan Rally last December in New Delhi with Charan Singh's picture

Debatable Surmise

SMALL IS POLITICS
Organizational Alternatives in India's Rural Development
by MARCUS FRANDA
Wiley Eastern Ltd
Pages: 296; Price: Rs 45

The title of the book bears a striking similarity to E.F. Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful*. The politics of *Small is Politics* is that since India is going through a "distinctly evolutionary process of transformation" there is "little scope for a political revolution" in the country, rural change and development is on the agenda; India may not go the China way and may operate within the democratic framework, if institutions to bring about rural development programmes are organized and credit is made available through them to small farmers.

Franda is very enthusiastic about the Janata Party's emphasis on rural development. The party's industrial policy, rural credit schemes, rural employment strategy, its commitment to *panchayats* and decentralization, small-scale and cottage industries and support for the ideas of voluntary action as exemplified in the Social Work Research Centre (SWRC) are motivated by a desire to help the "small man".

The challenges to the Janata Party and its economic strategy come from Mrs Indira Gandhi, chronic factionalism, reassertion of urban and heavy industry interests and landlords and rich peasants. Some of the assessments of Franda regarding the constituents of the Janata Party are controversial. For instance, his view that the Jan Sangh represents medium and small businessmen.

Wrong Emphasis: Franda feels that Charan Singh has the capacity to face these challenges, particularly by emphasizing a rural-oriented strategy. The author labours to show that Charan Singh is neither the representative of the rural rich nor the champion of Jats alone. Therefore he is neither a kulak nor a believer in caste. But, then, Charan Singh's budget has not attacked the industrialists, it is inflationary and goes against the urban middle class and urban and rural poor.

The seeming cession in the agricultural inputs will work against even the middle class peasant since the market is controlled by *banias*. Whatever concern there may be for the small peasant is evident only in the intention to consolidate land holdings for commercialization of agriculture.

The Janata Party's emphasis on rural development and the small farmer is in line with the World Bank's strategy initiated after 1973 by Robert S. McNamara, the president, to achieve a fair deal for rural areas which will be beneficial to a metropolitan capital. *Small is Politics* does not mention this. The author takes it for granted.

Franda's claim that India has no scope for revolution will be contested by communists of all times and shades. He is correct in saying that the Janata Party's strategy and particularly that of Charan Singh will alienate the Muslims and Harijans and this only increases the possibility of a revolution.

—RAKESH GUPTA

Schizophrenia

MY TRUE FACES
by CHAMAN NAHAL
Vision Books
Pages: 235; Price: Rs 30

E. M. Forster, whose birth centenary falls this year, once commented that during the Raj, Britain sent to India more administrators; soldiers and money-makers than scholars and writers to understand and write about the life and culture of the Indian people. With his *A Passage to India* a new vista was opened up and many more serious attempts followed leading to a good bulk of English literature by Indian authors today.

But not many attempts are authentic and first-hand because a distant and detached view is bound to be different from that of one who is part of the milieu. Of the handful with a claim to intimate knowledge of India's middle class life today, Chaman Nahal is undoubtedly one. That he has the capacity to offer what can be termed as original material has already received recognition in the form of an award from the Sahitya Kala Akademi.

The dichotomy of the educated Indian's life is the central theme of Nahal's new novel, *My True Faces*. It is the story of diverse pulls that appear in the individual as well as collective life as a result of different value-scales and attitudes.

The main characters are Kamal Kant, a university teacher who is brought up in a tradition-bound middle class family and his wife Malti who has a western bent of mind. Around their lives is woven a chain of events which leads to a clash between the orthodoxy of one and modernity of the other and a separation between them appears inevitable.

Graphic: The tensions Kamal experiences and a few finely etched cameos are the highlights of *My True Faces*. For instance, his deep attachment for his dead grandmother is brought out vividly. During the moments of his deepest frustration he visits the *peepal* tree which to her was a source of courage and strength. Narrations of the busy railway platform and the city suburb and the view it offers of the far-off city skyline, are rendered with imagination.

But a few incongruities have crept in. How Malti's presence at her uncle's home for days together can be hushed up in spite of a report about her disappearance lodged with the police goes unexplained. Also, the hero refuses the siren, the Ghaziabad lady doctor but rushes to the red light district soon after. Again, is the lack of a western type of commode a factor forceful enough among others to lead to a conjugal rift?

The author's attempt is nevertheless commendable both for its poignancy and appeal. A stamp of authenticity as opposed to a kind of window-dressing marks the work.

—AJIT KUMAR DUTTA

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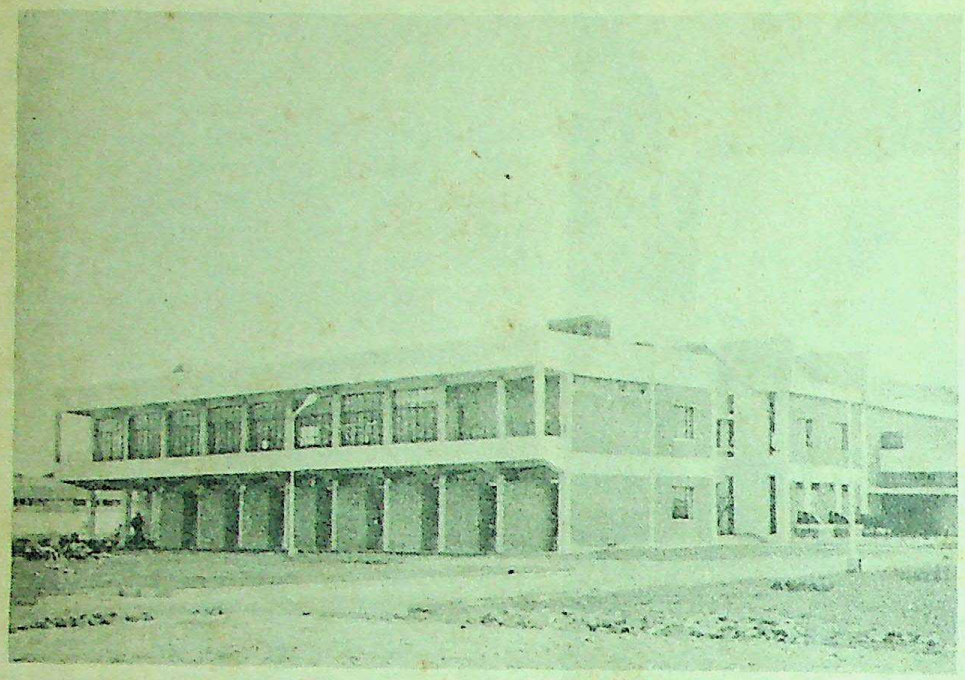

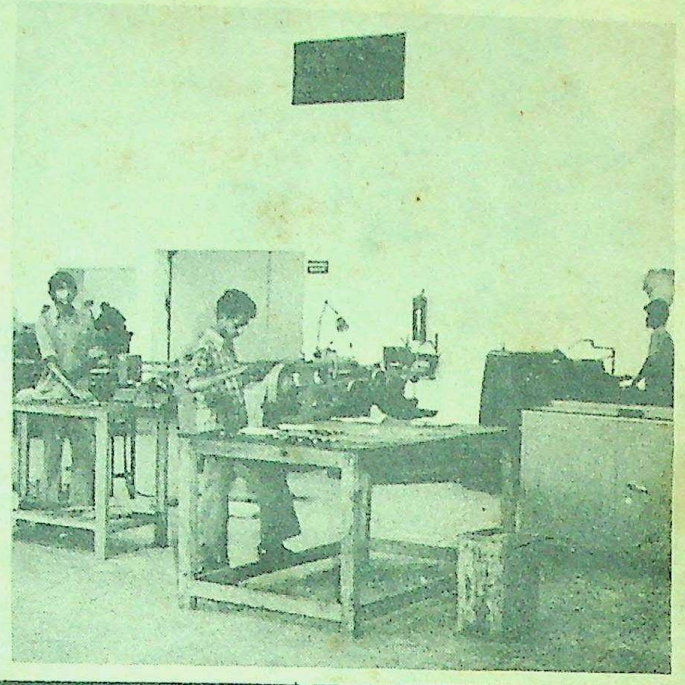

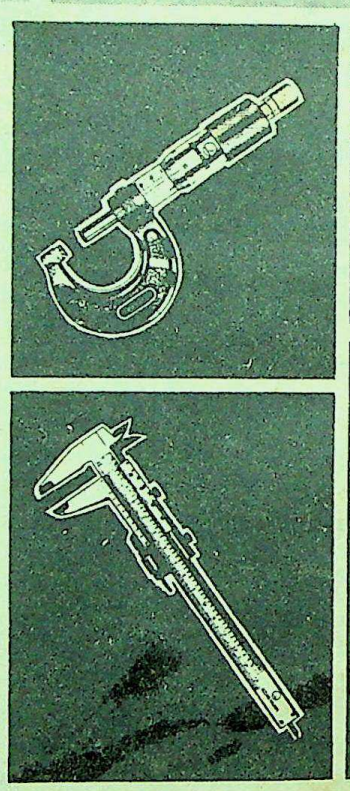

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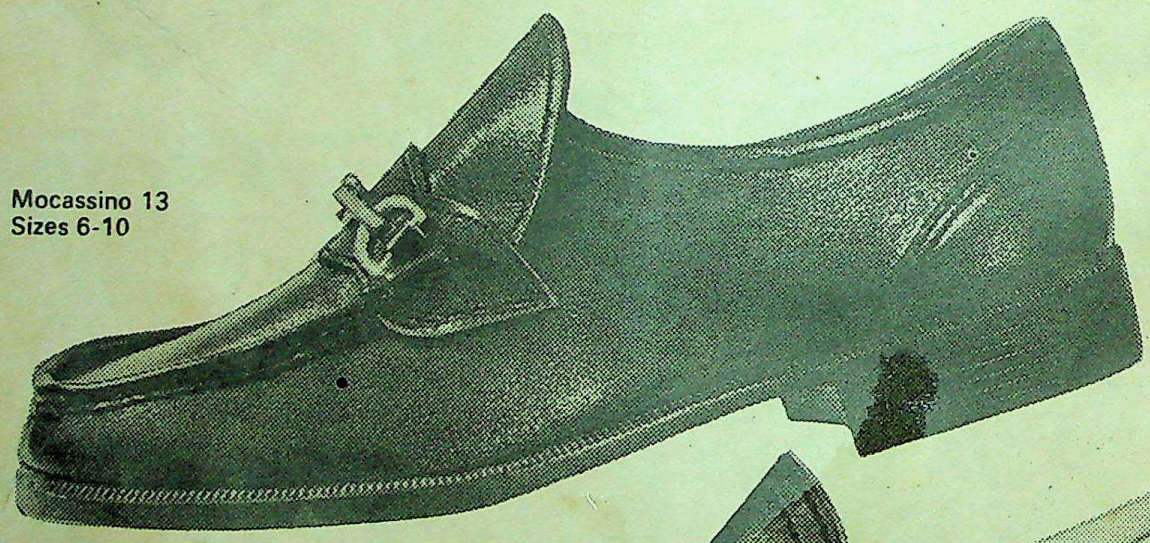

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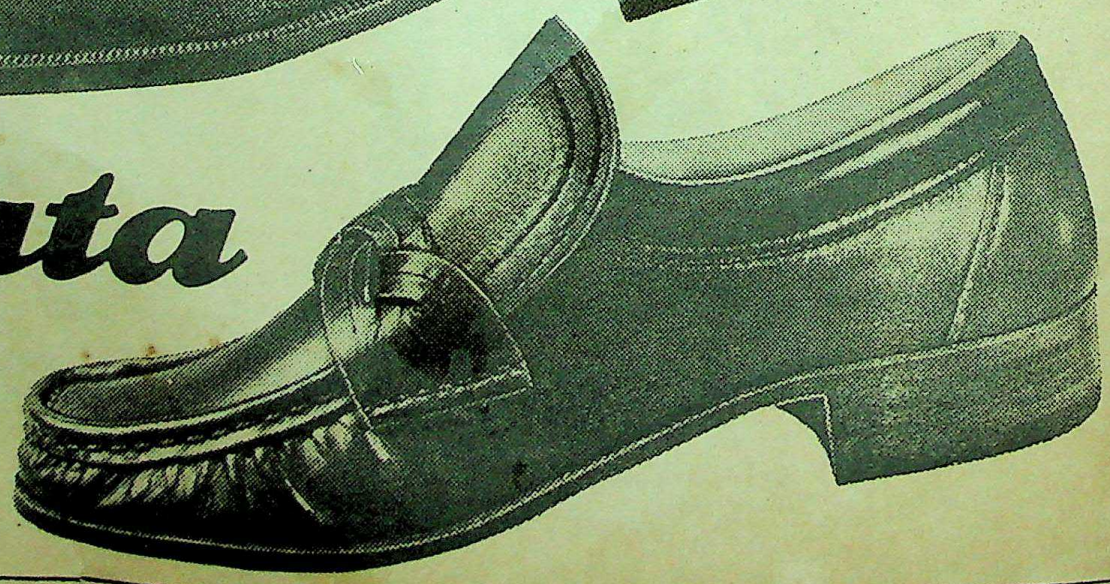

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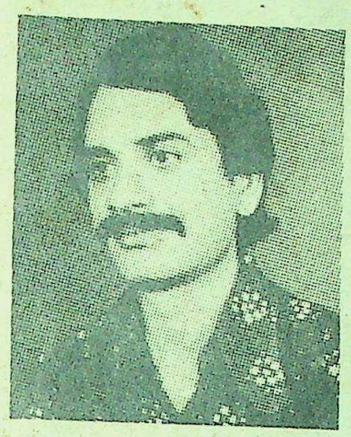

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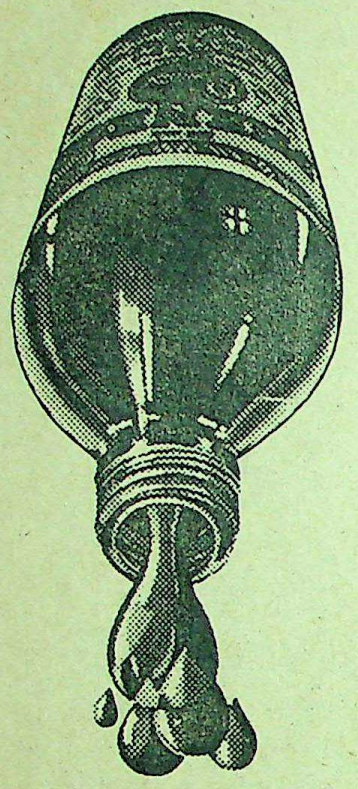

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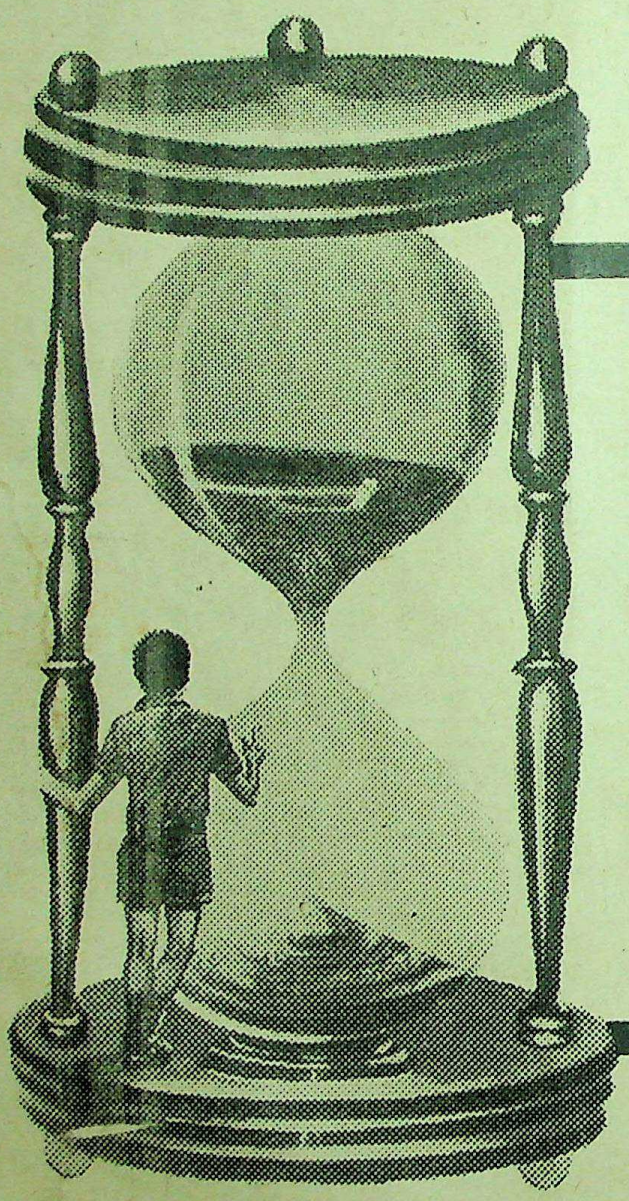

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SUNDAY VOLUME 7
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AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

July 8, 1979

The country is heading for a first rate economic crisis with an annual 29 per cent inflation rate staring it in the face. The blame for this must lie on the shoulders of an inept and sectarian Finance Minister and his inefficient Cabinet colleagues running the other economic Ministries. With the Janata disintegrating, it is everyone for himself and the devil take the poor, says KEWAL VARMA.

Kalpana, three times winner of the Karnataka Government's best actress award, died on May 11, 1979 in mysterious circumstances. While her family has suspected foul play, the police reports stated that she had committed suicide by taking sleeping pills. Others are confused after seeing her diamond ring sans the stone, wondering if she had swallowed it. RIMA KASHYAP investigates.

Did you know that Goa, now a heady seaside health resort, was once the battleground of a secret spy war ? About four decades ago the German Consul in the neutral Portuguese colony, discovered to be a spy, was kidnapped with his wife, forced to reveal secrets and killed. Shortly afterwards, a party of wartime British veterans from Calcutta was assembled, and sent to Goa on another secret mission — to destroy four German and Italian spy ships in the Goan harbour. MARIO CABRAL e SA recreates the suspense, horror and excitement of those stormy days.

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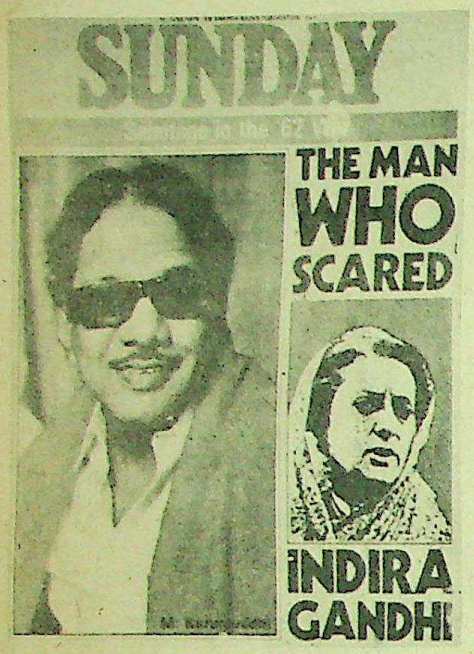

Better late

MRS GANDHI's ouster from Parliament, the breakaway of her once-staunch supporter, Devaraj Urs, and MGR's betrayal of her over Thanjavur, are eye-openers enough for Mrs Gandhi to realise it is time for her to quit politics. Her persistent political manoeuvring only proves the adage : "A woman's greed knows no bounds".
M. Dhanapalan, Rourkela.

NOT only did Kalaignar Karunanidhi learn his political craft at Periyar EVR's feet ("He learnt his craft at E. V. Ramasamy Naicker's feet", June 10) but so too almost every other politician in Tamil Nadu, for which reason Tamil Nadu politics has been relatively unaffected by national events. The photograph of the late Chief Minister Arignar Annadurai pointing to Anbil Dharmalingam, the DMK candidate for the Thanjavur byelection, with Kalaignar Karunanidhi was a pleasant surprise.
V. A. Poonkodi Selvan, Thiruvaiyaru.

THE Madras astrologer P. T. Sundaram ("Yes and No", June 10) says : "She (Mrs Gandhi) certainly would have won in Thanjavur but her victory would have created fresh problems for her". This ambiguous statement appears ridiculous without any supporting astrological facts. It is a pity that Prof Sundaram has not noticed the sixth house of the native, a guiding factor which clearly indicates Mrs Gandhi's inability to contest the byelection. Further, how can Saturn, being the Lord of Justice, allow the native to escape the verdict of law during his own period?
M. Bhasker Rao, Lucknow.

NOT Karunanidhi ("Hush-hush meetings in Delhi", June 10) but the Urs-MGR combine defeated Mrs Gandhi. You have given undue prominence to Mr Karunanidhi, in explaining why Mrs Gandhi backed out. Mr Karunanidhi now depends on agitations to keep up his popularity. In his interview ("I am glad I defeated her") he complains that MGR had denied permission to set up a statue of EVR near the Sankaracharya's *math* in Kanchipuram. This was for good reasons. Had a statue of EVR been erected there, it would definitely have offended the Hindus and provoked a conflict between the Hindus and atheist followers of EVR.
Ramanathan M. S., Tiruninravur.

I WOULD have liked Mr Karunanidhi to speak about the terror that was let loose on the staff of CMC Hospital, Vellore and the kind of punishment that was awarded to agitating graduate teachers during his rule. Mr Karunanidhi's political wisdom would never have been doubted had he resigned as soon as the Emergency was declared. But he stayed put until he was finally unseated by Mrs Gandhi. What is Mr Karunanidhi's reply to the charges brought forward by C.G.K. Reddy about the misuse of power during the Emergency ?
S. A. Alagarasamy, Madras.

MR M. KARUNANIDHI's accusation of corruption against MGR ("What I was fighting for in Thanjavur", June 10) is not simply a case of the pot calling the kettle black, but a pot covered with layers of soot, calling the kettle black. It is common knowledge that during Mr Karunanidhi's tenure as Chief Minister, corruption was systematised. One could get admitted to a medical or engineering college by paying a fixed bribe. MGR may be a *nautanki*, but he is now Chief Minister, just as a grocer's daughter is now Prime Minister of Britain; to refer to them with such names is in poor taste.
A.R.R. Narayanan, Rourkela.

KARUNANIDHI did nothing to better the lot of farmers during his tenure. He raised the price of electricity from nine paise to 16 paise per unit. He was also responsible for the rise in rice smuggling and the scarcity of rice in Tamil Nadu. MGR, on the other hand, has been trying hard to assuage the hardship of farmers, and done fairly well.
K. Elanthirayan, Madras.

Fascist 'culture'

"THE ambitions of the RSS" (June 10) by Madhu Limaye is an eye-opener. Mr Limaye has left no stone unturned to expose the shameful role of the RSS, which in recent years has emerged as a threat to national integration and development. Under the garb of nationalism and cultural awareness, it is playing a dubious role. It should mend its ways and act as a liberal cultural organisation without dabbling in fascist politics.
Soubhagyabanta Maharana, Bolangir.

ACCORDING to Mr Limaye, the RSS is drawing inspiration from the Nixon-Kissinger-Brzezinski-Carter line. He also states that the RSS wants friendship with China because America supports China. This is not denied. But when the USA 'tilted' towards Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pak conflict, did the RSS support Pakistan? He also claims the RSS used Subramaniam Swamy to denigrate Janata leaders. Considering Mr Swamy's attacks against Mr Vajpayee, this would mean the RSS is unhappy with the latter. But Mr Limaye contradicts himself by stating that any criticism of Mr Vajpayee, no matter how mild, is resented by the RSS.
Sudhendu Ranjan Pandey, Bhagalpur.

THE picture showing the RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras as a woman rocking a baby (Morarji Desai) in her arms ("Mother India ?", May 20) is not, as you would have us believe, the handiwork of the RSS. The picture was made by an ardent socialite who had attended the All-India Angrezi Hatao Sammelan at Nagpur. The artist had shown the picture to "Netaji" (Raj Narain) while he was addressing a Press conference. Besides, how a picture showing Deoras as a woman would gladden members of the RSS, eludes me.
A. K. Sharma, Nagpur.

Bank on husbands

MISS S. CHATTOPADHYAYA's letter (Opinion, June 10) reminded me of my own experience with a similar private bank, with its headquarters in Delhi. After taking all the trouble to go for the interview, it was disappointing to see that the interviewer had no intention of giving me a job at all. He asked me as to why I needed a job at all when my husband was earning enough to feed me and my child. If they are of the view that girls with earning husbands have no right to seek jobs, why was this not made clear in the advertisement itself ? Another friend of mine who suffered the same fate at an interview for a bank officer's job in Bangalore was asked why she was so greedy for more money when her husband was a bank officer himself. It is high time women resisted such humiliation.
R. Devi, Bombay

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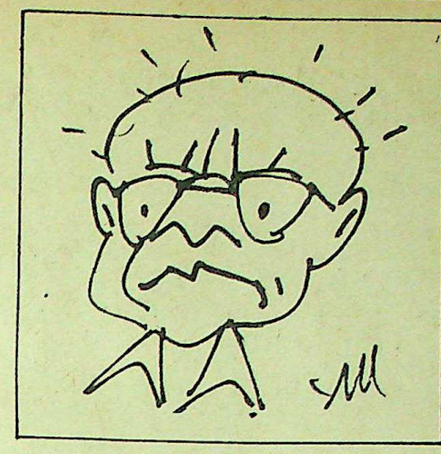
Naughty baby

M. O. MATHAI's "Nobel words" (Opinion, June 10) was amusing enough to be included in "Humour in real life". Rajiv Gandhi, apparently a very docile and non-committal person, was either asking for some reaction from Mathai, which goes to credit his sense of humour, or was just being plain honest and dumb in the interview ("Rajiv Gandhi answers", May 13), which reflects, as Mathai so bluntly put it, the size of the brain his head contains. In any case, Mathai was provoked.

Now, this does not speak much of the "goodwill that he still retains towards Rajiv", nor does it prove his statements about Rajiv in his book to be true. On the contrary, it destroys the credibility of his story. Maybe Mathai hoped to get away with certain allegations concerning Rajiv in his book, not realising that Rajiv was no more a cry baby and had something to say for himself. Mr Mathai, one can be sure, was not one bit amused. He was insulted.

Mitali Gupta, Secunderabad



M. O. MATHAI says in his letter that even for an adult, memory is in direct proportion to the size of the brain. Any neuro-surgeon will tell you that this is utter nonsense, that no person, however brainy, is likely to retain for long, events of a routine and inconsequential nature. But then, writing nonsense has become a prerogative of Mr Mathai.

R. Ravichandran, Madras

Rank incompetence

IT IS shameful that responsible high-ranking officers in the Indian Army on whom depends the security of this country, lack competence and integrity and do not hesitate to bring disaster to their country in exchange for wine, women and wealth. The extract "Sabotage in the 1962 war" by Lt Col J. R. Saigal (retd) (June 10) should serve as an eyeopener to everyone in service, and every citizen of India. The examples of sabotage cited in the extract should be inquired into by the Government, and the Armed Forces' administration should be cleansed. Admittedly, excessive political interference in the army makes it ineffective and irksome, but it should not be immune from a system of checks and balances.

Jasvinder Singh, New Delhi.

LT COL SAIGAL's historical narrative, if it can be so called, is an incoherent compound of personal attacks on commanders, senior and junior officers and even NCOs. As a former gunner, he takes devilish glee in swivelling his gun on all except himself. How the amorous acts of military intelligence officers, or their love for booze, can be the subject matter of the NEFA debacle is beyond our comprehension.

Jahan Das and Kartick Chandra Das, Calcutta.

First languag

NEELAKANT PATRI's article "North Eastern States take up the cudgels" (May 6) helps to focus attention on the indispensability of English as an essential language in India. English besides being the mother tongue of several thousand Indians, is also the de facto official and academic language. Again, English is almost the mother tongue of those living in the North Eastern States, who are confronted with a choice between a number of undeveloped dialects and English. We should accord English its legitimate status.

C. O. Sadasivan, Trivandrum

IF AFTER so many years of Independence, a few tribal groups do not learn a language recognised in the Constitution, it certainly isn't the fault of the Government. I am not aware of the number of years Mr Patri has spent in the North Eastern States, but as one who has lived here for four decades, I can say that notwithstanding English becoming the "official language", it is used only by the elite and not by the masses.

B. K. Mandal, Bongaigaon

THE attitude of the West Bengal Government towards English is fast becoming an enigma. On May 9, 1977, I attended the Rabindra Purashkar awards ceremony. The gathering was addressed by, among others, Mr Jyoti Basu and Prof Sambhu Ghosh. While Mr Basu explained the need for the introduction of Bengali at all levels, with which I agree, Prof Ghosh expressed his unhappiness at the fact that Bengalis very often use English while talking. Yet, he praised the attempts of a foreigner, Dr Dusan Zbavitel, to master the language of Tagore and Nazrul. I fail to understand his logic. If we praise a foreigner for learning our language, we must also praise a Bengali for learning a foreign language.

Rathindranath Chattopadhyay, Calcutta.

Illustration /Ahi Bhusan Malik

Generally absurd

LT GEN GILL has achieved the impossible ("Are Generals above the law?", May 20). At least over his misdemeanour, the Government, the Opposition, and the Fourth Estate are of one mind — a rare thing to come by! All of them are ardent champions of freedom of expression, and yet believe members of the Armed Forces should not express their views. But why? Political standpoint and activism are not one and the same thing. Ajoy Bose has quoted regulations which were framed in the colonial past. We do not hesitate to amend our Constitution, but why such Bourbonism only for the Armed Forces? We have gurus advocating free sex, journalists extolling the virtues of instant gratification, luminaries preaching urine therapy; but when a cranky brasshat makes a stupid comment, why the dickens can't it be ignored?

Mr Bhupesh Gupta should not be unaware that in the USSR Party membership is encouraged in the Forces (which are, albeit sectarian, politicised all the same). Yet when he goes into tantrums over an inconsequential utterance from a person who is intellectually even more inconsequential, surely he does not show his professed concern for fundamental human rights! Neither does the Government, nor does Ajoy Bose.

Brig Gopal Bose (retd.), Madhupur.

A stinker

IF RAJNEESH finds the culture of Pune stifling ("Pune stinks", June 10) he is welcome to quit the city. He is a hypocrite who professes the anti-culture of degeneration in the name of spiritualism to unassuming westerners, but has failed to impress the local population. The hypocrite in him stands exposed when he persists in his harangues against the heritage of the country on its very soil. Only the refined cultural ancestry of the city, and the country, prevents people from throwing dropouts like him out of India.

P. G. Vijairaghavan and K. Krishnan, Pune.

Religious killing

THANKS to Associated Press for the exclusive photographs of executions in Iran ("Iran executes", June 10) under the regime of the religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who was called the "JP of Iran". As far as I know, our JP is neither a religious leader nor a killer. It will be several generations before the Ayatollah achieves the eminence and nobility of our JP, simply because a person who presides over a wave of senseless executions fulfils no role of a religious leader.

Amrit Lall, 24 Parganas.

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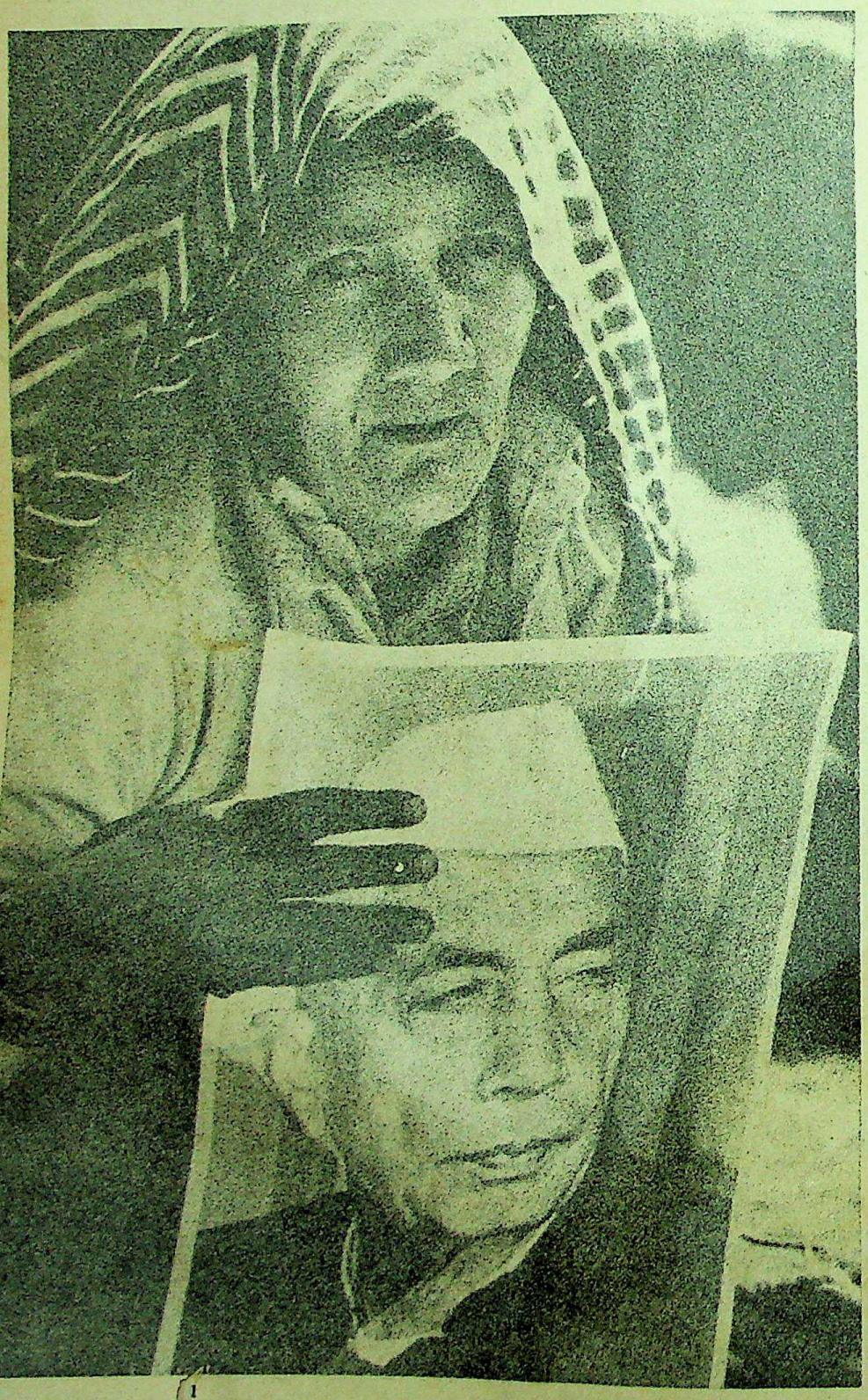
The Guilty Men Behind the Rising Prices

To start with, Finance Minister Charan Singh must go

By KEWAL VARMA



Raghu Rai

THE country is beginning to pay the price. Two years of total mismanagement and reckless economic policies have brought the day of reckoning for the Janata Party very near. The dry powder of an economic crisis has been accumulating for quite some time. But it has been left to Chaudhury Charan Singh to ignite the powder with his archaic, parochial "Baghpet" economic philosophy. In the last four months during which he has been the country's Finance Minister, the annual rate of inflation has been 29 per cent. The official wholesale price index increased from 183 on February 10 to 200.6 on June 9: a 9.6 per cent increase in four months. During the corresponding period last year, the index increased by merely 1.2 per cent, from 181.4 to 184.6, proving that the current price increase is not seasonal. Nor is it just a coincidence that the present inflationary bout started within two weeks of Charan Singh becoming the Finance Minister. If the present trend is not tempered, Charan Singh will have gifted to the country a record inflation. What is worse is that it is a pure and simple man-made inflation.

The main cause of the present inflation is that too much money is chasing too few goods and the excessive expansion in money supply has been caused by huge budgetary deficits. In the first two years of Janata rule, the total budgetary deficits added up to Rs 2,525 crores (This does not include the Rs 555 crores of accumulated deficits by the States.) In the current financial year of Chaudhury Charan Singh's regime, measures taken by the Central and State Governments so far have created a built-in budgetary deficit of over Rs 2,500 crores. This consists of about Rs 1,370 crores of uncovered gap in the Central budget and Rs 700 crores due to increase in prices of imported crude and petroleum products and various wage increases granted so far. In addition to this yawning budgetary deficit, the total market borrowings of the Central Government are planned to increase by Rs 200 crores this year. Unless credit to the private sector is further cut, the increased market borrowings

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are invariably financed by created money.

In fairness to the Janata, it must be said that it inherited a highly mismanaged monetary economics from the previous Indira regime. Mrs Gandhi's 1975 anti-inflationary package, though draconian and highly iniquitous, did restore equilibrium and order in the economy. The oil shock was also absorbed. In itself, it was a great economic feat, with few parallels in the non-socialist, non-oil-producing world. But then came the Emergency and with it the emergence of Sanjay. He laid down the outlines of the 1976 budget, which was the most irresponsible budget in the fiscal history of the country. Instead of mobilisation, there was in fact demobilisation of resources. The only mobilisation of resources undertaken in the Emergency year of 1976 was a futile search for hidden gold in a Jaipur fort.

As a result of the 'Sanjay budget' all the so-called economic gains of the Emergency were wiped out. The money supply expansion which was contained by the 1975 anti-inflation package, again started getting out of hand. It increased from 11.3 per cent in 1975-76 to 20.3 per cent in 1976-77. The Janata Government made only a half-hearted attempt to bring the situation under control. The rate of the money supply expansion in 1977-78 was about 17 per cent, and this went up to 18 per cent in 1978-79. If the current economic policies continue, the money supply expansion in the current year could be about 25 per cent. In the mean time, the accumulated heat of uninterrupted excessive money supply expansion of the last three years has already started displaying its after-effects in the shape of 29 per cent annual rate of inflation.

But why have prices started rising only now when the money supply has been expanding for the last three years? The answer is simple; it has been given by the Janata Party President Chandrashekhar himself: "There is a crisis of confidence in the country". The Janata Government has lost its credibility. More than anything else, it has lost on the psychological front. As a result, an inflationary psychology has gripped the country. In economic terms, the inflationary psychology incerases the velocity of money i.e. the rate of circulation of money. Excessive expansion in money supply with accelerated circulation of money compounds its inflationary impact. Under the inflationary psychology everybody, the consumer, the trader and the manufacturer, tends to hoard, obviously, according to their respective capacities. This only accentuates artificial shortages and further stokes the fire of inflation.

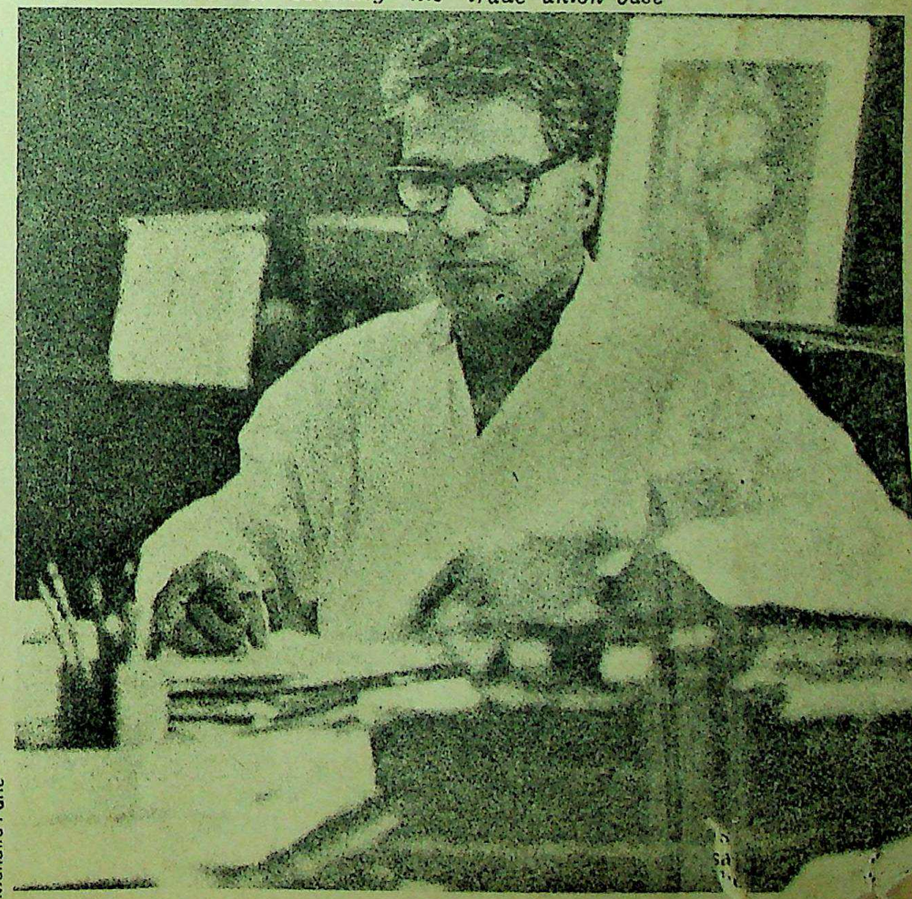
The man-made shortages are further compounded by a virtual total collapse of public sector management in the key economic sectors of railways, coal, power, ports and steel. Though all are under one Government, we witness the strange spectacle of one department blaming the other. The railways complain that they do not have sufficient coal and power, the coal people complain that they are being let down by the railways, and power stations complain that they are not getting coal and the railways are not doing their job. For the past nine months, a monitoring sub-committee of the Cabinet is supposed to be going into the problems of these sectors. Apart from asking various departments to put up notes, it has done pretty little. In the mean time, the vicious circle is becoming more and more vicious, holding the whole country to ransom.

> If the present course is not tempered Charan Singh will have gifted to the economy a record inflation of 30 per cent or more.

Railways

What's wrong with each of these sectors? Let's take them one by one. The railways carried 212.6 million tonnes of freight in 1976-77. In the first year of the Janata rule it came down to 210.8 million tonnes, and in the second year to 198.9 million tonnes. The beginning made in the third year indicates that there will be a further slump. How helpless the railways are cannot be better illustrated than by quoting the latest Press handout of the Ministry of Railways. It says : "Various factors, mostly beyond the control of the railways, affected rail operations resulting in loss of revenue-earning traffic during April, 1979, the first month of the current financial year. Mechanical breakdown in the Central India and Talcher coalfields, labour strikes in certain Bengal-Bihar collieries, shortage of power in the washeries affecting movement of raw coal to the steel plants, breakdown of reclaimers at Bacheli for about 10 days and accumulation of ore stocks at Vizag port restricting loading potential for movement of iron ore for export, and immobilisation of 2,000 wagons for more than a fortnight in the Jamshedpur area on account of disturbances, were some of the factors. Rail operation in the eastern sector remained interrupted on account of various agitations and wild-cat strikes by the railway staff. As a result of these factors, the railways moved only 15.21 million tonnes of the originating revenue-earning freight traffic during April, 1979,-as against 17.06 million tonnes moved during April, 1978. The approximate number of passengers booked in the month of April, 1979, was 256 millions, a drop of 46.64 millions compared to April, 1978. Both suburban and non-suburban traffic registered a drop, the former by 19.9 per cent and the latter by 10.5 per cent over the corresponding month of last year".

George Fernandes is securing his trade union base



Mandira Puri

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Drop, drop, drop

Now, power. After West Bengal, it is Maharashtra's turn, and as a result, the country's two most industrialised States are afflicted with a power crisis. God forbid, but if the rains are inadequate, practically the whole country will become West Bengal and Maharashtra. Fears that 1979 will be a year of darkness in the event of a monsoon failure, are based on the performance of thermal power stations last year. The generation of electricity of thermal power stations in 1978-79 increased by only 2.8 per cent. The latest bulletin of the Central Electricity Authority admits : "The plant load factor of thermal stations, including nuclear, during 1978-79 declined to about 48.4 per cent from the 1977-78 level of 50.8 per cent". The maintenance and coal supplies to thermal stations have further deteriorated. As a result, there is no hope of reversing the downward trend in the performance of the thermal stations. In a way, the Janata has been very lucky. There have been good monsoons and, as a result, the generation of hydel power increased by 23.9 per cent in 1978-79. This covered the shortfalls in thermal stations. If luck does not favour the country this year, such an option will not be available. In the mean time, the Energy Ministry is trying to live through the crisis through bluffs. It claimed that a new generating capacity of 3022 MW has been added during 1978-79. But the Power Engineers' Association has challenged this claim. According to power engineers, not more than 1800 MW new capacity is ready for commissioning this year.

In coal, about Rs. 1,100 crores of new investment has been made in the last five years. This is in addition to Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 crores of accumulated losses in this period. But where has this additional investment gone? The production in the last three to four years has been hovering round 100 million tonnes. For the last three years, coal production targets have been revised downwards almost every six months.

In steel, there was absolute decline in production in all the integrated steel plants except Bokaro during 1978-79. If production did not fall in Bokaro, it was because it was commissioned last year and its production cannot but pick up gradually. In April last, it was decided to deliberately cut the steel production by eight per cent to build up coal stocks for the monsoon period. But in the last three months, despite the cut in steel production, coal stocks at steel plants increased by only 13,000 tonnes. Since coal movement inevitably slows down during the rainy season, it is feared that with the available coal stocks, the steel production will have to be cut drastically in the coming months. As regards ports, at one time as many as 120 ships were waiting on the high seas as they were not getting berths at ports.

Inefficient, inexperienced ministers

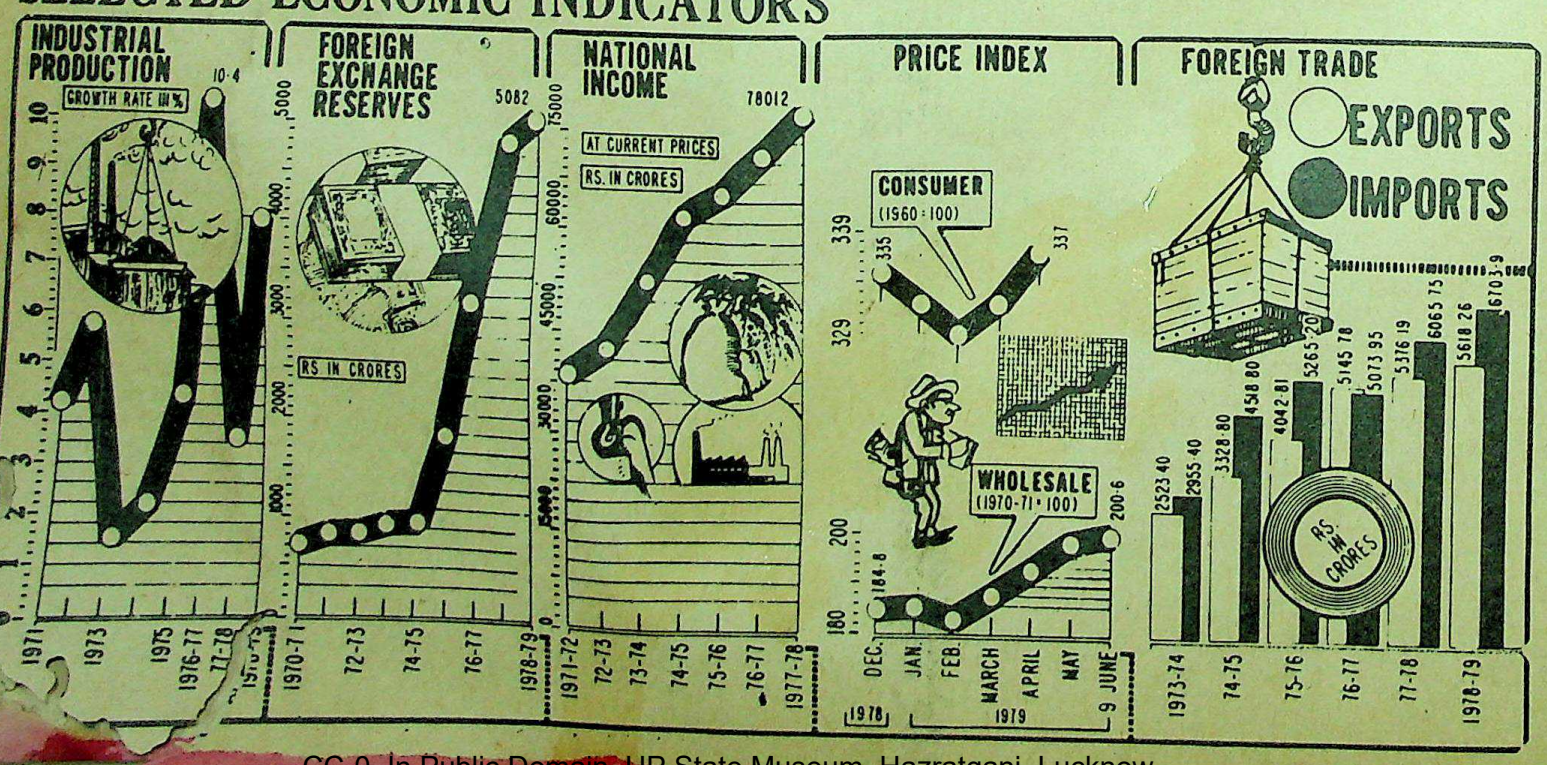
The collapse of the public sector infrastructure can be traced to the inefficiency and inexperience of Janata Ministers managing these departments. The only administrative experience the Energy Minister Ramachandran has is that of a housekeeper at Kamaraj's residence. It is said that he was very good in making coffee for Kamaraj's chosen friends. Before he became Minister at the Centre, Ramachandran did not even have the experience of managing a municipality. But in this world, blind loyalty to great men pays.

Now Madhu Dandavate is a goody goody soft socialist. He promises everything to everybody, and cannot say "no" to anybody. In the first flush of Janata's enthusiasm he got all those involved during the 1974 railway strike reinstated. A strict disciplinarian like Morarji Desai could not stop this; and this affected the morale of railway officers and bred further indiscipline. Gradually, Morarji became desperate. Like King Lear, his whole wrath came down on the innocents—in this case, the Railway Board chairman K. S. Rajan. When Dandavate demurred, Morarji told him : "Either you go or Rajan will go." Rajan went. This has further damaged the morale of railway officers.

Ravindra Varma was quite successful in labour management as long as the CPI(M) was playing ball with the Janata. But now the Marxists are becoming militant, adding to the headaches of Varma. And he has been stabbed in the back by some of his own colleagues, like George Fernandes, who have started instigating labour. As a result, Ravindra Varma's effectiveness as a Labour Minister has reduced considerably. In his helplessness, he can only tell his Cabinet colleagues : "Et tu, Brutus". And what can one say about Chand Ram. Coming from landlocked Haryana, he, perhaps, saw a ship for the first time after he became the Union Shipping Minister.

But of the Ministers of the economy, Biju Patnaik is the biggest disappointment. As Orissa Chief Minister, he had earned the reputation of being a good administrator, particularly in the sphere of economic develop-

SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS



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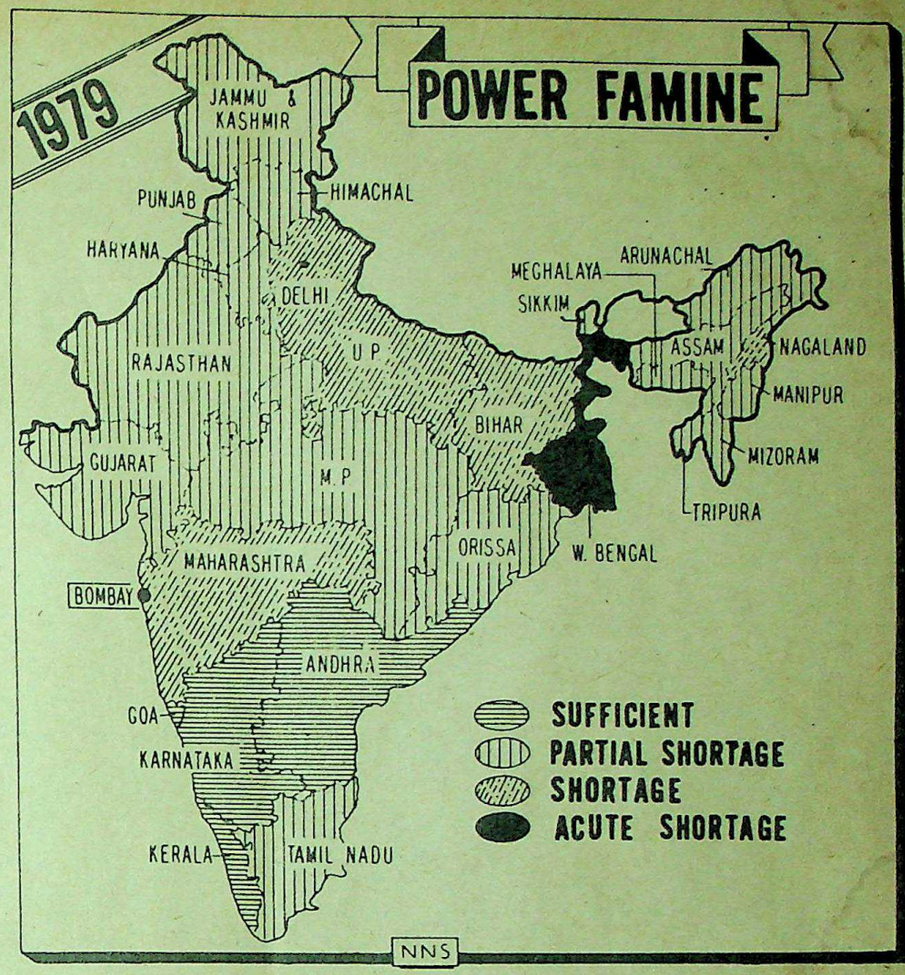
ment. But as Steel Minister, he has proved to be a bluffer and a braggart. It seems that he has no heart in the Steel Ministry; perhaps the Ministry is too small for his ego.

However, perhaps more than the inefficiency and inexperience of individual Ministers, it is the collective incompatibility of the Janata coalition which is mucking up the economy. With the Janata withering away at a growing pace, each constituent and each top Minister is in a great hurry and has become desperate to consolidate his mass base. If the Janata breaks up, which it will, George Fernandes, for instance, will have to fall back on trade unions to survive politically. The Jana Sangh depends on traders, and Charan Singh on kulaks. In fact, this free-for-all game was started in its worst form by Chaudhury Charan Singh when he became the Finance Minister and, of course, the Deputy Prime Minister also. In his budget, he offered windfall gains to kulaks at the cost of urban people. Against all economic rationale and advice of the Planning Commission, he abolished all duties on fertilisers, power tillers and PVC pipes for irrigation, and reduced duties on diesel for pump sets.

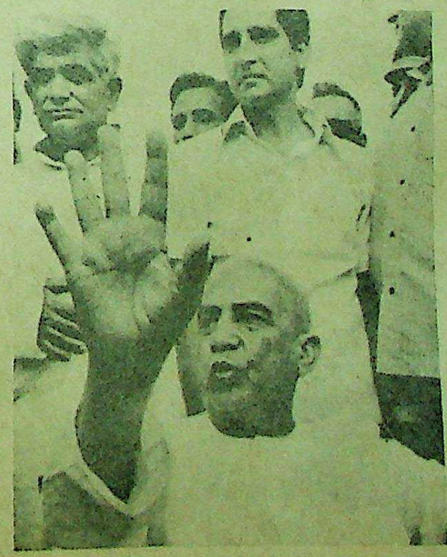
Subsequent to the budget, Charan Singh most skilfully used the credit instruments and his authority over other economic Ministries to transfer gains to his rich farmer constituents. Charan Singh comes from the heartland of the sugar-growing districts of western UP. He seems to have entered into an unwritten understanding with sugar magnates that he would enable them to earn massive profits provided they paid high prices to growers. Thus, when he became the Finance Minister, the wholesale price index of sugar, khandsari and gur was 130; now it has crossed 190. All in four months. The sugar industry was given most liberal bank credits. This created the holding capacity in the industry. Simultaneously, the sugar syndicate, despite massive production, regulated the sugar supplies in such a manner as led to the rigging of the retail sugar prices. When the sugar syndicate was manipulating the prices, the Government became a passive spectator. In fact, Bhanu Pratap Singh, a dyed-in-the-wool kulak and Chaudhury protege, proved too smart for his senior, Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala, and for all practical purposes controls the Food Ministry which is in charge of the sugar department. It is only now that the Government has taken over the monthly releases of sugar. But the sugar syndicate still wields considerable influence over the sugar controller's office.

As in the case of sugar, the wholesale price index of edible oils in the last four months increased from 149 to 172. First, in his budget, Charan Singh announced a basic customs duty of 12.5 per cent on imported palm oil, rapeseed oil, soyabean oil, sunflower oil and palmolive oil. This set in motion a price rise in edible oils. Also, tankers bringing imported edible oils were not accorded priority and were not given berths in ports for weeks together. It is worth investigating who conspirated in this delay. This was enough to create an artificial scarcity of edible oils.

Charan Singh's pro-kulak bias knows no limits. He has now put a ceiling of Rs. 100 crores on the food-for-work programme for the current year. This programme is, perhaps, the only positive economic achievement of the Janata. Even though it was conceived and made possible by the previous Government, the credit for implementation certainly goes to the Janata. Despite leakages and corruption in the programme, it provides employment and increases the wage level of agricultural workers. It is catching up in a big way. Apart from pushing up the wage levels of agricultural workers, it has reduced their abject dependence on rich farmers. Agricultural workers and marginal farmers conserve food from the quota they receive under the programme; as a result, they will not have to go to village moneylenders and rich farmers for food in the lean season at "any price" — either in cash or in kind. This is enough to enrage kulaks. So they have nipped the programme in the bud. When the food stocks have swelled to 22 million tonnes — experts think that beyond 16 million tonnes food stocks are counter productive — Charan Singh will let food stocks spoil in the ■



God forbid, but if the rains are inadequate, the whole country will become West Bengal and Maharashtra, power-starved. The Energy Ministry is trying to live through the crisis through bluffs.



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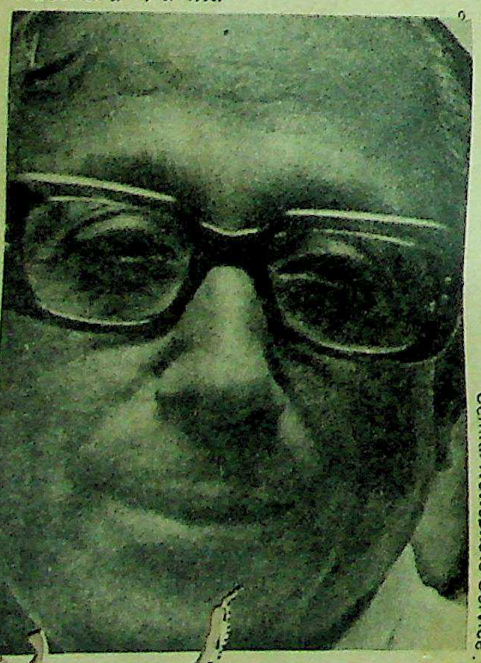
rains and be eaten by rodents rather than by the hungry millions in the rural area. After all, American kulaks also either keep their land fallow or burn their grains in the fields rather than wipe out hunger in the developing countries.

Earlier, the widening budgetary gaps did not deter Charan Singh from increasing the subsidy on fertiliser. Now, he is increasing the subsidy on food. With the big increase in productivity, the cost of production of agricultural commodities has come down this year. Yet, the procurement prices of wheat have been increased, and of rice and cotton are being increased in the teeth of opposition from the Planning Commission. The Agricultural Prices Commission, which recommends these increases, is packed with kulaks and is headed by a kulak-oriented administrator, Avtar Singh Khaloon; there is no representative of consumers in this commission. The Finance Ministry, which normally should play the role of a moderator in such cases, is openly aiding these moves even though in the process it is making its task of fiscal and monetary management more difficult. Charan Singh's keenness to help middle and rich farmers is so strong that he recently raised the limit of Government subsidy for installing irrigation pumps from 5-acre holdings to 10-acre holdings.

A free for all

When Chaudhury Charan Singh is so unabashedly using his governmental position to shower undeserved windfall gains on his constituency, which by no stretch of imagination belongs to the weaker sections of the society, he has no moral authority to deny the same privilege to his other Ministerial colleagues and constituents of the Janata Party. The Jana Sangh has started instigating traders to demand abolition of sales tax. Why should traders pay sales tax, when reports reaching

Ravindra Varma



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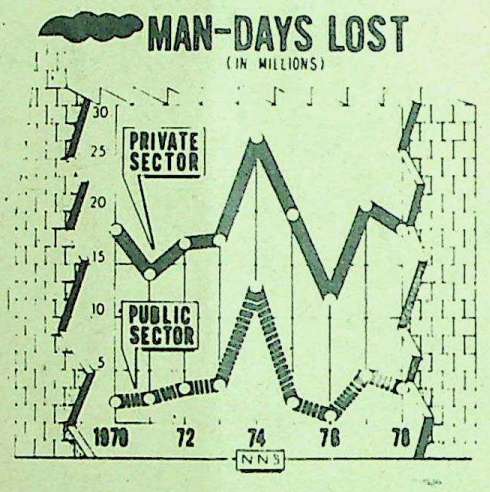
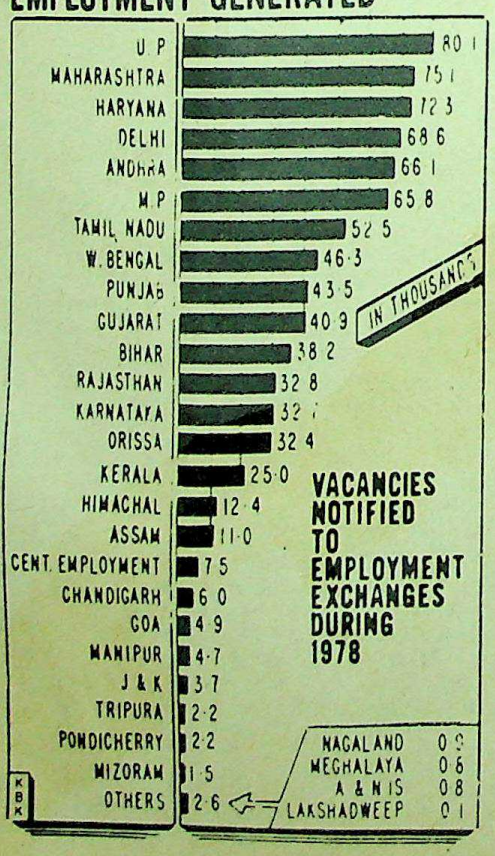
Of the Ministers of the Economy Biju Patnaik is the biggest disappointment. As Steel Minister he has proved to be a bluffer and a braggart.

Vijayendra Tyagi



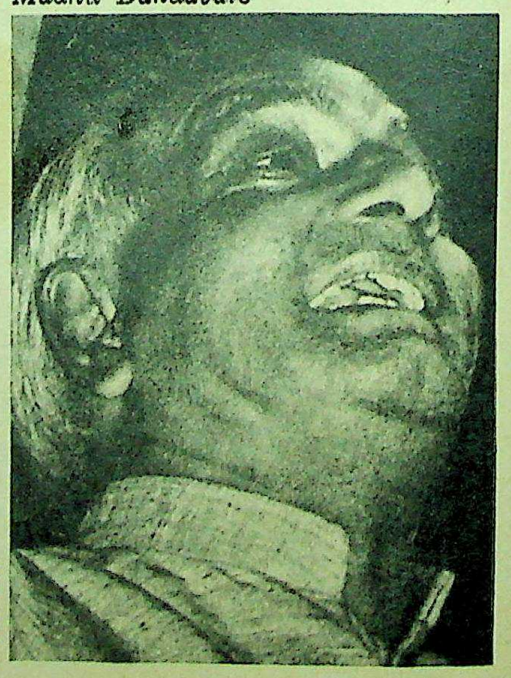


Delhi indicate that in many parts rich farmers are not paying land revenue because they feel they have their own Government? It is reported that they are not returning loans of cooperative banks since the supreme bank in the country, namely the Reserve Bank, is now under the control of their leader, Charan Singh.

Earlier, when the Gujarati mafia had monopolised all the critical economic instruments, it also followed the axiom : charity begins at home. The Gujarati's lust for gold is well known. They had an eye on the nation's gold stocks built with the sweat and tears of the people. The former Finance Minister, H. M. Patel, auctioned gold to reduce prices. But with every auction, the gold price went up and the country, on a very conservative estimate, lost Rs. 50 crores. Anybody with any knowledge of international economics should have known that with the erosion of confidence in the dollar, and the proposed official restoration of gold contribution in the European monetary system, the international prices of gold would inevitably go up, and this would inevitably have an effect on domestic prices of gold in India. But who bothers about the nation's interest and disinterested intelligent projections, when money-making by policy makers and their friends is the primary motivation?

In this free-for-all atmosphere, organised and unionised sections of employees, both white collared and blue collared, cannot be expected to remain far behind. More so when they have such a vocal and irrepressible political patron as George Fernandes in the Cabinet. Bank employees in particular made a mockery of the feeble attempts to evolve a wage policy. At first, Morarji showed his impotent anger. He threatened to issue an ordinance to ban bank strikes. But his Cabinet colleagues, responsive to urban middle class pressure, browbeat him and bank employees got what they were demanding. Then Charan

Madhu Dandavate



Sri Bikash.

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'The Janata will not administer tough medicine'

Dr Raj Krishna, a member of the Planning Commission since 1977, has been an important spokesman of the Janata Government's overall economic policies. At the turn of the year he extolled the Government's good economic housekeeping in a long newspaper article. A brief six months later the tide has turned dramatically and it is an altogether more defensive Dr Krishna who answers AJOY BOSE's questions.

Q *What are the causes of inflation and what are the prospects if the present policies continue?*

A : There has been an unnecessary controversy whether the budget caused the inflation or not. In any country inflation is caused by three basic reasons : the cost push factor, the demand pull factor and scarcity. Fortunately we have not had very much scarcity. But the cost push factors have become very strong because of the recent increase in prices of petroleum products, cement, steel, etc. There is also some increase in indirect taxes because of the last budget. On the demand pull side, the main cause of concern is the 18 per cent increase in the supply of money in the last year, partly due to the very large Government deficit of Rs 1,400 crores. So the present inflation is due to cost push factors and demand pull factors. Which factor is stronger is, I think, a largely academic question, because from the policy point of view, both should be attacked.

Q : What are the components of the anti-inflationary package suggested by you ?

A : We have basically recommended four measures. First, the rate of growth of the money supply should be brought down to 10 per cent, particularly by squeezing commercial credit given to traders. But the productive credit flow should be maintained. Second, the non-developmental expenditure of the Central Government should be cut down by at least 10 per cent. Third, the bank interest rate should be raised from nine per cent to 10 per cent and other interest rates should also be raised upwards. And finally, the prices of four essential commodities, grains, sugar, edible oil and common varieties of cloth must not be allowed to rise at all. Zero inflation in all these commodities is possible because the Government can either have buffer stocks or import these commodities. It is absolutely important that these prices are not allowed to rise. Further, increases in administered prices should be postponed and partial increases in the price of coal, petroleum products, rice and cotton which have been proposed, should be postponed until the price situation has stabilised.

Q : Will the Government really take up these measures?

A : Well, out of the package, it seems that the Reserve Bank of India is already squeezing credit and the Government has also taken action to bring down the market price of sugar and also started releasing more edible oil in the open market. But, so far there has been no action to raise interest rates. And no substantial action is being contemplated to reduce non-developmental expenditure. This is very necessary because we feel that if the Government deficit continues to be large it will not be possible for the RBI to reduce the growth of the money supply. The Government should also be careful not to raise the prices of coal, rice, petroleum products and cotton even if they are necessary.

Q : But do you think that the Janata Government has the political will to implement the whole package?

A : No. I don't think it is possible. This is because of political reasons. Any of the proposed expenditure cuts will adversely affect some interests. All these interests have strong representation in the Government. For instance, agricultural subsidies cannot be cut and probably subsidies for some agricultural products will be raised. Similarly, staff emoluments have also to be raised. Defence expenditure will probably not be reviewed. The expenditure on prohibition will also have to be incurred. All these expenditures cannot be cut because of political reasons.

Q. What would then be the effect of the anti-inflationary package?

A : Well, it would be like administering half the required dose to the patient. The easier medicine like credit squeeze and supply management of essential commodities will be administered. But the more difficult medicine, namely cutting down of non-developmental expenditure and the raising of interest rates, would not be possible.

Q : What then are the prospects and which section of the population would be hit by the inflation?

A : Well, the rate of inflation will rise to 12 per cent in this financial year. And as in all inflationary situations, it will be the agricultural labourers, factory workers, fixed salary earners—all whose incomes do not rise with prices—who will be hit the worst. Whereas manufacturers and businessmen will gain since their incomes rise with prices. Some big farmers will also gain if agricultural prices rise.

Q. What effect will this inflation have on the plan and the growth prospects of the country?

A : Inflation will force the Government to spend more and more money on non-developmental items and less on planned projects. Inflation is always regressive. It does not increase the rate of investment nor does it help the growth prospects of the country.

Q : How desperate do you think is the situation?

A : Fortunately, we have a food buffer stock of 22 million tonnes and foreign exchange reserves of Rs 5,000 crores. This makes it easier for the present Government to deal with the situation than was the case in the early seventies. The situation is bad but we will survive.

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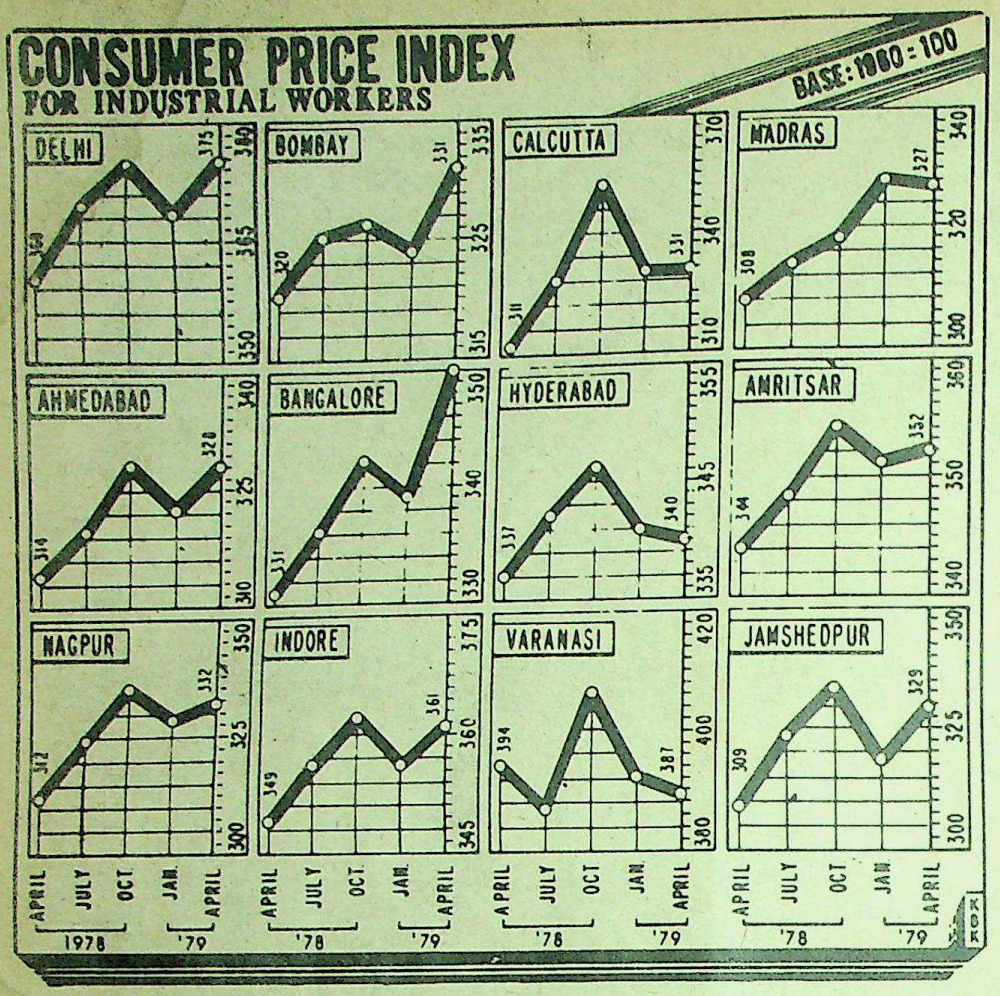

Singh tried to be firm and said that in the public sector he would not let wages increase by more than the 10 per cent ceiling fixed by the Bureau of Public Enterprises. But in the mean time, coal miners demonstrated their unity through a token strike and threatened an indefinite strike. This unnerved the Government. Twelve hours before the strike was to start, it conceded an 18 per cent increase in the coal miners wages. This has opened the floodgates of wage explosion and the so-called wage policy of the Janata Government is in a shambles.

Now a big fuss is being made on the bonus for railwaymen. George Fernandes has made it clear that he will remain in the Government only if railwaymen get bonus. If he goes out of the Government, he will make things impossible for the Government, at least through the railways. Chaudhury Charan Singh, who has been opposing bonus, perhaps realises this. So he is entering into competitive radicalism with George. In his letter to the Prime Minister, he has said that if bonus is given to railwaymen, it cannot be denied to employees of other departmental undertakings and State and Central Governments, including the security forces. This will cost Rs. 600 crores per annum to the exchequer. In addition, the sudden countrywide police revolt cannot but lead to a hefty increase in their wage bill : Punjab, with its panicky response, has already set the pace in this regard.

Back to the blackmarket

One of the most serious failings of the Janata has been the reemergence of blackmarketing during its regime. In the last two years, more than Rs. 200 crores of black money must have been generated through blackmarketing. And in commodities for which the Great Socialist George is responsible. Paper is openly selling at treble the controlled price, cement at double the price, tyres and tubes at 50 per cent higher. Steel prices in the open market are 50 per cent

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Charan Singh (here addressing the kisan rally) is openly partial to his electoral base

higher than those fixed by the Government, and soda ash is selling at about 70 per cent higher than fixed by manufacturers. The value of property and gold has shot up by 100 per cent in the last two years. Cotton prices have come down, but cotton textile prices have gone up. Traders, emboldened by their political power, are indulging in black-marketing with impunity. And our George is not raising even his little finger. Perhaps this is the price he is paying for seeking Jana Sangh support to dislodge Devi Lal. Mr. Fernandes cannot keep his credibility with empty threats alone. Only lately he came out against the rising communal violence but the next day took back a lot of what he had said.

The finance ministry remains most complacent. It has become a victim of its own propaganda that the budget has caused an increase of only 0.8 per cent in the price index. It is trying to deceive itself that with foreign exchange reserves and the food stock, there is nothing much to worry about. But with congestion in ports, it may not be possible to arrange timely imports. Also, the international price of practically every commodity is higher than the domestic price. In other words, the greater the imports, the higher will be the imported inflation. Also, shortages of some non-tradeables, i.e. items which cannot be imported, like power and transport, are becoming serious. After some time it may not be possible to import unlimited quantities of petroleum products and crude to meet the shortfall in the sources of domestic energy. As regards food, it is true that even with one drought there should be no problem of wheat and rice. But we are entering a phase where "not by bread alone" will be literally true. A starving man does not revolt. He submits to his fate. Only a man with something in his stomach demands more. And it is that "more" which is becoming scarce and costly. This "more" is sugar, edible oil, cloth, a house etc. When the current wave of wage explosion runs its full course, this "more" will be increasingly sucked into the whirlpool of hyper-inflation. The Government is also caught between the devil and the deep sea on the question of increasing the prices of coal and petroleum products to economic levels. If their prices are increased now, it will only add to the inflationary psychology. If the increases are postponed, budgetary deficits will increase further, and this will also increase inflationary potentials even in the short-term. In the mean time, Chaudhary Charan Singh is so supremely unconcerned with the plight of the consumers that he has said that he cannot guarantee bank credits to launch the public distribution scheme prepared by his colleague, Mohan Dharia.

There is now much talk of an anti-inflationary package. When national interests are suborbinated to sectional interests, God alone can save the country. In fact, even the sectional gains are illusory, since sooner rather than later they are eaten away by inflation. In this free-for-all situation, the only sufferers will be the unorganised majority of the Indian people, and the future generation. Inflation will eat into the growth potential. What makes the situation grave is that as in 1974-75, economic and political crises have converged. The Janata Party is at breaking point; the political and moral authority of the Government is at the lowest ebb; the police are revolting, communal riots have broken out, and the sensitive north-east region is in trouble again. In this situation, a political crisis will feed on the economic crisis and vice versa. There are very disconcerting signs. In the wake of the police revolt and the mounting economic crisis, Morarji has declared that he cannot effectively govern the country without a preventive detention law. If democracy is to be saved, the country indeed needs a 'Veer-Abhimanyu' to break up the 'Chakravyooha'. Alas, 84-year-old Morarji is not equal to the task. He is leading a most incompatible and disorganised team. Behind the facade of a strongman, Morarji will make any compromises to continue as Prime Minister. In 1975, the anti-inflationary package resolved the economic crisis by placing additional burdens on salaried classes and peasantry. The burdens were most unequally distributed, but the country's economy was saved. Somebody has to make the sacrifices this time too. But, in the Janata, who will bell the cat? As a first step, Charan Singh will have to be sacked to save the economy. But who will do it? ■

The only administrative experience the Energy Minister has is that of a housekeeper at Kamaraj's residence. It is said he was very good at making coffee.

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Raj Narain declares independence

And Haryana will be his fort

Vijendra Tyagi

RAJ NARAIN must surely be the most underestimated politician in the country. And the blame for this must, to an extent, be shared by Mr Raj Narain himself: His colourful hyperbole and dramatic style do not exactly conform to the middle class notion of a "respectable" politician, who is expected to be sober, thoughtful, committed and possibly honest too. In fact, the only adjective that does not apply to Raj Narain from that list is "sober" : the others fit him. Not merely this : *Raj Narain has played a crucial role in the recent political history of this country. One is referring not only to his singular victory over Mrs Gandhi, first in the law courts, then on the electoral battlefield. On crucial occasions, Raj Narain has acted as the catalyst, the mover of events that have had significant consequences. Once again, this might happen.*

June has been an important month for Mr Raj Narain, and perhaps it was a sense of history that made him resign from the Janata Party on June 23. It was an interesting time. In the South, Mr Devaraj Urs was getting ready to leave Mrs Gandhi, and set in motion an effort to provide an alternative to both the discredited Janata Party and the discarded Congress(I). The North was in a mess. The Jana Sangh-Congress(O) Ministry in Bihar was already in trouble; Ram Sunder Das was still unable to form a Government. The anti-RSS forces in Bihar were waiting to pounce. And in Haryana, the battle between the Jana Sangh and the anti-RSS factions of the Janata Party was coming to a head. Rajasthan was unsteady. All over, in fact, what might broadly be called the pro and anti-RSS sections of the Janata Party were fighting with an acrimony they had never exhibited in the past, a passion that would surely make it impossible for them to cooperate in the future (although, of course, nothing can be ruled out in the corrupt political climate that exists in the country).

By the end of the month, the coming split in the Janata was even clearer. George Fernandes, who had been calmly ignoring the RSS menace at the expense of all he had stood for, came out with an anti-RSS statement. And Chandrashekhar, whose affection for his Prime Minister had reached such proportions, finally realised that there was a crisis in the country, and the Prime Minister was responsible for it. Bahuguna issued a statement against the RSS, and it was a safe bet that he was preparing to eventually join the revived Congress. Of course, none of this can be directly attributed to Mr Raj Narain's resignation from the Janata Party — but once again, it was Raj Narain who had made the first move, perhaps the decisive move. And the issue he had chosen, the RSS, was the issue that would break the Party.

But the most curious reaction to Mr Narain's resignation was from his supporters. The first question was : Was this a prelude to a general resignation by Chaudhury Charan Singh and his followers, leading to a collapse of the Morarji Government? The answer was available very soon —No. Charan Singh was still not ready to give up power. But it is possible that he might be waiting for an opportune moment, for the right economic issue to arise. It would be more dramatic, would it not, if he resigned on the bonus issue — converting a decision to give railwaymen bonus into another concession to the city at the expense of the village. According to the theorists (and their number is legion in the capital city) Raj Narain's resignation was a trial balloon sent up by the Chaudhury camp. It would be followed by the resignation of about ten MPs. And if even this did not change things in the Janata Party and the Government, the great exodus would start.

Events, some startling, could overtake the theorists. A period of uncertainty, in which the only certainty is the failure of the Government, has begun, and the different politicians could do some unexpected things. There could be betrayal — hardly an unknown element in Indian politics. But what is most likely is that two anti-Morarji-RSS and anti-Mrs Gandhi Parties will emerge within the next few months. One of them will be the Congress, the other the old BLD (what names these Parties eventually acquire is a secret of which only god is aware at the moment). The two could work in harmony in the coming electoral battles.

In the meantime, the ludicrous battle for power in Haryana is the

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dawn which shows the day. Devi Lal and Raj Narain have left no one in any doubt about their intentions : They would rather destroy the Janata Party than allow the RSS to dominate it.

OM PRAKASH describes what happened in Haryana :

THE Bihar drama was reenacted in Haryana. The Jana Sangh, Socialists, CFD and Congress(O) joined hands to oust the BLD Chief Minister, Devi Lal. Much has been and can still be said against Devi Lal's style of functioning but the high-pitched drama which took place in Delhi in the last three weeks of June with the open connivance of the Central leadership can have serious repercussions in the Janata Party in particular and national politics in general.

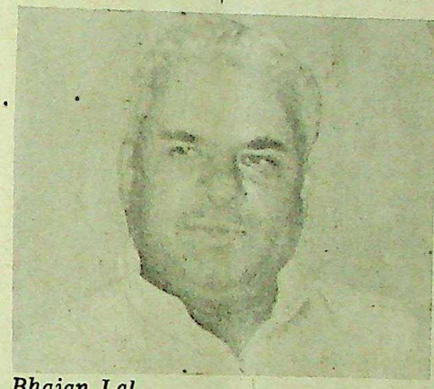
It all started with the fateful decision of Devi Lal to sack four Jana Sangh Ministers, Dr Mangal Sain, Kamla Verma, Ram Lal Vadhura and Bir Singh. There was no immediate provocation for this ill-timed decision. But it was a typical 'Jat' reaction to what had earlier happened in Bihar and UP. Charan Singh advised Devi Lal not to do so but the latter was adamant and complacent that he could easily ride out the storm.

The four ousted Ministers camped at 11 Ashoka Road in New Delhi which is commonly shared by three bachelor MP's. Besides Jhandewala (RSS Delhi office) this is also virtually a camp office of the Sangh. The entire Haryana drama was rehearsed and played out here. After persuading their Central leadership the four Ministers contacted, nagged and persuaded the other constituents of the Janata Party to stage a coup d'etat against Devi Lal. And on June 8 after getting a green signal from his mentor and Party President, Chandrashekhar, Gajraj Nagar raised the curtain. He, along with Bhajan Lal (CFD), Mehar Singh Rathi and Sher Singh (both BLD dissidents) announced his resignation from the Devi Lal Ministry. S. C. Malik, deputy chairman of the State Welfare Board, was also present on this occasion.

The BLD camp was taken aback. Devi Lal himself was touring the inner parts of Haryana distributing the matching grants to the rural folk. An unruffled Devi Lal said in his Jat English "worry not". And thus also spake the ever cool, calm and composed Jagjivan Ram while briefing pressmen about his tour of East European countries. It is nothing new in Haryana politics. Nothing would happen. Little did he know then that exactly two weeks later he would have to throw his whole weight behind his protege Bhajan Lal to get him the CM's seat.

Devi Lal was sure and so were Haryana watchers. But the dissidents under the shrewd leadership of the Jana Sangh high command were more than obsessed by the horse-trading tactics of Devi Lal. They had seen that Devi Lal was a past master at the numbers game. They had been robbed of almost certain victory twice. So they pressed for a fresh confidence vote. Chandrashekhar was closeted with the Prime Minister twice but Mr Desai said; "Nothing doing. I am not going to believe these Haryana MLAs". They had twice wasted his connivance in ousting Devi Lal. Forty-three MLAs paraded before him. But he said not so soon. "Let me come back from USSR." Bhajan Lal went to see off Mr Desai at the airport. He even told this correspondent that the new leader would be elected by him and Chandrashekhar.

R. K. Hegde announced that the Janata Parliamentary Board would discuss the Haryana issue on June 22. Devi Lal got 10 days to manoeuvre. The dissidents got jittery. Even at the rate of one MLA a day Devi Lal could turn the tables. He was capable of even more. The Jana Sangh, however had an ace up its sleeves. Remove the MLAs from the scene. What would Devi Lal barter with ? And that really worked. Twenty-eight MLAs were sent in three groups in air-conditioned luxury coaches for Bharat Darshan. But with a rider. They could visit only the saffron capitals, i.e. Jaipur, Bhopal and Simla. And meanwhile their



Creative Eye

Bhajan Lal

leaders kept on claiming their majority

Devi Lal, for the first time in his chequered career, found himself outwitted. He requested Bhairon Singh Shekhawat to clinch a deal. You scratch my back I will scratch yours. Shekhawat said I have no dissidents. You do. Hence it can't be a deal. A humiliated Devi Lal was rebuffed by Shekhawat who had put his MLAs in luxurious captivity. Devi Lal even made the husband of an MLA issue a rescue cry for his wife. He sent his elder brother, Saheb Ram, to the dissidents' guide, philosopher and friend, Muktiar Singh Malik, to issue an appeal to spare his brother. But before that some loyal bureaucrat had issued a statement from Haryana Bhawan that Malik had been ostracised from his 'khap' (community). Devi Lal even resorted to holding the sarpanchs' meeting, calling upon their elected legislators to return in case they decided to oppose Devi Lal. But nothing worked. The die had been cast. Devi Lal's days were numbered.

Devi Lal, in a desperate attempt, threatened to dissolve the Assembly. When Chandrashekhar took strong exception to his right to do so, he denied having made such a threat. One MLA even quoted the Prime Minister that Devi Lal would not be allowed to dissolve the Assembly. The PM's secretariat did not contradict this assertion. On the eve of the JLP meeting Devi Lal resigned from the leadership but retained the CM's post. It was an abortive attempt to frustrate the MLAs' attempt to pass a no-confidence vote against him. Chandrashekhar again rejected his request to cancel the meeting. Just before the meeting Devi Lal resigned unconditionally. The 72 MLAs unanimously accepted the resignation. The meeting to elect the new leader was billed for the next day. The climax was approaching. Before this Devi Lal had circulated the name of the PWD minister, Lachman Singh, for the new leader. But on seeing the dissension he denied his support.

June 26 was the most crucial. Each faction held its own conclave. The PM wanted Balwant Rai Tayal. Chandrashekhar wanted Gajraj Nagar. Chand Ram wanted Rizak Ram. The Jana Sangh had no nominee. They were looking for the most vulnerable candidate to render their support. At this juncture Chandrashekhar and Jagjivan Ram met Mr Desai. The CRP and army clashes were fresh in their minds. The PM and his protege, H. M. Patel, were the target of the attack. Chandrashekhar, shrewd as he was, lashed out at the PM for not assessing and appreciating the dangers confronting the country. Mr Desai had little to explain. Jagjivan Ram had always waited for such an opportunity. He subtly mentioned the name of Bhajan Lal who had the blessings of Kanti Bhai and Suresh Ram. The only hurdle was Chand Ram who was adamant on Rizak Ram. But he was persuaded on the plea that the atmosphere was not in favour of a Jat candidate.

Bhajan Lal's public image is not enviable, so feel many. There are many skeletons in his cupboard. His detractors can always capitalise on them. So he would be compelled to play second fiddle. What else could the Jana Sangh have wanted? They pocketed another State capital.

In this review it is noteworthy that it was Sunder Singh Bhandari who tilted the balance in favour of Bhajan Lal after Krishan Kant walked out in exasperation and disgust. It was apparent to Krishan Kant that Sunder Singh Bhandari had already decided and was bent upon imposing Bhajan Lal on the Party, though Bhandari was skilfully playing the part of a democratic negotiator to arrive at a consensus. It will be an all Jana Sangh Government from the word go, which was amply evident in his first Press conference which was not only held at Bhandari's house against Bhajan Lal's wishes but, what is more, was addressed by Malik and Mangal Sain.

Tailpiece — One cynic quipped : Now that Bhajan Lal is elected we better amend the Constitution to add corruption and smuggling to the ninth schedule so that both occupations also enjoy protection from the courts of law.

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The impact of Urs

It can be found everywhere

THE expulsion of Mr Devraj Urs by Mrs Indira Gandhi from the Congress which has split for the third time in a decade has ironically at the same stroke prepared the ground for the various Congress factions to come together on one platform against her.

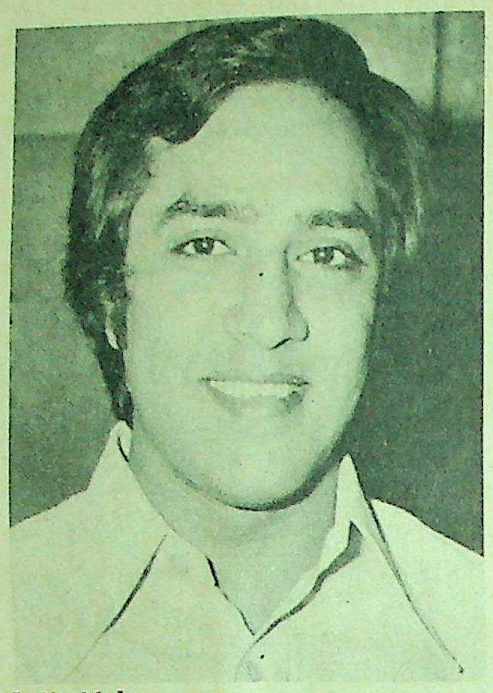
Urs's call for a realignment of political forces has struck a very responsive chord in the various existing factions of the Congress today. Whether it is the numerous dissidents inside the Indira Congress or the Swaran Singh Congress or even the breakaway State factions like the Sharad Pawar group—all are keen to make common cause with Urs to fight against the authoritarian style of functioning that Mrs Gandhi has come to represent.

The unity talks between the two Congresses which were suddenly scotched by Mrs Gandhi at the insistence of Sanjay, have again been reactivated, but this time, without her. While most members in the Indira Congress still remain hesitant about coming out openly against Mrs Gandhi, more and more dissident groups in the various State Pradesh Congress Committees are thinking seriously of the Third Force alternative that Mr Urs has proposed. A few, however, have already come out openly in support of this move. "It is high time that we stopped Mrs Gandhi coming in the way of a revitalised Congress Party just because her son does not want it so", said Mrs Tarkeshwari Sinha, a bitter critic of Sanjay and his caucus. Mrs Sinha who vehemently opposed the emergence of Sanjay in the Congress at the AICC (I) Conference held in April might face expulsion from the Party for her open support of Mr Devraj Urs and her criticism of the non-democratic style of functioning in the Party.

"I remember L. N. Mishra used to say in 1974, when Sanjay started his Maruti, that we should all try to raise money to make his car company a success. Otherwise, he warned, this boy is going to turn to politics and that would be disastrous for the Party and the country. That is exactly what has happened," Mrs Sinha said.

What is interesting is that while the Karnataka controversy had nothing to do directly with him, Sanjay Gandhi seems to be the main issue on which most dissidents in the Indira Congress are united.

The best example is Mr Lalit Maken, General Secretary of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee and one of the most vociferous supporters of Mrs Gandhi, both during and after the Emergency. Mr Maken was responsible for gathering crowds for shouting slogans supporting her. This he did with great zeal and in



Lalit Maken

fact when Mrs Gandhi was being whisked away in a CBI car after her arrest in October 1977, it was Maken who jumped on the car and tried to stop it. What he failed to do, however, was to placate Sanjay who had his own ideas of showing support for Mrs Gandhi. "The main difference beween me and Sanjay was that where he wanted to deliberately provoke violence, I wanted to follow the old Gandhian path of satyagraha", Maken said. Maken was also taken to task after his father-in-law, Mr Shankar Dayal Sharma, at the time of the 1978 split sided with Mr Brahmananda Reddy. Further, his wife, Geetanjali Maken (nee Sharma) was removed from the Presidentship of the National Students' Union of India.

Ironically, Mr Shankar Dayal Sharma made his way back sometime later into the Mrs Gandhi camp while Mr Maken became increasingly alienated from her. An interesting tale which Mr Maken has to relate is the blood donation incident. Evidently, the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee took up a blood donation drive in 1978. They decided to donate blood equivalent to the weight of Mrs Gandhi but ultimately donated four times her weight. For this Mr Maken was praised by Mrs Gandhi. This year, however, when the Red Cross approached Mrs. Gandhi to ask her supporters to donate blood again, she wrote to them saying that Mr Maken had nohing to do with it last year and the Red Cross should approach Mr Jagdish Tytler, a noted Sanjay supporter.

It is not strange, therefore, when the day after the Congress Working Committee decided to set up the ad hoc Committee in Karnataka, Mr Maken held a Press conference denouncing the move and openly supported the stand taken by Mr Urs. He was expelled soon after from the Party.

According to Mr Maken, of the seven General Secretaries in the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee only Mr Sajjan Kumar, one of the juniormost General Secretaries is a staunch Sanjay supporter. "The rest of them are just watching the situation. They are unhappy about the dominance of the Party by Sanjay and support Urs for his stand against him but they are still afraid to take an open stand against him like me," he asserted.

The situation in the other States is very similar. Most dissidents would like to join Mr Urs but are afraid of taking an open stand against Mrs Gandhi. As Maken puts it, "How do you suddenly call Mrs Gandhi a dictator if you have been shouting for so long from rooftops that she was the greatest leader of the country".

The biggest beneficiary of the Indira Congress split has been the Swaran Singh Congress. The Congress (S) which has been lying dormant for so many months has suddenly, within a space of a week, been reactivated. "Devraj has given us a supreme opportunity to revive a united and dynamic Congress which could be a real alternative to the Janata Party", said Mr Chandrajit Yadav who is in almost daily touch with Mr Urs, to work out a strategy for a united front. "My calculation is that if we manage to put up a united platform for Congressmen to come together, at least 40 per cent of the Indira Congress will come over to us", he said. Mr Yadav was also certain that this would also lead to considerable erosion in the Channa Reddy Government in Andhra Pradesh, the only remaining State ruled by the Indira Congress.

The gains for a unified Congress could indeed be immense. Mr Sharad Pawar has already given the green signal for such a move and is also in touch with Mr Urs. If the united front succeeds, the Congress could well govern both Karnataka and Maharashtra and might then succeed in also capturing Andhra Pradesh. In Parliament, a unified Congress could easily dislodge the Indira Congress from being the majority Opposition Party. Mr Urs himself can bring 12 MPs and more from other States are likely to follow suit.

Even in Mrs Gandhi's own camp there are few who are basically against a unified Congress. In the 20-member Congress Working Committee there were as many as 17 who were for unity before Mrs Gandhi forced the unity talks to break down. Except for the three hawks—Mr A. P. Sharma, Mr Pranab Mukherjee and Mr Stephen, all the others were wary of adopting a hard line against Mr Urs. It would be interesting to see how long the few who are with Mrs Gandhi today, stay with her.

AJOY BOSE, New Delhi

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Decency in distress

Eveteasers are doing worse than teasing

PLAINCLOTHES policemen swarm all over the Lucknow University campus to check what has been described as the "eve-teasing scourge" by the District Magistrate of the city, Mr Yogesh Narain. The district authorities were forced to sit up when the traditional form of eve-teasing by passing lewd remarks was replaced with such brazen acts as *dupatta* snatching, back-patting and in some cases even forced kissing.

"We are determined to put an end to the activities of campus terrorists," fulminated the DM. "A handful of hooligans cannot trifle with the rights of a silent majority." It was only a week later that Mr Narain realised the magnitude of the menace he was so anxious to eradicate. No records of residents of the University hostels are available with the Provost. Consequently no action could be taken against students, though it was found that even outsiders had brazenly occupied rooms while hundreds others still stood on a waiting list. Lethal firearms, including country-made bombs, pistols handgrenades and even teargas shells were found in several rooms.

It was also discovered that campus *dadas* served as liaison officers for contractors looking for work on campus. For this they pocketed hefty commissions that went as high as 25 per cent. Even more incredibly, over 100 students armed with fake degrees secured admission into the University at pistol point.

Lucknow University is not the only campus plagued by the campus terrorists, however. Gang warfare, in the words of a senior police officer, has assumed "apocalyptic proportions" in almost every university campus in the State. Students of Kanpur University stormed a police station recently and gave the policemen on duty a sound thrashing for police failure to "protect" law-abiding students. Students of BHU nearly assaulted a State Minister when he refused to meet a student conducting a hunger strike. The police had to wage a pitched battle with armed students before the President of the students' union. Mr Chanchal Kumar, could be arrested. In Bareilly, the Deputy Registrar of Rohilkhand University was gunned down by students inside a restaurant. Pantnagar, still limping back to normalcy after the April 13, 1978 massacre, was witness to a renewed outbreak of violence on November 27 when, there was a clash between two rival groups of Jats and Purabis. In the ensuing carte blanche two students were gravely injured and two professors, Dr Sharma and Dr Golakotta, were precariously poised between life and death for two weeks. A shaken Vice-Chancellor, Mr Mathur ordered the University closed *sine die*. It reopened nearly three months later, after disciplinary action had been instituted against nearly 50 students.

Riotous students of Lucknow University hijacked two mini buses and set them ablaze sometime ago. In another incident, hundreds of students waged a pitched battle with the police who attempted to disrupt the unruly mob even as panic gripped commuters in the city. The students were protesting against the "murderous assault" upon a student by a conductor for allegedly travelling without a ticket.

Universities throughout Uttar Pradesh are in turmoil. Not one of the 17 universities in the State was able to hold its examinations on schedule. Campus violence has risen by 30 per cent over the last twelve months. During the first half of 1978, 7,434 students were arrested in 146 riotous incidents in the State whereas throughout 1977 only 588 students were arrested in 67 incidents.

The trend of violence on Kanpur's campuses assumed monstrous proportions during the Emergency, when one college was discovered to have its own virtual arsenal. There were other trends too: the S. D. Singh Commission of Enquiry was appointed in 1971 to investigate reports of sex abuse on the campuses of Lucknow University and had warned of the existence of a Mafia that either

Sanjay's modesty

IS Mr Sanjay Gandhi in politics or out of it? This is a question which is answered differently by different people. The Congress(I) leaders, including Mr Gandhi's mother, Mrs Indira Gandhi, assert that he is not in politics. The non-Congress(I) politicians say that he is. Mr Devaraj Urs and his supporters say that they have left Mrs Gandhi's Party because of Mr Sanjay Gandhi's interference in the Party's affairs. While this debate is on, Mr Gandhi has been leading Congress(I) demonstrations in various parts of the country and his statements to the Press have been, to say the least, political.

Take June 22, for example. Mrs Indira Gandhi was in Srinagar and her younger son had flown to Calcutta to lead a Congress (I) rally. Mrs Gandhi told newsmen in Srinagar that "Sanjay is neither a member of the Congress (I), nor in politics and his participation in any demonstration is in his individual capacity". While the news agencies flashed this statement by the former Prime Minister, Mr

Tarapada Banerjee

Sanjay Gandhi was telling newsmen at the Calcutta airport that Mr Urs had violated Party discipline by refusing to accept the ad-hoc committee of the State Congress (I) in Karnataka. This surely was not a statement of a person who is not involved in Party politics!

That afternoon Mr Gandhi "participated" in a Congress (I) rally. He was among the five people who went in a deputation to the State secretariat, the Writers Building, and handed over a memorandum to the Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu. If Mr Gandhi had participated in the rally in his "individual capacity", then why was he included in the five-member delegation? Moreover, Mr Basu told newsmen soon after the meeting with the Congress(I) deputation (which included the State unit President, Mr A. B. A. Ghani Khan Choudhury) that he had promised Mr Sanjay Gandhi that he would enquire into the specific cases listed in the memorandum. Did the Congress (I) leaders take a back seat during their talks with the Chief Minister and let the leadership be in the hands of a person who had joined them in his "individual capacity"?

Every citizen in India has the freedom to be a member of a political Party, and if possible, lead it. Then why this hide and seek, Mr Sanjay Gandhi?

S. BHATTACHARYA

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terrorised girls or enticed girls into the flesh trade. Organised copying is yet another irritant to the University authorities. Groups of students are reported to have intimidated professors into leaking examination papers. Invigilators have been threatened and even beaten up. Some students have even taken their answer scripts to their hostels to work in a more congenial atmosphere. In a Meerut college four boys and girls ejected an invigilator, locked themselves inside the examination hall and only emerged six hours later. In Rohilkhand University copying was done so brazenly that a self-constituted *Nakalchi Sena* (Copying Army) chanted slogans extolling the virtues of copying outside the examination hall while their colleagues copied with impunity.

Authorities are alarmed at the increasing involvement of students in political riots. Most of the 500 youths arrested in the Lucknow Youth Congress (I) rally at midnight on May 6 were enrolled students. Aligarh Muslim University and Benares Hindu University are hotbeds of political violence between rival youth groups dominated by the Jamaat-e-Islami on the one hand and the RSS-dominated Akhil Bahritya Vidhvarti Parishad on the other. "Political involvement of active student unionists is almost 100 per cent," according to a police officer. Not a pretty picture at all.

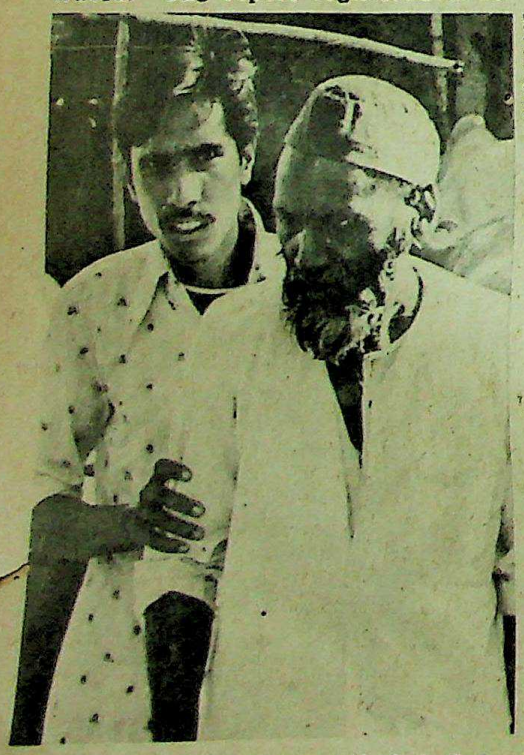
ACHAL MEHRA, Lucknow

The curious case of the stolen buffalo

Starring an ex-Minister of UP

MILCH cattle are a weakness with Ravindra Kishore Shahi, the former Minister for Power and Irrigation in the Ram Naresh Yadav Government and an active RSS man. A recent incident now under investigation by the local police throws some light on Shahi's love of cows and buffaloes.

It was on March 30 that Shahi's servant, Paras Nath Pandey, lodged an FIR with Husainganj police station. The report said that a buffalo belonging to the former Power Minister was missing since 10 a.m. and despite efforts it could not be traced. The report registered under Section 379 said that the missing buffalo was short and had a tail with a black end. So fond was Shahi of his buffalo that he telephoned the District Magistrate, Yogendra Narain, and Senior Superintendent of Police, Sriram Arun to trace his buffalo and restore it to him within 24 hours.



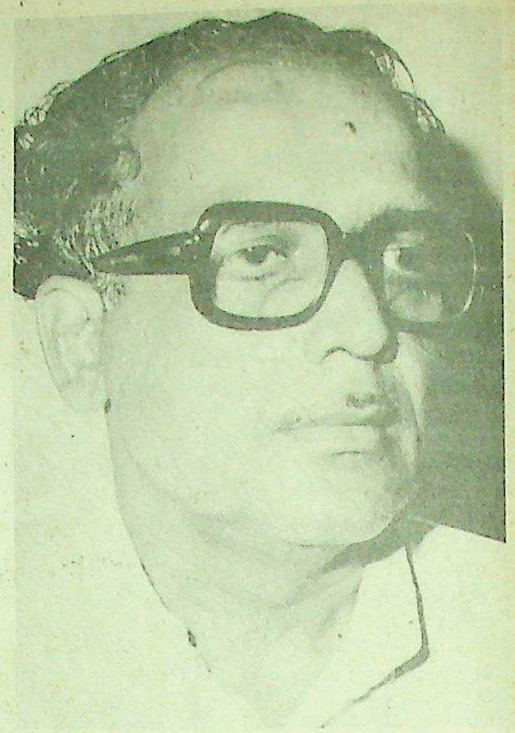
S. P. Premi

Ghulam Nabi with his blind father, Rahim Buksh

Shahi, though no more a Minister, is still in the habit of throwing his weight about as he feels that being a dissident belonging to the Jana Sangh faction gives him more power over the administration today than he had as a Minister. They tried to prove their efficiency and by the next evening the Station House Officer of Husainganj brought a buffalo to Shahi's house. Shahi, however, was not satisfied by the buffalo's performance, though its looks had convinced him that it was his. He sent the buffalo back to the police station after keeping it for three days and three nights. "This is not *Mantriji's* buffalo," Paras Nath told the baffled police officer, "because its milk-yield is very low." The police had willy-nilly agreed to continue the search for Shahi's original buffalo while the one returned by Shahi went back to where it had come from.

After a three-week lull, the buffalo front was again activised by Shahi. Ghulam Nabi, a cowherd of Havelock Road, not very far from Shahi's Mall Avenue residence, was chased away by the Husainganj police station on April 21 when he went to report that one of his buffaloes had been forcibly taken away by some men of one Ravindra Kishore Shahi who according to the same people was a former Minister.

For three days Ghulam Nabi was running from pillar to post and had knocked on almost all the doors.



S. P. Premi

Ex-Minister, R. K. Shahi

But nobody seemed to pay attention to his words. Finally, his cause was taken up by a member of the Janata Party, who just about a year ago lost to the Congress (I) candidate in a byelection for the State Assembly. Belonging to the former Socialist Party, Akshaiber Mal has in recent months developed a political dislike for the former Jana Sangh men. Mal first gained the sympathy of a dissident leader, to whose group Shahi now owes allegiance at least in public. Like Shahi he comes from Deoria district. Mal was shrewd enough to do so and thus neutralized the affair before it could take a turn for the worse involving Ministers. He then accompanied Ghulam Nabi with a letter to the District Magistrate detailing his complaint against the robbers who came from Shahi's residence. According to Ghulam Nabi, Shahi's men not only took away his buffalo by force but also beat up his blind father, Rahim Bukhsh, who tried to resist.

Nabi has claimed that he purchased the buffalo from Munir Ahmad of Meerut for Rs 2,000 (to be paid in instalments) and readily produced a receipt to prove his purchase. He requested the District Magistrate to treat this complaint as an FIR to the police station (which had refused to entertain his complaint on April 21) and direct the local police to take appropriate action for immediate restoration of his buffalo.

Although the police and the local administration is tight-lipped, reliable sources say that the former Minister's claim to this particular buffalo (whose milk-yield is almost as much as that mentioned in the report registered by the former Minister's servant Paras Nath) rests on very flimsy ground. Shahi was unable to produce any evidence to prove that he had purchased the buffalo. "It was born in my house," he is reported to have told the police.

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"Its mother was bought by my men in Bihar." But Shahi could not produce any document to prove his later statement either. The report lodged by Shahi's servant had stated that the former Minister's buffalo was short and had a tail with a black end. To the amazement of the police officer, Nabi's buffalo (now claimed by Shahi) was not only taller but has a tail with a white tip. But Shahi is not ready to go back on his claim to this buffalo.

There is yet another discrepancy which could only be verified by a veterinary doctor. According to Shahi the buffalo has produced a calf once. Nabi had told the police that the buffalo, yielding seven litres of milk twice a day, has produced three calves — the last did not survive. The veterinary, Dr R. K. Paramhans, who was taken to Shahi's residence to examine the buffalo and gave his opinion said that he would not examine the buffalo until he received instructions in writing. He also said that he had informed all concerned he would like the buffalo examined at the hospital by a panel of three veterinary doctors. According to Shahi's neighbours and some of his servants, the buffalo responds to Nabi's call and recognises him among other members of Shahi's household.

The dispute between an ordinary citizen and a VIP has become a problem for officials. They do not know which way to decide the case — on merit or on other considerations. If Shahi becomes a Minister again he is not the kind of man who is going to forget and forgive and would surely take his revenge. If they decide the case in his favour (and Nabi is deprived of his buffalo) the people in authority today may take them to task for doing injustice to an ordinary citizen.

"Shahi has a weakness for milch cattle and all cattle-owners should know," said a senior official of the State Government. He recalled a Call Attention motion in the State's Vidhan Parishad about a year ago. It was mentioned in the House that a retiring station officer of Tarkulwa Thana in Deoria district had left a guidance note for his successor in the police station's register number 8 (which acts as a brief on the criminals within the jurisdiction of that police station.) The register contains the following note about a notorious cattle-lifter of the area. "... this bad character is at present residing in Lucknow having become a Minister. This has naturally resulted in decreased incidence of cases of cattle-lifting. Even then the vigilance (on him) must not be relaxed." Shahi had refuted the allegation on the floor of the House that he was ever suspected of cattle-lifting. But when the leader of the Opposition had challenged the Government to produce the said register in the House to disprove his statement that the entry was related to Shahi, the Government had preferred to remain silent. "Maybe habits die hard as people say," murmured the harassed officer, who has to take a decision on the two complaints.

S. P. PREMI, Lucknow

Funny money

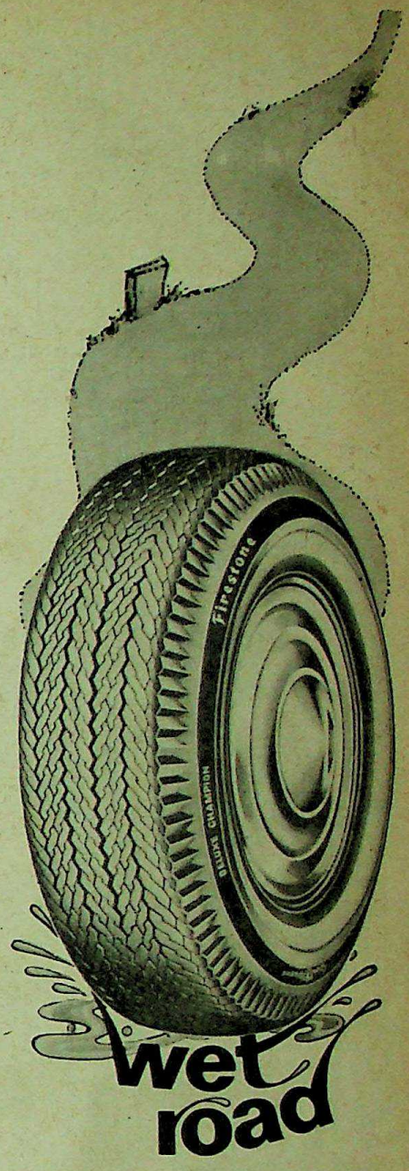
It's no longer a crime to hoard old currency

WHEN money is old it could be bought at ten thousand times—or more—its face value. It can be hoarded. You can possess foreign money—if it is out of circulation, mind you—without fearing an encounter with the Enforcement Branch. You can even counterfeit old coins and old notes with impunity.

When the Rs, 10,000 and Rs 1,000 notes were legal tender, their possession could create problems. You might have had to explain the source and lost it all or, more likely, you may have had to share some of it with the "long limb of the law", a cliche which enlightened etymologists suspect was coined after it was realized what lengths corrupt officials can reach to grab a bribe. You may now frame all your Rs 10,000 and Rs 1,000 notes on your parlour wall, and no one can do a thing about it. It has ceased to be money.

As money oddities go, old money may be obsolete, even antique; but it has been exempted from the Antiquities Act. And so it is safer to possess a rare Aureus of Geta—one such was auctioned in 1975, in Switzerland for 65,000 Swiss francs, and is today worth upwards of 100,000 in the same currency—than to possess the framed likeness of your dear departed mother-in-law. For, if she was as ancient as most mothers-in-law are, you come under the purview of the Antiquities Act, and besides keeping her darling daughter happy and contented, you will have to periodically fill forms and returns, to remain on the right side of the law. You may, of course, gift your framed ma-in-law to the National Museum, and get rid of the headache for that, in essence, is the final aim of the Act. But talk of coins and you are safe.

An Advocate in tiny Goa, Mr Kotambi Desai is reportedly negotiating with the Government the sale of one of the largest and rarest hoards of coins. He is said to value it at Rs 15 lakhs, though the Government is willing to pay a limit of Rs eight lakhs. Dr T. Gune, the Director of Historical Archives (and an authority



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on Deccan King coins) was shocked and scandalized when I rang him to seek confirmation of the deal. He initially did not get my name right and thought by "my aggressive tone" of voice that I was a Government Secretary. He meekly agreed that a proposal for the deal was under way, then asked my name again and, in a quavering and high pitched voice, admonished me saying that it was "wrong to ask such things", they being "top secret". Anyway, if the deal goes through, the Government will come in possession of what is perhaps the only existing Gupta period coins, circa 300 or 400 AD. In the theft at the National Museum, New Delhi in the mid sixties, coins of the same vintage disappeared and have not been seen or heard of since.

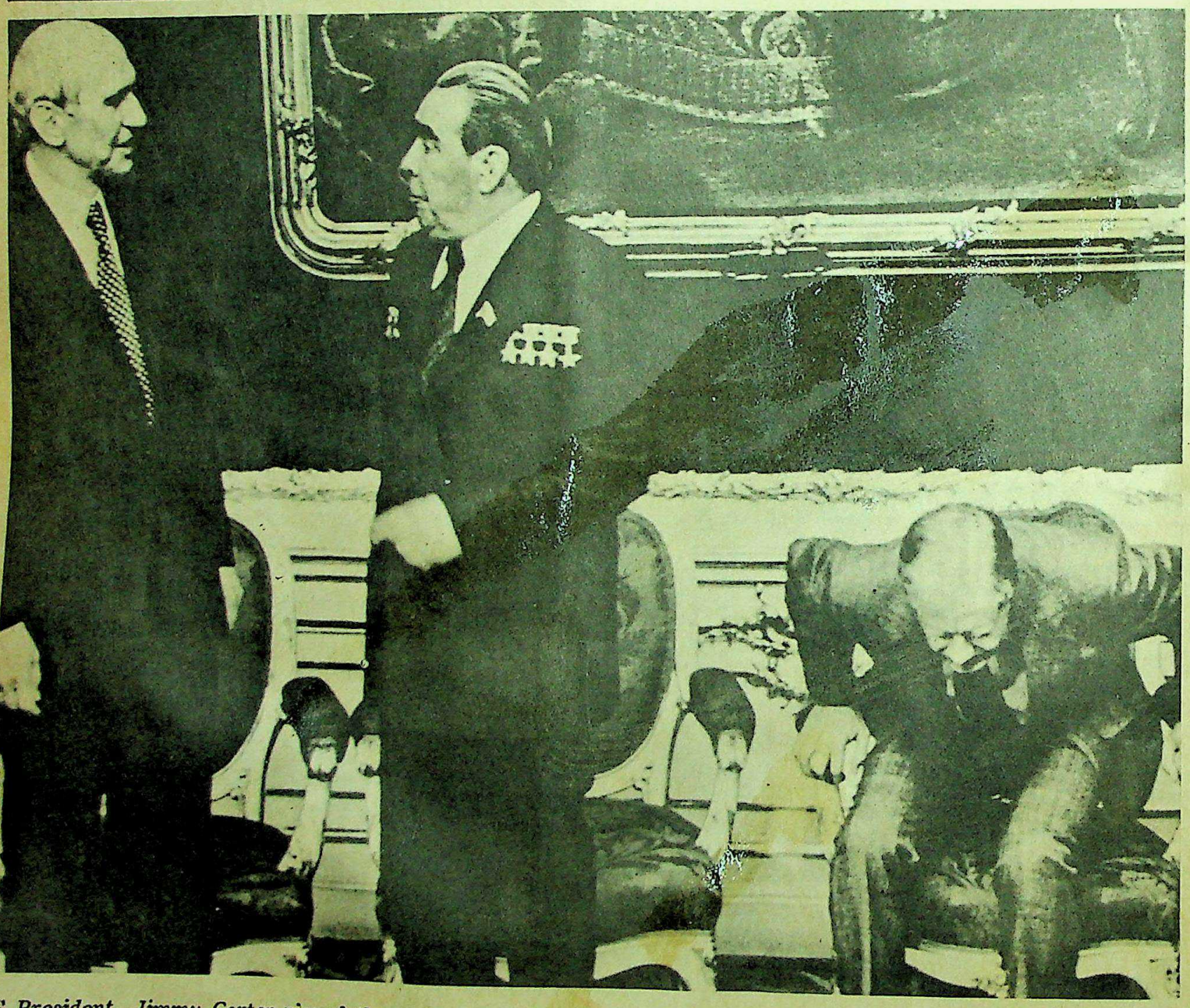
Kotambi Desai's hoard probably includes Deccan King coins (circa 100 BC) and rare Portuguese issues (a gold coin with a face value of one rupee was sold in 1975 in London for £ 750). Fenelon Rebello, probably the most respected authority on Portuguese issues in India, says that it is difficult to say what Kotambi's collection is worth as it has not been catalogued.

Money can be so funny that, if you fake a coin, it could be worth a fortune as a fake, provided, of course, it is well faked and, further, if you "tender" it as a "fake." If, however, you merely try to pass on a fake buck, you may have to reckon with Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code, for it would be cheating. A goldsmith who knows a lot about casting fakes, tell me that most collectors being fakes themselves—if not out and out fools—for they have nothing but an irrepressible possessive urge, you can always get out of a "fake" jam very smoothly: by taking it back or replacing it or, as often done, "you can always say that you sold in good faith. And that you yourself were a victim." With luck, the collector may agree to buy the fake at a lower price, hoping to pass it on and get away with it.

Mr Rebello estimates that, of the silver coins floating around, a sizable portion consists of fakes. They are faked in Goa, at least at three places, as well as in Belgaum and Karwar.

MARIO CABRAL e SA, Goa.

CARTER'S UTMOST FOR SALT-II



UPI

US President Jimmy Carter signed the SALT II agreement with the ailing Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev on June 18 in Vienna. The Treaty which runs until 1985 limits both the Soviet Union and the USA to 2,400 missiles and bombers within six months of SALT II's ratification and later to 2,250 bombers. The Russians will have to lessen their present capacity of 2,500 bombers while the Americans will increase their fleet from their present figure of 2,058. SALT II will lead to more American spending on nuclear weapons to offset the present Russian lead in short-range nuclear weaponry most of it based in Europe. Soviet President Brezhnev (centre) talks to Austrian President Rudolf Kirchschlaeger during the first meeting at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna while US President Jimmy Carter (right) seems to be having a hard time getting to his feet.

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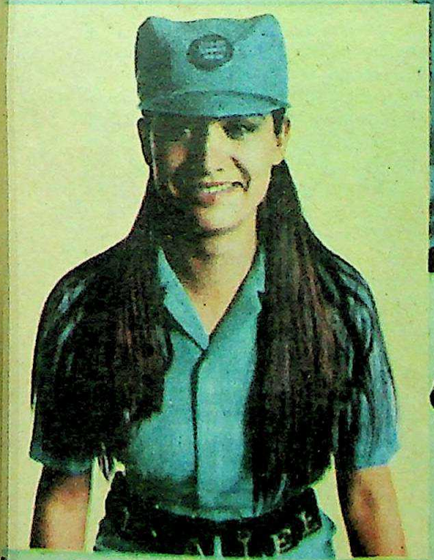

JIYAJEE

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The sins of a son

A. K. CHAKRAVORTY and UDAYAN SHARMA report on the new found wealth of Om Prakash Saklecha, son of the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister

When a 21-year-old undergraduate carries around lakhs of rupees, a lot of eyebrows are raised. When that undergraduate is the son of a Chief Minister, a lot of doubts are raised in addition to the eyebrows. The Chief Minister in question is Madhya Pradesh's Virendra Kumar Saklecha, whose son Om Prakash is now in the limelight.

Om Prakash Saklecha caught the public eye at a DDA (Delhi Development Authority) auction on January 17, 1979. The 777-square metre plot that was put up for auction fetched the incredible price of Rs 1.33 crores and enterprising journalists later discovered that Om Prakash had been the second highest bidder. He had baulked after the bidding crossed the one crore and thirty one lakh mark. However, the Jana Sangh CM's son had carried a startling sum of Rs 25 lakhs in cash and bank drafts to the auction: under DDA rules 25 per cent of the sale money has to be deposited on the spot by the bidder. This sudden flush of money caught the attention of certain real estate businessmen present at the auction and also prompted the Revenue Intelligence to enquire into the lad's business connections.

The Chief Minister initially denied that his son had even been present at the auction. The issue was then raised in the Rajya Sabha by Mr N. K. P. Salve but Mr Sikander Bhakt took it upon himself to shield Om Prakash by stating that DDA records did not maintain a list of bidders' names. It was only later when Mr Jyotirmoy Bosu raised the matter in the Lok Sabha that the Minister was hauled over the coals. At that stage he admitted that "Om Prakash Saklecha was the second highest bidder". Mr Saklecha (Sr) now admits that his son was present at the auction but he claimed that he was bidding on behalf of Mr R. K. Gupta, a businessman.

Om Prakash, who never made a mark in the academic field, was launched by his father in business when he was hardly 19 years old. He is fond of the good things in life and is an extrovert in the mould of his father. A lot of the political clout commanded by Mr V. K. Saklecha by virtue of being Chief Minister has rubbed off onto his arrogant son. Om Prakash made his maiden venture into the realm of business early in 1977 when he purchased industrial sheds in NOIDA (New Okhla Industrial Development Authority) with the intention of setting up a cardboard manufacturing unit. Saklecha Udyog, a partnership concern was established the same year, registered in Jawad, Madhya Pradesh. The partners in the firm were Mr V. K. Saklecha, Mrs Chetan Kumari Saklecha and Om Prakash Saklecha. Later that year, on June 26, Mr Saklecha substituted his name with that of his minor son, Vijay Kumar Saklecha, as he had been inducted as Minister for Industries in Madhya Pradesh.

Om Prakash skilfully utilised his father's connections and obtained generous grants from the Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation, thanks to the good offices of the Jana Sangh Minister for Industries in Uttar Pradesh, Mr Ram Prakash Gupta. Om Prakash now possesses two sheds in addition to the NOIDA plot and has switched over from the manufacture of cardboard boxes to machines required for plastic moulding. He has set up two plastic injection moulding machines, the market value of which is anything between Rs 15 and 18 lakhs. The UP Financial Corporation has given Om Prakash loans totalling Rs eight lakhs. Mr Ram Prakash Gupta had taken a personal interest in sanctioning the loans bypassing the normal procedures.

V. K. Saklecha, after his election victory in 1978

Certain new interesting facts have come to light regarding the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr V. K. Saklecha's shady business connections and investments made by him in real estate. Only a thorough probe by the Department of Revenue Intelligence and other independent agencies of the Government can bring out the truth.

Mr Saklecha purchased two flats in Gopal Towers situated in Rajendra Place Commercial Complex in early 1978. The two flats are valued around Rs 5 lakhs. The Gopal Towers, a multistoried building, is owned by a construction firm, United Builders. The managing director of United Builders is Mr R. K. Gupta. It may be recalled that Mr R. K. Gupta had accompanied Mr Om Prakash Saklecha, the eldest son of MP Chief Minister, to the January 17 DDA land auction at which the latter made a bid up to Rs 1.31 crores. It is now learnt that Mr Saklecha was legal adviser to United Builders for the last 13 years. He was also at one time a director of United Builders.

Mr R. K. Gupta has floated a firm called Madhav International whose ostensible purpose is to construct hotels and to promote tourism. For this specific purpose they were able to get clearance from the Government to utilise remittances from abroad by Indian businessmen, which is said to be substantial. When Om Prakash Saklecha unsuccessfully participated in the DDA auction on January 17, 1979 he carried hefty bank drafts purchased by Madhav International. The Parliament Street branch of Canara Bank handles the banking operations of Madhav International. Incidentally, Mr Saklecha had deposited Rs 2.5 lakhs in Canara Bank, Bhopal, between August 3 and 8, 1977 in the names of his family members and no satisfactory explanation has been given about the source.

When the O. P. Saklecha auction issue found an echo in Parliament and there was the possibility of a probe, the executive secretary of Madhav International, Mr J. P. Sharma, resigned from his job. Mr J. P. Sharma resigned out of fear that the Government may haul him up for "illegally" diverting company funds (foreign exchange) meant for a specific purpose. Mr J. P. Sharma was earlier working as general manager in a public sector hotel.

Besides Mr R. K. Gupta, other partners of Madhav International are Mr Haribhau Shah, a businessman from Kenya, one Mr Harbans Singh, an Indian settled in New Orleans (USA) and two others, Mr Bhism Agarwal and Mr Brahm Agarwal. It is alleged that Mr Saklecha has Prakash loans totalling Rs eight lakhs. Mr Ram Prakash Gupta had taken a personal interest in sanctioning the loans bypassing the normal procedures.

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benami shares in Madhav International.

The diversion of funds—that too foreign exchange—meant specifically for a purpose permitted by the Government of India attracts the penal provisions of COFEPOSA (Conservation of foreign exchange and prevention of smuggling Act).

A detailed inquiry by the Government into the affairs of Madhav International can only unravel the truth. The revenue intelligence should be immediately asked to seize the bank accounts and other probable incriminating records now with Madhav International.

The affairs of United Builders and its kingpin Mr R. K. Gupta require close examination by the Finance Department and its agencies. It will also help clear doubts about the extent of black money reportedly funnelled by Mr V. K. Saklecha and his family members into the activities of United Builders.

HOW Om Prakash, who began as a young entrepreneur in 1977, could muster the huge investment required for plastic injection moulding machines has yet to be satisfactorily answered by both father and son. The DDA auction gamble and the confidence with which he carried the money has aroused widespread suspicion and mutterings about black money being used.

In 1978, Om Prakash had filed an affidavit before the Delhi Development Authority, stating that his elder sister (from whom he had obtained a power of attorney) was a resident of Nyawala in Old Delhi. According to the affidavit his elder sister owned a house in Nyawala which had been demolished during the Emergency. Om Prakash therefore sought compensation for the damage and claimed that a plot measuring 165 square metres be allotted to him in an industrial area for business purpose. The DDA made the land allotment measuring 165 square metres in the Okhla industrial area. Om Prakash then presented a fresh application to the DDA in late 1978, stating that the allotment of the 165 square metre plot was inadequate for his business purposes and requested that another industrial plot measuring 556 square metres be allotted to him. He expressed his willingness to pay the market value of the land if it was allotted to him. Three addresses are mentioned in the affidavit. One of them is No. 10 Janpath, the official residence of Mr Larang Sai, the Union Minister of State for Labour and Parliamentary Affairs.

DDA officials, surprised at the fresh demand, wondered whether Om Prakash was in a position to pay the sum of Rs 3,20,000, the market value of the land he sought. But they were in for a jolt. Om Prakash sent four reminders within a week, asking that the allotment be made as he was prepared to foot the bill.

At this point of time, a Land Management officer ordered an investigation to verify the details mentioned in the affidavit. In the course of the inquiry it came to light that the affidavit itself was a concoction, every word of which was false. Legal experts in the DDA suggested that Om Prakash be hauled up before a court of law for filing a false affidavit. It is learnt that some M.P. Government officials who are on deputation to the DDA, soft-pedalled the issue, fearing the wrath of the Chief Minister. The affidavit is now believed to be in the custody of Revenue Intelligence authorities, according to whom it prime facie establishes that Om Prakash was in a position to pay the amount of Rs 3,20,000 for the land. The affidavit was seized from the DDA office by the Revenue Intelligence Department.

Two of Om Prakash's godfathers are Delhi-based businessmen, Mr R. K. Gupta and Mr J. C. Rishi. According to reliable reports Mr V. K. Saklecha had instructed the two to teach Om Prakash the fundamentals of business. Mr R. K. Gupta, once a junior engineer in Haryana, is today a leading real estate businessman. He has an excellent rapport with top Jana Sangh leaders and recently expanded his business operations to Kenya and some Arab countries. Mr J. C. Rishi began his career as an accountant with a mine owner in Bilaspur (MP) and can today boast of being a director of over two dozen firms. Rishi, who has his head offices in Nehru Place, New Delhi was close to such Congress leaders as S. C. Shukla and V. C. Shukla before the 1977 elections. He has wormed his way into the Janata Party, claiming that he had given shelter to a top RSS boss during the Emergency. Rishi also has the dubious distinction of unsuccessfully contesting a Rajya Sabha seat from Madhya Pradesh on six occasions. He also has extensive mining interests in Madhya Pradesh.

Mr Rishi's son, Ravindra Kumar Rishi, travelled with Om Prakash to Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore obtensibly to further the interests of the Rishi Electronic Company. There are allegations that Om Prakash Saklecha has sizable shares in the Rishi Electronic Company. Incidentally, Mr Sitala Sahay, the MP Minister for Health who was in Hong Kong on an official visit spotted Om Prakash and Ravindra Kumar at the airport. Mr Sahay reported the matter to Mr Kushabhan Thakre, the RSS boss of MP, on his return. Significantly, Mr Ramashankar Singh, former Minister for Planning whose resignation was recently obtained by Mr V. K. Saklecha, has disclosed that official agencies are investigating a report that Om Prakash deposited a sum of Rs 10,00,000 in a branch of Midlands Bank in Singapore.

MYSTERY also surrounds Om Prakash's acquisition of a plot of land in Atana village, Jawad tehsil Mandsaur, with the connivance of his father. Om Prakash submitted an application on August 17, 1977 to the gram panchayat of Atana village for a plot of land in the village in order to build a house, even though he is not a resident of the village. As the area enclosing the plot was common village land, the district panchayat officer, by virtue of a written order dated December 18, 1976, had prohibited the allotment of this piece of land to any individual. In spite of this order, pressure was brought on the panch by Mr V. K. Saklecha, as a result of which the land was allotted to Om Prakash Saklecha on September 14, 1977. Significantly, the sarpanch of this gram panchayat, Mr Shyam Sharma, is the driver of Mr V. K. Saklecha.

On Prakash also travelled with his father when the latter flew in the State aircraft on a mysterious visit to Kathmandu in mid-1978. The allegations that Saklecha deposited money in the Nepal Rashtra Bank have now been substantiated by a team of IB and RAW officials, who went to Nepal to investigate their accusations. It is still not clear whether the money belonged to the RSS or Saklecha himself. Recent investigations by Revenue Intelligence officials into the business contacts of Om Prakash Saklecha have revealed that he is interested in Madhav International, a firm which constructs hotels and is in tourism otherwise also. Some Jana Sangh leaders including Mr K. N. Sahani, the chief executive councillor of Delhi, have financial interests in the concern and it has been revealed that part of the money which Mr O. P. Saklecha carried on the day of the DDA auction came from Madhav International. The secretary of the firm, one Mr Sharma has since resigned in protest, fearing that if official agencies investigate, he will be answerable for illegal use of the company's fund.

To avoid further exposure of his son's business operations and contacts, Chief Minister Saklecha has shifted his residence from Madhya Pradesh Bhawan to a bungalow in Lodi Colony when he is in Delhi. The bungalow was hitherto occupied by the Special Commissioner of Madhya Pradesh in Delhi. Om Prakash Saklecha, on the other hand, is said to be *benami* owner of a house near Green Park. No outsiders are permitted to enter. Mr V. K. Saklecha's brother-in-law, Mr G. C. Surana, who is now an insurance executive, has been asked to shadow Om Prakash while he is in Delhi, lest he be trapped. Mr Surana, who was earlier an insurance agent in a branch office in Ajmer was brought over to Delhi on a salary of Rs 2200 per month. The general insurance firm extracted its price for the favour and in return got insurance worth Rs. 40,00,000 from various State and autonomous departments in Madhya Pradesh. The company has also given him a loan for a car, which he recently obtained from Premnath Motors. But Mr Surna is seldom seen in the Fiat which is at the disposal of Om Prakash Saklecha.

Om Prakash Saklecha's activities and the spate of corruption charges levelled against his father, the Chief Minister, have embarrassed even the RSS leadership. They too have a "Sanjay" in their midst. ■

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An Asterix Adventure

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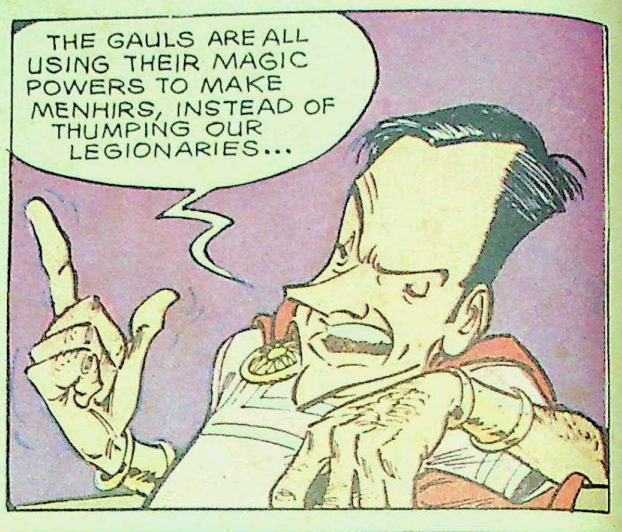

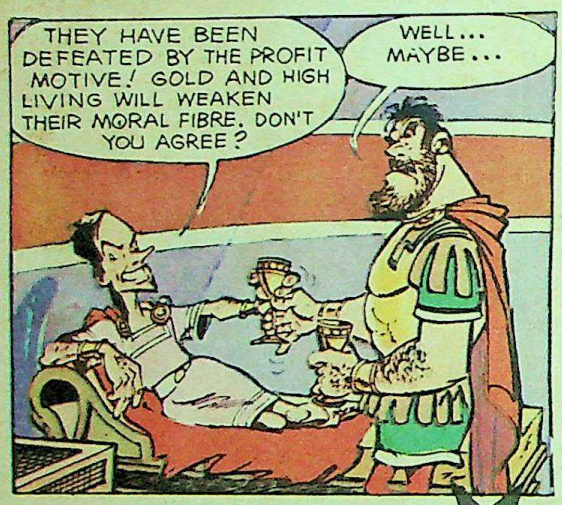

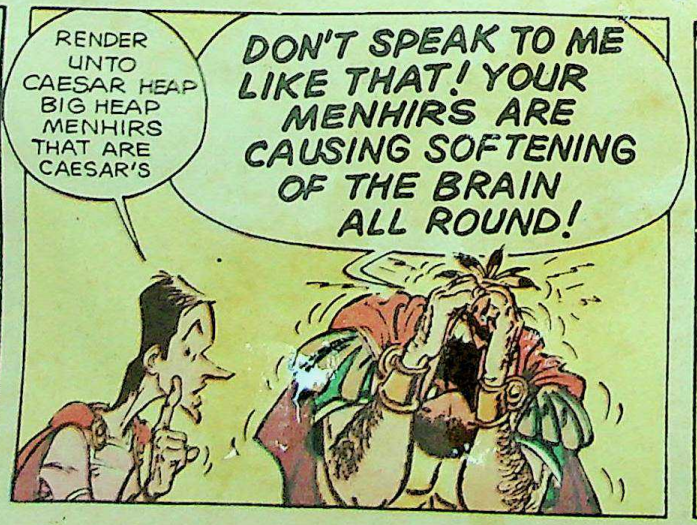

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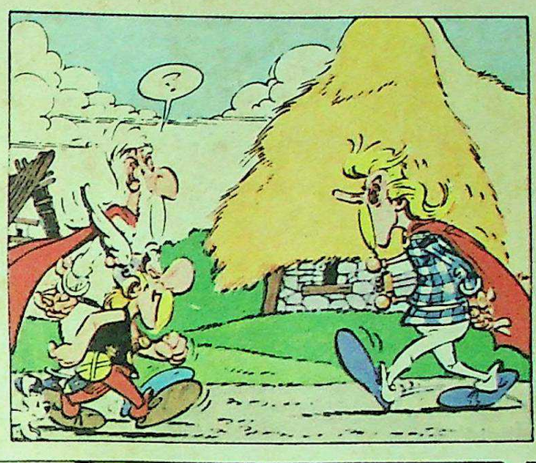

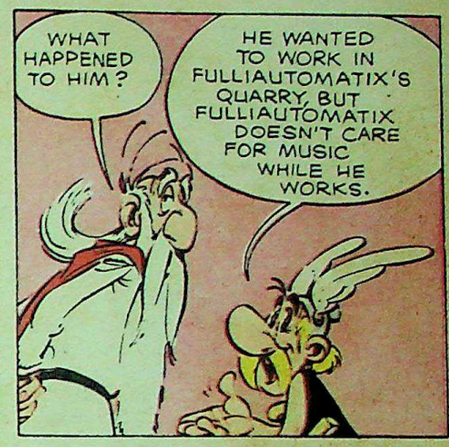

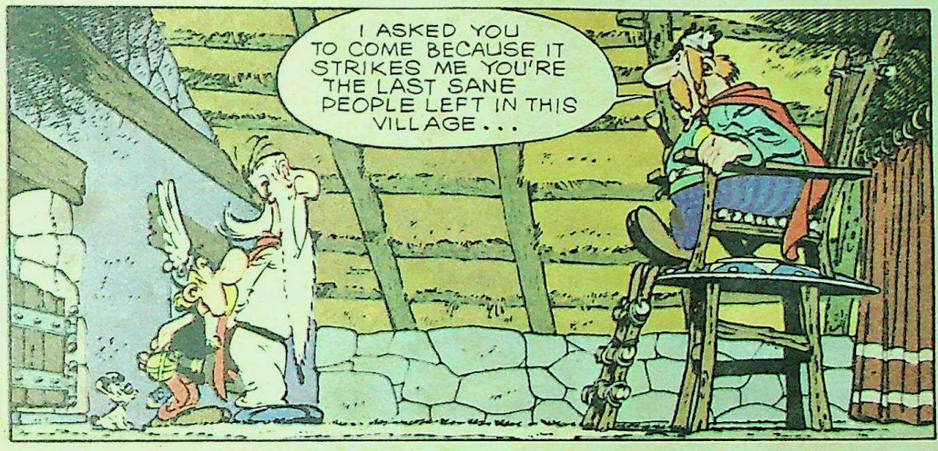

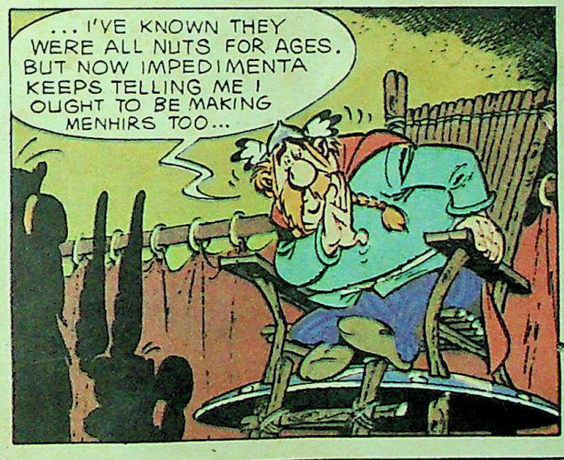

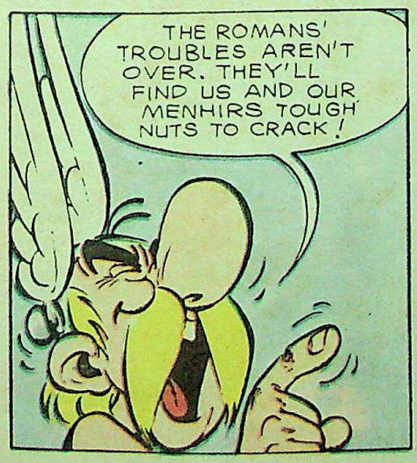

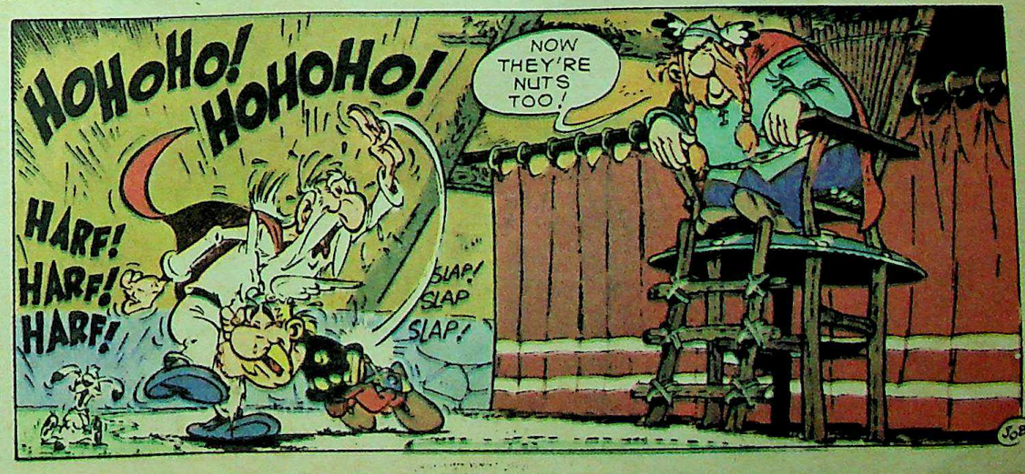

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The mystery of the Twinkling Star

Several questions about the death of filmstar Kalpana remain unanswered, reports RIMA KASHYAP from Bangalore

SHE was called "Minugutare" (Twinkling star) because of the zest and beauty she threw into her screen roles. They were all unconventional roles—mostly tragic—but she threw herself into her roles with a passion that sent shivers down the spine of the audience. On May 11 this year, Kalpana, three times winner of the State Government's best actress gold medal, was found dead in the Gotur Inspection Bungalow, 50 kms from Belgaum.

The initial reports all said that she had committed suicide but the method she used was not clearly apparent. Her personal attendant, Sakkubai, said that she was in the habit of consuming dozens of sleeping pills before going to bed—but then it was noticed that the diamond in her ring was missing.

The discovery that the diamond was missing caused quite a stir because in one of her most popular movies, "Gejje Puje" (Initiation), Kalpana playing the part of a girl from a Devadasi family is reluctant to join the family business after her education. She swallows a diamond from her ring and dies after the religious ceremony initiating her into the profession. The film won the Best Film award from the State Government, and won her the best actress award as well. Did Kalpana re-play her make-believe movie death in real life as well?

Her family members were informed of her death the next day through

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a cryptic phone-call from the police asking what they should do with the body. Kalpana's aunt requested them to keep the body intact till they arrived to take it. When the postmortem had been completed, the police sent the body back to Bangalore in a van. The family members met the van en route and "in total darkness, while it poured outside, the body of the beautiful girl was given to us from the dicky of the car." The next morning the body was so disfigured and decomposed that it seemed as if the Twinkling Star had been struck by a meteor. The cremation was held soon after—and immediately after that newspapers, which had earlier accepted the suicide report handed over to them by the ever-compliant cops, echoed the thoughts of the family—suspecting foul-play.

The matter was brought up in the council, one of Kalpana's close friends being Mr Viswanath, MLC. The Opposition leader Subbiah, stated in the council that her body bore marks of injury; that the proprietor of the drama company owed her money and that the suicide letter was unsigned. A letter dated May 9 which reached her mother a day after the cremation said almost gaily that she was well. She enclosed a bank draft of Rs 300 adding that she had sent her younger brother in Bombay Rs 400. She also wrote she would send her mother Rs 1,200 by money order within 2-3 days. "I have some throat trouble", she wrote explaining the reason why she could not act and therefore unable to send more money.

On May 14, the Chief Minister Mr Devaraj Urs, said in the council that the police had not received any complaints about her death. This he did when he was forced to make a statement.

Four days after her death the proprietor of the theatre company, a rich landlord named Basavaraj appeared before the police. He was known to be "close' to Kalpana and in a statement to the police he announced that he had secretly married the star in July 1978 at her residence. Apparently the fact that he has a living wife and six children forced him to keep the marriage a secret. But family friends of Kalpana ask why he should suddenly disclose his bigamous relationship. Relating the events prior to her death Basavaraj said that Kalpana playing the role of Rama's young mother in "Kaliyuga Rama" missed the cue in her dialogue on the night of May 10 while playing at Sankeshwar—a small town near Belgaum. Hot words were exchanged and he slapped her. The next morning he alleges she was in tears and her eyes were red and swollen. According to Sakkubai she later gifted her sarees and clothes to the Bungalow staff.

Meanwhile the post-mortem report released by the police said that her death was not due to strangulation or even consumption of diamond dust. The surgeon added that there was no evidence of external or internal injuries. A lot of time was spent on analysing a book in which a diamond

Kalpana's career

DAUGHTER of a businessman, Kalpana was born Sharat Kumari. She spent some years at St. Ann's Convent, Mangalore and completed her schooling. At 17, she decided she wanted to become an actress. This decision, according to her family, is the reason her father left disapprovingly. Her career on the screen began with "Saaku Magalu" (Adopted daughter). Her small role was not a great success. In fact, it was believed that she would never be successful because of her unconventional beauty and the way she spoke Kannada. She came to the screen via the stage and by the time she acted in Laxmi Narayan's "Naandi" (The beginning) she had attracted attention. She played Raj Kumar's wife who dies in childbirth. Her portrayal of the character earned a lot of sympathy. The film was a success and Kalpana started to rise.

In her very first leading role in Puttana Kanagal's "Belimoda" (Cloud with a silver lining) she enacted what many consider her best film. Playing the fiancee of a young man (who goes abroad and returns and changes his mind about marrying her), she showed various moods—happiness, frustration and desperation.

It was the kind of role that she would subsequently revel in and it gave her the name she was known by—Minugutare (Twinkling star).

Her next, "Uyyaale" (swing) saw her protraying a married woman who falls in love and finally gives up her lover; in "Hannele Chiguridaga" (Rebirth of an old leaf) she played a young widow. The film had tragic undercurrents which by then had become her forte. And it was then that she is said to have become involved with her director Puttana Kanagal.

It was in his film, "Gejje Puje" that the diamond-swallowing episode occurred followed by "Shara Panjara" (Cage of arrows) in which a pre-marital affair haunts her after marriage and ultimately drives her mad.

When she reached fame Kalpana suddenly seemed to have found the position too much for her. Her relationship with Puttana collapsed and she broke up with him—at least professionally. She became very demanding—and even Raj Kumar dropped her as his leading lady. She got fewer roles and at a Press conference at that time she wept and said that "the Kannada film industry had deserted her." Her only trip abroad to Bylo-Russia in 1972 was the only distraction for her that year.

In 1974, she began redecorating a house she had bought on Davis Road. The 5-bedroomed house is done in immaculate taste—white wrought iron pelmets with rich purple curtains and upholstery on white cane in the verandah; cream carpet and a sofa set in the living room. Her books were neatly divided into English and Kannada—Denise Robbins, best sellers, roses and books on trees adorn the room. She had even been asked to do the decor for the West End Hotel some years ago. Often she designed her own clothes for her films—her sexy clothes for the role of the young widow caused quite a controversy.

She thought she was a star and wanted to be treated like one. Whenever she travelled a dozen coconuts and various other fruits surrounded her along with her trunk full of clothes. Even on the last day, a dozen coconuts lay under her bed and a similar number of *musambis* were on her bedside table. A *kathakali* dancer in her earlier years, she was known for her lavish hospitality. After her success in films many felt she had become arrogant, but no one ever dreamed that she would take her own life.

R. K.

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Trail-Blazer in masculine fashions

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like dent was discovered. Kalpana had asked for a metal file, Sakkubai said, and later a hammer, it transpired. The diamond has to this day not been found.

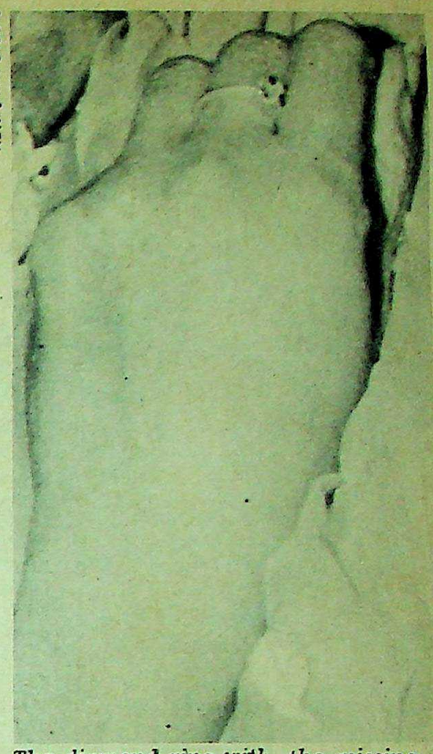
With witnesses making inconsistent statements—and the quick acceptance of the suicide theory by the police which made it difficult to recreate the scene of her death—it became difficult for the COD (Corps of Detectives) team of eight policemen appointed by the CM to find any evidence to support the theory of foul-play.

Evidence there was in plenty. 27 Hypnotex-S pills were found in the room; doubts were expressed about the suicide note; the forensic experts established that she had ingested a toxic dose of a sleeping pill—but hesitated to say whether death was due to the drug or a diamond, and was reluctant to clarify whether it was a case of homicide or suicide.

The police, having already committed themselves to a premature statement of suicide would prefer to let the statement lie. But family members and friends of the star are convinced, like many in Hubli and Belgaum, that the star was either murdered or forced to swallow poison.

Some points made by her aunt, Seethamma. are that Kalpana had a signature which was difficult to copy. Both in English and Kannada she signed with swirls and squiggles. The fact that the suicide note was not signed is very strange. The note, besides, merely says: "Do not worry about the marks on my face—they were caused accidentally when I braked the car to avoid hitting a cow. Do not think I was hit..." She asks: would a girl about to commit suicide write such a note?

There were visible scars on both sides of her forehead, and the tip of her nose was burnt and blistered. Seethamma feels these were probably due to hot tea being poured over her head in anger by someone. As to Sakkubai's evidence, Seethamma scornfully said: "Kalpana's personal attendant for 13 years, Chinnamma was not allowed to go with her for the first time. They (the drama troupe) begged Kalpana for two days to join their troupe. As a matter of fact, they were so insistent they took her baggage with them but they would not allow her own attendant to accompany her and engaged Sakkubai for her." Sakkubai is alleged to have said that she gave some breakfast to Kalpana that morning. Photographs prove that plantain leaves were strewn on the floor of Kalpana's room. "Kalpana was so fastidious about her room she would never have eaten and left her plantain leaf on the floor," said her aunt.



Katti's Art Studio

The diamond ring with the missing diamond

According to the "Artha Vikasa" —a Hubli newspaper of June 10— the viscera examination showed traces of an ingredient which is not found in the Hypnotex-S pills. These pills were later found in her room. The newspaper also asks why no attempt has been made to find out what happened to her between the night of May 10 when she had an altercation with Basavaraj and the night of May 11 when she was found dead.

The jewellery Kalpana was wearing, many of her personal assets and her clothes have yet to be returned to the family. The diamond on her ring was cleanly removed. Would she carefully remove the diamond and then put the ring back on her finger? Where is the drama troupe she was working with? Not one of them had shown up to pay their condolence to the family.

The proprietor of the troupe and the man who claims to have been secretly married to her "disappeared in Hubli for four days after the fight." He made statements that she owed Rs 1.5 lakhs for her house and was pestering him for money. Kalpana's family instead, insist that he owed her money and on the promise of paying her back lured her to Belgaum. "In fact, on the telephone earlier and even in her letter of May 9, she has said that she was going either to Bijapur or Jamkhandi—there was no mention of Sankeshwar till that time." The detectives are to submit their report. One hopes it will be a fair one to the memory of the Twinkling Star. ■

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CONVERSATION

Mishra Case : The other side

"It's politically motivated"

The former Chief Minister of Bihar, DR. JAGANNATH MISHRA, is the younger brother of the late L. N. Mishra. He was present at the Samastipur railway station when Mr L. N. Mishra was injured due to a bomb blast. Dr Mishra was also hurt in the blast. Presently a Congress (I) stalwart and the Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Vidhan Sabha, Dr Mishra feels that the demand for a fresh probe into his brother's murder is politically motivated. He wants the people found guilty by the CBI prosecuted and the CBI's findings honoured till any substantial evidence is found to the contrary. ARUN RANJAN spoke to him in Patna on May 15.

Krishna Murari Kishan

Q: *Why are you opposed to a fresh probe into the murder of Lalit babu?*

A: I am not opposed to a fresh probe. There has been some misunderstanding. I do not want the probe to be inspired by political motives. Those who have been found guilty by the CBI should not be considered innocent, until some fresh evidence is found. One thing is clear, the demand for a fresh probe has come up with a motive—that the Ananda Margis found guilty in the case should be released. Take, for example, the last despatch on the Tarkunde report which was published by the *Indian Express*. In that a strong appeal was made for building up public opinion in favour of a fresh probe, and in case the Government does not yield, for a writ petition. This was the motive behind the Tarkunde report and each of the reports published in the *Express*. Are these (the *Express*) people and Mr Tarkunde pursuing their respective professions — journalism and law—or are they advocating the case of a particular group? What is new in the story or the theory of the Tarkunde report? The present DIG (Vigilance) was the DIG (CID) at the time of the murder and the present SP (Vigilance) was the SP of Samastipur. These two had managed to get a confessional statement at that time, which was not accepted by the Government. Now these two gentlemen, sitting in the Vigilance Department, want to give credibility to the theory advanced by them earlier and gain rewards. The people who are demanding a fresh probe and those who are accused in the case are in league with each other. One of the accused, an Ananda Margi, Ranjan Dwivedi, has in the past worked as a junior lawyer with Mr Tarkunde. Mr Tarkunde himself has worked as a lawyer for the Vigilance Department in which the two officers (mentioned above), Sahay and Ojha, were in charge. The journalist, B. M. Sinha, on whose so-called investigations the reports in the *Indian Express* were based, is committed to the Ananda Marg. He has in the past been arrested as an Ananda Margi. According to my information, Mr Sinha had been to jail during the Emergency for being an Ananda Margi. The Government's intentions are also clear from the fact that the findings of Mr Tarkunde were not made available to all the newspapers but to one newspaper, and the reports were released after much planning and consideration. It is the Ananda Marg and some vested interests who are behind the demand for a fresh probe.

Q: How did you become the Chief Minister after Lalit Babu's death? It is alleged that the post was offered to you in order to keep you silent.

A: There is no justification for this (allegation). The move for removing Mr Abdul Gafoor (as Chief Minister) had started long back, during Lalit Babu's lifetime itself. He did not enjoy the majority support in the Party. The Party High Command knew this. When the Party had expressed its lack of confidence in Mr Kedar Pande, two-thirds of the Party's legislators had expressed their confidence in me. But at that time I had informed the High Command in writing that I did not want to take up the leadership. Therefore, to say that I was made the Chief Minister for any other reason is totally wrong and baseless. Was Gafoor really removed? When he saw the lack of support for him (within the Party) and the growing unrest, he had no option but to resign. I enjoyed a massive majority in the Assembly, so I was elected unopposed. Another thing: when Lalit Babu died due the bomb explosion, I had a narrow escape. I was near him. I could have been killed and he could have survived. Do you think that I am shielding the people who may have killed me? Even today I feel the pain of the wounds caused by the bomb splinters. Why don't you look at the case objectively? Everything would then be clear.

Q: What was the relationship between Ram Bilas Jha and Lalit Babu? What are your terms with Jha now?

A: As far as I know he (Jha) was Lalit Babu's trusted man. He used to carry out Lalit Babu's orders. I do not know him intimately.

Q: What were the political and personal relations between Mrs Gandhi and Lalit Babu in the period immediately preceding his death?

A: As far as I know, till January 1, 1975, their relations were extremely good—both political and personal. This I know because he (L. N. Mishra) used to confide in me about political matters. Therefore, I can confidently say that their relations were never bad. Despite a forceful campaign by his opponents, Mrs Gandhi did not agree to either removing him from the Ministry, or to

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an enquiry against Lalit Babu because he was her trusted lieutenant. What other proof do you want?

Q: Then how do you react to the statement of Lalit Babu's widow, Kameshwari Devi, that Mrs Gandhi wanted to remove Lalit Babu from the Centre and make him the Chief Minister of Bihar?

A: This is wrong and baseless.

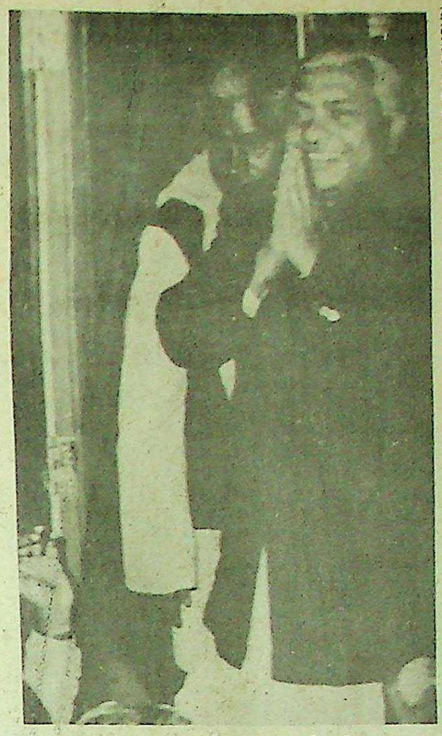
Q: Do you have any reservations regarding the role of the two CID officers, Mr Shashibhushan Sahay and Mr D. P. Ojha? Do you doubt their integrity?

A: Both these officials have political motives. They have been more involved in politicking than policing. Perhaps that is the reason why, instead of being punished, they have been getting promotions. The Mathew Commission had held the local administration of Samastipur guilty of neglecting the security criterion (on the day of the murder). Ojha was then the SP of Samastipur, so he knew about his failing. Even then the DIG (CID), Mr Sahay, entrusted the initial investigation to Mr Ojha. The so-called confessional statement was obtained at the instance of these two, who wanted to get rewards. A cash award of Rs 25,000 was recommended for Ojha and a President's Police medal for Sahay. I removed Sahay's name from the awards list because he had wrongly recommended Ojha's name for the cash reward. I had opposed this duo's investigative theory. These facts were known to the former Janata Chief Minister, Mr Karpoori Thakur.

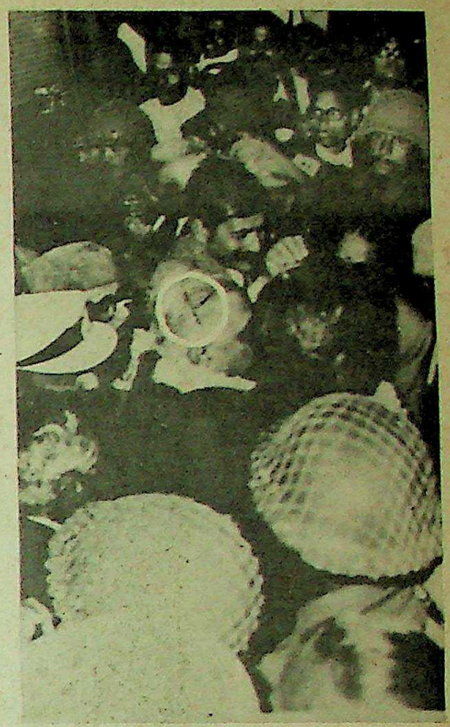
Mr Karpoori Thakur posted these two officials to the Vigilance Department for two reasons. First, to advance his political interests. For example, they seized the incriminating letters from Haridwar Pandey. Secondly, these officers were entrusted with the task of filing false cases against me, because as the Leader of the Opposition I had been a strong critic of the Thakur Government. These two officers took full advantage of Thakur's weaknesses. On these people's instance the former Chief Minister had instituted the Tarkunde probe. Because there were close ties between these two officers and Mr Tarkunde, they managed to advance their old theory through him. Based on their old theory and some untenable arguments, these two prepared a 35-page report and got it signed by Mr Tarkunde. Karpoori had no option but to order the Tarkunde probe because these two officers had in their possession the incriminating letters seized from Haridwar Pandey, which were in his (Karpoori's) own handwriting.

Q: You reached Lalit Babu moments after he was hit by the bomb. Is it true that he told you that it was the work of some 'high-level' people?

A: As far as I remember, he suspected the railway union leader George Fernandes and the striking railwaymen. He suspected that a conspiracy was hatched by these people. This is broadly what he had said; I do not remember what exactly he had said, four years after the incident.



Krishna Murari Kishan



L. N. Mishra arrives at platform no 3 of Samastipur railway station

Q: Why was no post-mortem done on Lalit Babu's body?

A: There was no talk of a post-mortem then. He had been operated upon, and the reason for his death had been declared by the doctors. What was the need for a post-mortem then?

Q: Was there any 'unidentified person' in the train that brought the injured Lalit Babu from Samastipur to Danapur? Was Lalit Babu carrying some documents? If so, what happened to them? Did anybody offer any food to him during the journey? If so, who, and where?

A: I was injured and in pain. I was in a state of semi-conciousness. How could I have known about any unidentified person? We were in the same bogey, but in different compartments. There was some luggage with Lalit Babu which was taken off the train at Danapur. He was under the care of Dr Bhalla. He must have eaten only what the doctor had given him to eat.

Q: What do you have to say about the so-called confessional statements of Arun Thakur and Arun Mishra?

A: Neither are their statements reliable, nor is there any logic in them. The strong motivation that should be evident in the murder of an important man is missing in the weak statements given by them. In any case, does the law accept confessional statements obtained forcibly?

Q: What are the steps you have taken in this matter, apart from making public statements that there should be no fresh probe, or that the probe should be on the correct lines?

A: I wonder why the Government is so interested in the murder case. The Mathew Commission submitted its report. It was approved by the Cabinet. Even the Janata-dominated Parliament approved a part of the report. Should not action have been initiated on at least that part of the report which has been approved? Shouldn't action have been taken against the two officers? They were held responsible for the lack of security arrangements. Shouldn't they have been given exemplary punishment to ensure that in future Government officers did not act in such a negligent manner? What was Karpoori Thakur's duty—to appoint the Tarkunde probe, or to punish the guilty officers? The intentions of many people (who are dealing with the case) seem doubtful. It is ironical that a tragic murder case should be politicised by a Government and the people should remain silent spectators. More than the urge for finding out the murderers of Lalit Babu, these people are interested in shielding the Ananda Marg. One day, this will prove tragic for Delhi.

Dr Jagannath Mishra

Krishna Murari Kishan

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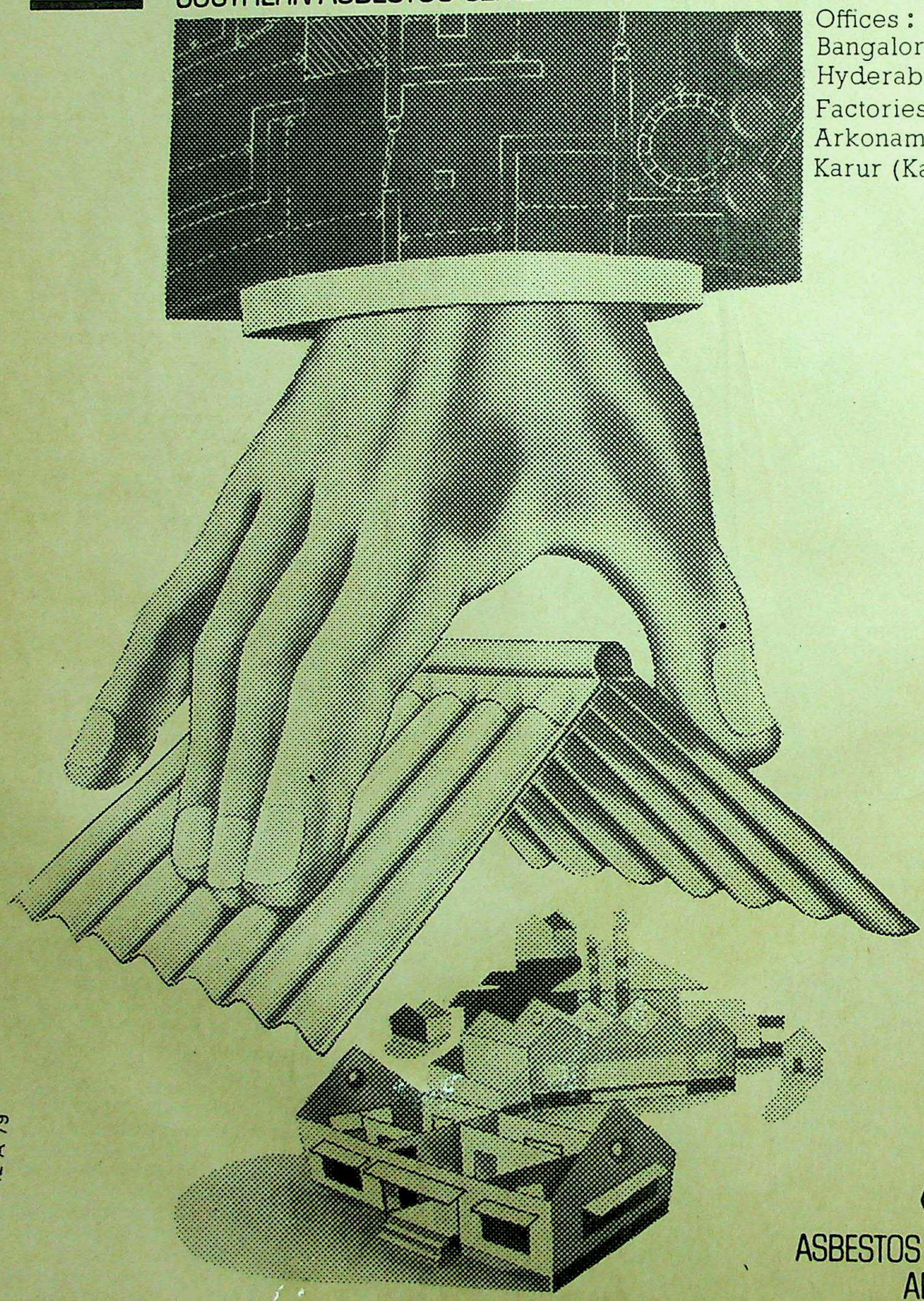

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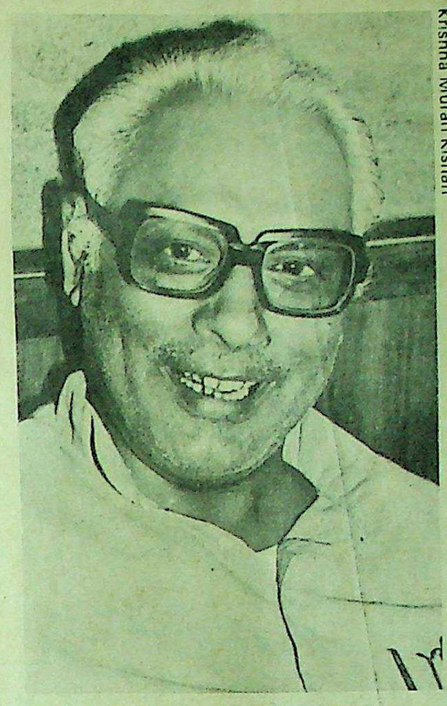
"They tortured me for 27 days"

In the second week of May, one of the chief accused witnesses in the L. N. Mishra murder case, Arun Kumar Mishra, along with another witness, Arun Kumar Thakur, arrived in Patna. They were very keen to meet a senior Congress leader. Of medium build and height, fair complexioned, a short hair cut, a moustache, with a towel placed on his shoulders, Arun Kumar Mishra is in the habit of speaking in a bossy manner. We present his story, which he told ARUN RANJAN, in his own words. This is strictly Arun Mishra's version.

ON January 8, 1975 people from the CBI came to my house to look for me. At that time I was in Mohiuddinnagar. When I returned people told me that the CBI had been looking for me and that I should go and meet them. On January 10, I met a CBI officer, Ahuja. From January 10 to 28, 1975, I was interrogated. They even searched my house. In the end they said I could go.

Suddenly, on February 3, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon the SP of Police, Mr D. P. Ojha, Inspector K. P. Singh, along with other CID officers, raided my house. They were accompanied by a police contingent. They surrounded my house. I asked Ojha: 'SP *saab*, what is the need for such a large force? Whenever you have called me, I have gone and met you.' Ojha replied: 'I have brought this force along with me for security purposes. IG *saab* has come and he wants to meet you.' They took me to the Samastipur thana. At 10 o'clock at night I discovered that I was under arrest. For three days I was fine. From the fourth day the interrogation started. On the fifth day I found that Arun Thakur had been brought here too. In fact, they purposely made me see him from a distance. I understood that Thakur had also been detained in connection with the L. N. Mishra case. Soon after, we were shifted to the Dalsinghsarai IB (office) Even in Dalsinghsarai, there were heavy security arrangements. It was at this place that an interrogation cell had been opened. We were kept separately. My interrogation started: 'How did you know Thakur? How was the murder plan drawn up? Who all were present and where?' I said that from 10 days before the incident I had not met Thakur. I kept on repeating this and then they showed their true colours. First, both my legs were tied up, I was turned around and my legs were tied to the window. Then they started hitting me with a rod on the soles of my feet. They carried on hitting me and asking me questions: 'Which prominent people and politicians are involved in this?' When I could not answer, they untied my legs and tied my hands, separately, to the window—crucifixion style. It was very painful. Whenever I tried to rest by lowering my head or closing my eyes, they threw



Krishna Murari Kishan

Ram Bilas Jha, alias "Boss" Jha

ice-cold water on one. It was winter, so you can well imagine my condition. This torture carried on for 27 to 28 days. In between, for two days, I was made to lie down on ice. The police made sure that I didn't die. They used to keep warm water next to me. When my blood began to freeze, I was removed, and washed in warm water till I felt better, and, then put on ice again.

Now you might ask why I was implicated. In 1973, at the Bhagalpur jail I had met Shiv Narain Vishwakarma (alias Sharma) for a short while. After he was released from there, Shiv Narain started writing letters to me. The police got hold of a letter and some leftist pamphlets which he had sent, from me. Arun Thakur had written a booklet called "Red Revolution". They had found a part of that. On the basis of these, the police were preparing a case. And they were asking me to confess.

Even then I did not listen, and the next part began. Along with the beating they gave me an opium injection. Under the influence of the opium, people normally do not become unconscious but tend to give an exaggerated account of things. They wanted me to corroborate their version. I was forced to give an oral statement. One day, the SP, Ojha, gave me a paper to read. I got to know later that under the table, they had placed a tape-recorder. When I read the paper Ojha had handed over to me, all that I read got taped. When it had been taped, the IG of Police, Ghosh *saab*, came to Samastipur. I was brought before him. He told me of this statement. I denied it. Then the tape was played. I told IG *saab* that I did not know anything, and that I had read from a piece of paper which Ojha *saab* had handed over to me, and he had taped this without my knowledge. Naturally, when IG *saab* went away, Ojha beat me mercilessly for having said what I had before the IG.

Not having got anything from me, they started turning their attention towards Arun Thakur. One day they got a confession from Thakur. They gave it to me to read, and said: 'See, had you done the same, the Government would have made you an approver. Now we will release Thakur. But there is still time; if you make a statement in front of the magistrate, we will also release you.'

Under these new circumstances, I got a bit nervous. I said, 'OK, since Thakur has given his confession, I will consider it'. I was taken to the SP's house. There, after a long time, I was served good food. When SP *saab* went to sleep I was given Thakur's statement, so that I could read that and prepare my own statement. Till late at night I was reading it. Suddenly I realised that all this was very wrong. So in the morning, I refused to give a statement. When SP *saab* came, he came to know that I had got the statement, but after reading it, I had decided not to give a confession. He got angry and said, 'All right, lock him up'.

After that I was kept in Samastipur jail. I did not know what these people were up to. There the jailer, Rahman, started pampering me to give a confession. He said that Thakur had already given his statement and asked me to mention a few names among which Ram Bilas Jha's name should be mentioned. The truth is that I would not recognise Ram Bilas Jha even today. One day the jailer prepared some questions and answers and started drilling me, just the way children are drilled in order to make them learn their lessons. He was asking some questions about the case—'Yes, then what happened?' This was the way he extracted a statement from me and taped it. Later on, with a lot of fanfare, this was displayed as my second confession.

In reality, I had not given any confession. During Holi, the Director of CBI, D. Sen, along with some other CBI officers, arrived in Samastipur. The jailer, Rahman, on the pretext that it was Holi, made me drink a lot of liquor. Then I was brought before D. Sen. There the jailer played the manipulated tape. Every one was congratulating the jailer for what he had done. The jailer was under the impression that under the influence of alcohol, I would say 'yes' to whatever they asked me. But I again told them the entire story of how a list of questions and answers had been drawn up and how the entire thing was made to look like a statement.

The L. N. Mishra murder case is being brought up again. See what people like us, who are weak, alone and innocent have to face.

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The Pope goes home

UPI

The Pope in Warsaw's Victory Square

SOMETIME back, a cocktail party was held in the Holiday Inn, just outside Krakow on the road to Auschwitz. It was a hearty, almost triumphant occasion with vodka supplied by the Bison Brand people who had been dispensing their fine product, gratis, plus Bison Brand desk flags, key rings and ballpoint pens to the thousand or more foreign Press covering the Pope's tour of his homeland. It was an invitations-only affair hosted by the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic and with guests drawn from four distinct groups: the hierarchies of the United Workers (Communist) Party and the Polish Church, the Vatican and the media. "This is such a *wonderful* celebration", said a bishop to a senior Ministry 'spokesman', whose arm appeared to be fixed to the bishop's shoulder, as if a tango were contemplated. "There is much to celebrate", said he; and the happy, crumpled faces of both God's and Ceasar's servants seemed to indicate this was so. Certainly, the Press could not have been happier; shrewd nannying by the Government Interpress Agency was almost American-style with cataracts of handouts and translations, interpreters, 'shuttle' buses and batteries of phones and Telex machines wherever we went, including a 'Press centre' in the Gate of Death at Birkenau extermination camp, overlooking the ovens and the chimneys.

But what was the celebration really about? From what I could gather here, a great many commentators in Western Europe and America have seen the Pope's tour in trusted Cold War terms of good (the Church) triumphant over evil (Communism); and of course it was nothing of the sort. Of all the hisctoric 'firsts', the most significant was scarcely mentioned: the striking of an unwritten deal between the Vatican, representing spiritual imperialism, and the Polish leadership, representing Stalinist imperialism. It is a deal involving great gamesmanship, under which, for the sake of self preservation and 'continuity', each recognises the other's boundaries of power in Poland—power, that is, to subdue and tame the Polish people. At the Pope's airport farewell the Polish President, Henryk Jablonski having been bear-hugged by the Pontiff, put it like this. There is now, he said, a "convergence between Church and State in Poland." There is in other words, another 'concordat', though much more subtle than the last which was consummated between the Vatican and Germany in 1933.

On the eve of the Pope's arrival, I was introduced to a senior Government bureaucrat, a man responsible for much of Poland's foreign trade dealing by one of his 'liberal' friends in the film world. He said: "If you come here and wish to see this event as an heroic Pope returning home and thereby challenging the power of the State, that is your mistake. The reality is quite different. Poland is the political volcano of the Soviet bloc; the workers brought down Gomulka and two of his predecessors and ninety per cent of them are Roman Catholic. Without an accommodation between Church and State neither will survive in their present form. *Anyway, look how much we have in common*! We are both totalitrian. We both wish to control people and to instruct their minds! The Pope is a Pole; he knows this better than anyone, and as Pope it's his job —*his sacred duty*!—to accommodate with the lesser evil..."

Such measured cynicism is echoed by those who oppose or rather resist the regime as best they can: especially writers and filmmakers who have survived by perfecting what they call 'the code of the metaphor'. (A radical Polish film currently doing the rounds here is called *King Fu*, which to the politically initiated means 'struggle for freedom'.)

Throughout his tour the Pope's generally vapid jibes at the regime were blown into headlines and given a significance they did not deserve, especially when you compare them with his effusive flattery of the Central Committee. To Edward Gierek, the Party Chairman, he said, "I express my esteem for all your solicitude that has as its aim the common good of fellow citizens". To the assembled Politburo, he said, "I have regard for all of you, the distinguished representatives of the authorities and for each one in particular and the dignity which you hold..." And they all beamed and shook on it.

In his book, *God's First Love*, probably the most documented account of the Vatican's 1933 Concordat with the Nazis, Frederich Heer wrote: "Archbishop Grober, in the Handbook of Contemporary Religious Questions which was published with official

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church approval in Freiburg in 1937 and which gave the authoritative view of the German churches on all political and religious questions of the Nazi period, declared the Concordat to be "a proof that two powers, totalitarian in character, can reach an agreement, if their spheres are clearly differentiated..." That is precisely what they were celebrating the other night at the Holiday Inn.

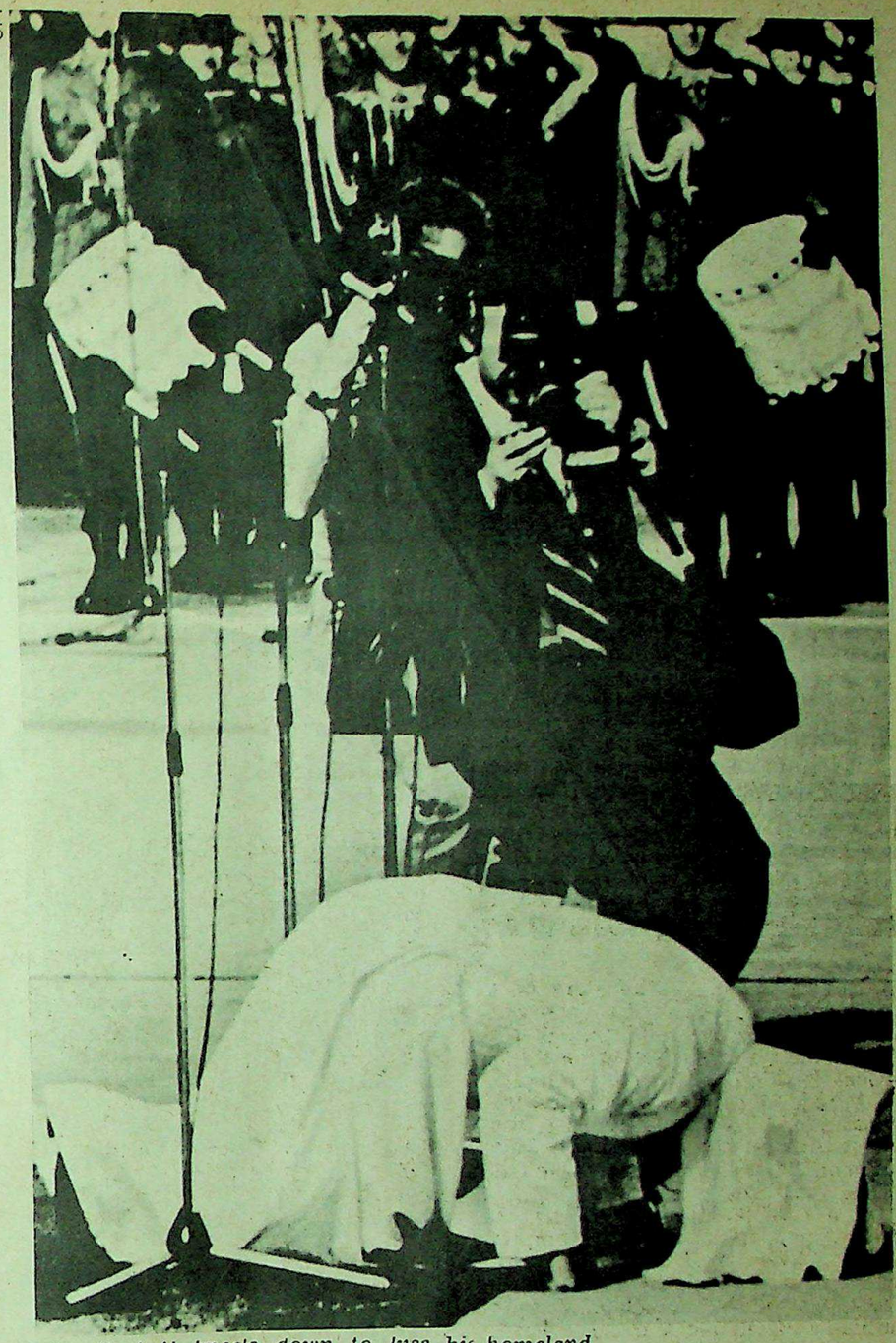
OF course, Pope John Paul II is a very different man from the reclusive, tortured character that was Pius; but what the ballyhoo surrounding him on his Polish odyssey concealed was that like Pius and Paul (John was an aberration: the one true radical), he is a profound fundamentalist, a preserver at all costs.

Since his installation as Pope, his considerable energies have been directed almost exclusively to shoring up the archaic fortress of the Catholic church, as exemplified by the Polish branch, which produced him and is still very much medieval at heart. (One unforgettable sight was a long line of confessional booths, on a meadow beside the Jasna Gora monastery, with a queue of passive sinners awaiting their turn.) Do those who have exalted the Polish Church's 'struggle for freedom' seriously suggest that the Poles would have more democratic freedoms if they swapped Edward Gierek for the despotic Cardinal Wyzynski?

Indeed, in the short time since Karol Wojtyla became Pope, he has wasted no time in condemning *all* the main liberalising forces within the Church: those that champion a more humane attitude toward birth control, abortion, divorce and the celibacy rules for priests. In his Puebla speech he said nothing about those Christians, including many priests, who have suffered in the torture chambers of Latin America and have died in the defence of human rights and their Christian faith. I was in Mexico, shortly after the Pope's visit and met young priests, superb men, trying to battle with poverty, the State oligarchy and their own hyper-orthodox masters, and who waited for a powerful word of support from Joh Paul II. One of them who bore the scars of a torture session in El Salvador, said, "I despair his silence". The 1970's may be a very different world from the 1930s and 1940s; but Pius, in his obsession with the preservation of Fortress Vatican, alas said nothing about the thousands of similar sufferers.

John Paul II is undoubtedly the first 'media Pope'. I have been to a number of 'media events' around the world; I have never been to one like that staged at Auschwitz and Birkenau death camps during his visit. At Birkenau, the Pope's large white helicopter landed in a plantation of chimneys: hundreds of horrific sentinels built at ground level and with the ovens beneath. Nearby was a prefabricated edifice for the Mass, a kind of Papal reviewing stand, with the gold and velvet Papal throne, a giant cross girt by barbed wire and two priests, former prisoners, wearing copies of the infamous striped uniform. And half a million people. And stalls selling busts of the Pope, plastic Dying Christs, ice cream, Coca Cola and sizzling sausages—the first meat, incidentally, many of the faithful had seen for weeks. Those photographers who managed to escape from the 'media enclosure' and try for a creative angle of His Holiness were swiftly apprehended by armband wearing toughs from the parishes; heaving a camera strap from behind was favourite method of ecclesiastical arrest. If revolutionary fires had been lit in the great crowds, it would have been these soldiers of the Church who would have put them out.

Over all this was a whiff of of hypocrisy. Most of those murdered here were Jews, and they died while church bells continued to peal in Germany. And here was the leader of the Church celebrating mass at the epicentre of their agony. Of the Jews he said this: "The very people that received from God the commandment, 'Thou Shalt Not Kill', itself experienced in special measure what is meant by killing. It is not permissible for anyone to pass by this...with indifference." And that was all he said about them. If ever there was a historic opportunity to publicly repudiate the Church's darkest age since the Inquisition—the Concordat with the Nazis which, in effect, condemned many Jews to death—this was such an opportunity. But he made no mention of it, which is a pity.



UPI

John Paul II kneels down to kiss his homeland

JOHN PILGER from Poland

(By arrangement with New Statesman)

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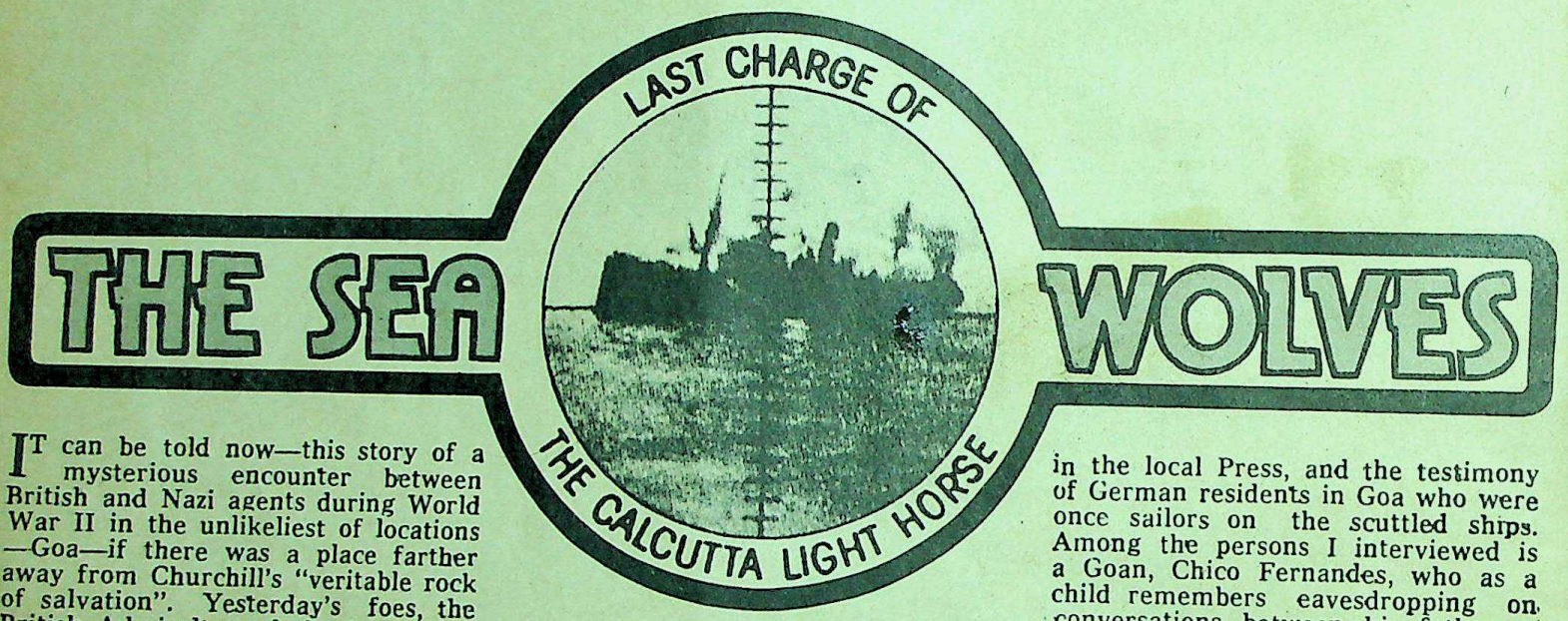
Goa's secret war

Thirty-six years ago, Goa was the scene of an unexpected encounter that might have shocked those who thought India was a safe-enough distance away from Nazi Germany. The German Consul in Goa, then a neutral Portuguese colony, and his wife were kidnapped, whisked off to Belgaum, forced to give out secrets, and shot dead. The attack followed the discovery that the Consul was a spy who regularly transmitted details of Allied ship movements to Germany. MARIO CABRAL e SA met residents of Goa who remember the affair, and got the full story of this secret war.



IT can be told now—this story of a mysterious encounter between British and Nazi agents during World War II in the unlikeliest of locations —Goa—if there was a place farther away from Churchill's "veritable rock of salvation". Yesterday's foes, the British Admiralty and the Bonn Government, have got together to tell it all. 36 years later.

On a carnival dawn, of March 9, 1943, Panaji was woken from its drunken haze by loud blasts. The southernmost tip of the town, Dona Paula, was lit by the blaze of four burning ships in the Marmagoa harbour, one Italian and three German. Smudges of blood shimmered on the emerald green sea, and dead bodies floated amid the debris of the burning ships.

Three months previously, Robert Koch, the German Consul in Goa, and his wife Greta, were kidnapped from their house in Panaji's elite residential district of Altinho, before aghast Goan housewives, still in their rollers and nighties, talking sleepily to the bakers outside their half-open bedroom windows. Disguised as a bona-fide representative, Koch was part of the formidable, worldwide Nazi spy network and operated under the code name 'Trompeta'. And what a silent operator he was, despite the name! On intelligence regularly supplied by him, German U-boats were sinking upto an average of 40 Allied ships a month in the Arabian Sea, under the very nose of Mountbatten's South East Command, based in Colombo.

These facts have been culled by James Leasor from the records of the British Admiralty, the statutory limit on their secrecy of 35 years having lapsed in 1978. Leasor's book, *The Boarding Party* (published by William Heinemann, London, May 1978, priced at £ 4.90), was serialised in London's *Sunday Express* in spring last year. Euan Lloyd, the producer of *Wild Geese* and *Guns of Navarone*, has bought the filming rights. The film is to be shot in Goa around October this year, apart from some location work in Calcutta, where the British had mustered the 'boarding party' from among the armchair soldiers of the Light Horse (also called the Tight Horse, for their love of alcohol) and the Calcutta Scottish, both clubs of disgruntled soldiers, and Cochin, from where the 'party' sailed for the assault by the Phoebe, a dredger secretly arranged for the operation by the Calcutta Port Commissioners.

James Leasor's account, though not authentic in detail, is by and large credible. (I gleaned material for this feature from such sources as the Historical Archives in Goa, police records, a thesis on Portuguese diplomacy by Dr P. Shirodkar, reports in the local Press, and the testimony of German residents in Goa who were once sailors on the scuttled ships. Among the persons I interviewed is a Goan, Chico Fernandes, who as a child remembers eavesdropping on conversations between his father, a schoolteacher, and a Colonel of the Portuguese Medical Corps, a Goan, both of whom collaborated with Koch, and spoke in whispers about the war and the secret operations afoot.)

LISA was eighteen and slender. Her father, Paul Gasse, repaired watches and had been an engineer aboard one of the spy ships scuttled in the Marmagoa harbour. After his ship floundered, he spent with the other survivors, ten years in a Portuguese prison in Goa, after which he decided to stay back and send for his family. Germany, for him, was done for. But he was still proud of being a German: an Arab merchant settled in Panaji, who smuggled gold to India, had once sent him a signed blank cheque. "Fill in the amount and send me your daughter," he had said in a note attached. But Gasse knew better. He sent back the cheque and kept his daughter. "The Reich may have fallen, the Germans still had their pride." Paul is now dead and Lisa, aged and frail, lives in Germany. She still plays the accordion, as when I knew her, and she still is a 'navy girl'—her husband is an engineer in the merchant navy.

Madame Hepp was a tall, bony

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blonde—a bit mousy perhaps, but still great fun. She would step out of her virgin-white bedroom, tiptoe gingerly to the centre of the dim-lit parlour, flip open her green and black bathrobe, and rush back into her room before the sex-starved Portuguese officers, gathered for a sundowner, had caught a glimpse of her sparsely-haired pubis. If encored, she would be back, cackling loudly as a hen that had just laid an egg, curtsey and fling around rubber condoms, customarily 'made in Deutschland'. Some had embossed scales no larger than a lizard's, others had a cock's comb on the top. "Try them. good night." And Madame Hepp would finally get into her bath, alone.

Like a bunch of little children clutching their lollypops, the Portuguese officers would grab their rubbers, troop out in a bustle, climb excitedly into their waiting Volkswagens, and shoot out into the night, looking for a whore.

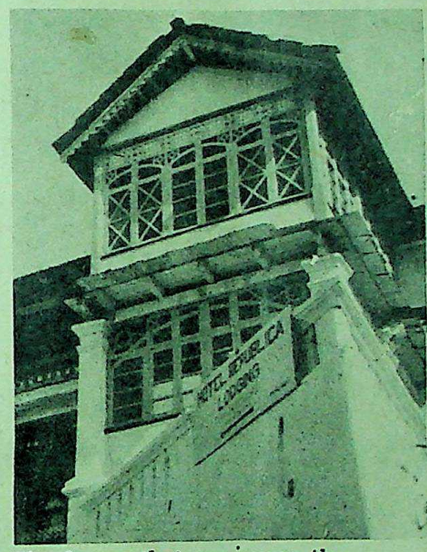
That was Panaji, circa 1954. For a living, Robert Hepp (Madame's husband) sold cars—German cars, of course—by the thousand. And understandably, because Madame Hepp's titillation always worked. It was an ingenious arrangement, and business was brisk. And no wonder. Robert Hepp had a talent for ingenuity: He had been a radio officer aboard the spy ship Ehrenfels and knew 'Trompeta' very well, as he must have, for how else would Koch have sunk so many British ships in the Arabian Sea?

Chico Fernandes markets tyres in Goa. As a child he recollects having overheard his father and a doctor friend talking in whispers about certain radio transmissions. One of the transmitters in question was concealed in a small, inconspicuous private shoe-polish manufacturing laboratory near the town post office. The laboratory had a small range of unimportant products: shoe polish, and tranquillizers for hysteria.

When World War II was on in full cry, Portugal was a neutral country, and so Goa too, being a Portuguese possession. But the British did not take any chances with Goa, knowing it to be a secret base of German espionage. They posted a stocky officer of the Bombay CID in Goa, Inspector D'Souza, to tail 'Trompeta' wherever he went. Mr D'Souza bred poodles (I knew him as a teenager; in fact, he had given my sister one of his poodles as a gift. His son Daniel D'Souza, once a *Free Press Journal* sports reporter, worked for me when I was editing a local daily in Goa) and pretended to be a Goan come home on an extended holiday. The British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and radio monitoring services had thoroughly investigated the German secret operations in Goa. 'Trompeta' was found to supply clear and precise data to the German U-boats. One of them, U-181, commanded by Lt Wolfgang Luth, had sunk the Dorrington Court, a 5,000 tonner and seven other ships in almost as many days. British intelligence also grew wise to who and where 'Trompeta' was. In fact, 'Trompeta' and Inspector D'Souza's contacts were common. The good Nazi that he was, 'Trompeta' was haughty and worked almost singlehanded. SOE found out about his secret transmissions from India, which seemed unbelievable to those who still maintained Britannia ruled the waves.

The British, on the other hand, wished to avoid doing anything that would hurt the Portuguese, particularly in Goa, because it was Portugal's oldest colony, and Portugal Britain's oldest ally. True, the Portuguese were neutral, but it was a neutrality that betrayed a sympathy for the Allies, who were already making full use of the Portuguese Archipelago of the Azores, in the Atlantic.

Apart from Inspector D'Souza, the SOE had their own man in Goa, a lanky six-footer, Gavin Stewart. He had detected from radio monitoring services that 'Trompeta' sent his coded messages from Marmagoa through a transmitter in the Ehrenfels, a 7,752 tonner of the Hansa Lines. Ehrenfels had been to Calcutta earlier and an Indian agent, posing as a port fireman, had reported to SOE that she had decks made of reinforced steel, concealed gun mountings, two six-cylinder two-stroke Mann engines and a cruising speed of 18 to 20 knots which enabled her to double as an auxiliary cruiser. A sister ship of the Ehrenfels, Kandelfels, had done just that, sinking in the process 28 Allied ships, before the Cornwall got her. Ehrenfels' Captain, Rofer, was an exceptionally experienced and daring man. He had managed to pull his ship out of the Hooghly without a pilot, and disappear even before the British could start working out a capture plan. He brought the ship to neutral Goa and dropped anchor at Marmagoa where, shortly after his arrival, the Anfora, a 5,452 tonner of Lloyd Triestino under the Italian flag, and two other Hansa Lines ships, the Drachenfels (6,342 tons) and Braunfels (7,847 tons) also joined the Ehrenfels in seeking asylum.



The house that was once the "Hotel Palacio" where Nazi and British spies stayed

The SOE's problems were many and serious. First, Ehrenfels was a regular enemy transmitting station. Second, there was every possibility of her slipping out and sailing for Singapore to join the Japanese. Third, any rash attempt to capture the ship from Marmagoa might antagonise the Portuguese and turn them in favour of the enemy. Officially, the Ehrenfels was unarmed and stationed in a neutral port, though the Salazar regime in Lisbon was undisguisedly fascist. So, with the circumspection and cunning characteristic of wartime British commanders, the SOE decided to despatch an agent to Rofer.

THE crews of the Italian and German ships were on the dole. They had no money, and subsisted on making small deals of pilfered cargo with grocers and ship chandlers, some of whom presently own crores of rupees. In a document I read, Robert Hepp, among others, is said to have represented to the Portuguese Government that the crews were putting up with great hardship because they were unable to communicate with their own Government in Bonn, and the Portuguese were not allowing them the use of the official wireless station to send their messages home, asking for money. A bold ruse, no doubt, considering Ehrenfels had a powerful transmitter of its own.

SOE's agent to Rofer was instructed to offer him £20,000 and raise it to a maximum of £30,000 for getting him to sail three miles out of the Marmagoa harbour. Once the ship was three miles out, the British would pounce on it and give Rofer and the crews money and safe conduct to wherever they chose to go. The ship was well worth over £500,000, and for a bribe of £30,000 it would be a handsome bargain. But Rofer would not listen. Next, a plan was chalked out —and abandoned— for smuggling time bombs on board the ships in baskets of mangoes and oranges. But it was a foolish plan, considering the bombs when exploded, would not cause much damage beyond the decks and the storeroom.

SOE then decided on a final plan—to silence 'Trompeta'. Lewis Pugh and Gavin Stewart were sent from their headquarters in Meerut, the seat of the Ministry of Economic Welfare, to Calcutta. Pugh, then director of Country Sections, was in his late thirties, blue-eyed and sandy-haired. He knew the members of the Calcutta Light Horse too well, most of whom, with "their thickening waists and thinning hairlines"—as Leasor describes them—had been relegated from active service. Their long discourses about patriotic zeal and the pains of rejection were fuelled with the best Scotch. No wonder they were called the 'Tight Horse'. But they could still be of great use, as was later proved.

The Light Horse was commanded by Colonel Bill Grice, the managing director of a Calcutta-based chemical

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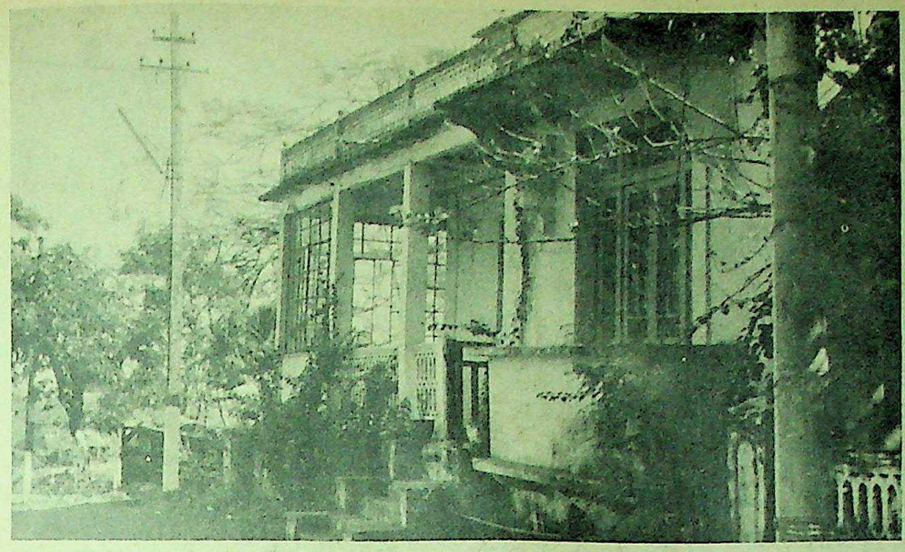

Here lived Trompeta until he and his wife were kidnapped and killed

company, and had other resourceful members—planters, jute merchants, insurance and shipping executives, like Harry Square, a merchant who had arranged the money to bail out the Calcutta zoo from financial stringency. Harry's plan was simple. He had rhino urine sold at a high price for its aphrodisiac properties, real or imagined. The stocks imported from Africa were of suspect quality, so Harry had the rhinos of the zoo defecate while the keepers dangled carrots and sugarcane bits in front of them. The urine was collected and sold fresh, almost from source. In the bargain, he raised a few thousand rupees every month, from 'natives' praying for a hard-on.

Pugh got Grice, who had extensive business contacts, to write a letter to any Goan shipping agent, introducing them as bonafide businessmen. And so, with forged letters and a borrowed Ford V8 station-wagon, specially chosen for its roominess, given the mission in mind, they came to Goa, drove straight to the Hotel Palacio, (which still stands), bang opposite the Secretariat.

'Trompeta' got his intelligence from, among others, Ram Das Gupta, a drop-out from the Aligarh University, and a staunch nationalist. Ram Das's mistress in Bombay would ever so often, hand him an envelope to carry to Goa. He would go to Goa, and at an appointed place — generally a cafe — he would meet 'Trompeta', give him the envelope, collect the money and return to Bombay. Not a pleasantry was exchanged. 'Trompeta' was a strong man, crew-cut like other brother-Nazis, and pushing 40. He was constantly tailed by the British Consul in the colony, also a resident of Altinho. And tailing him was not difficult, considering Goa was a small place. But most of the data that could be collected by tracking him was of little value; 'Trompeta's' principal operations were confined to the Ehrenfels, to which the British Consul had no access.

The Light Horse men, Pugh and Stewart, were quick and energetic and deliberately crude. They learnt that 'Trompeta' never received visitors before nine in the morning. So they went to his Altinho house before eight, and called out to him in German. He answered from behind the closed door, but refused to open up. Soon they coaxed him into letting them in. Once inside, Stewart drew his colt .32 and pressed the muzzle against 'Trompeta's' ribs. They ordered him to clasp his hands behind his head, walked in, and told his wife to follow suit. On the way to the waiting station wagon outside, Greta made a bid to run away. Stewart grabbed her, covered her bleeding mouth with a massive hand, lifted her and shoved her into the rear seat. 'Trompeta' had already collapsed on the seat after being hit on the head with the pistol butt. On the drive, they were given a shot of pentothal.

"Are you going to kill us?" Greta asked when she came round. There was no trace of fear in her eyes, just a little feminine curiosity.

"No, just to make you drowsy," Pugh answered flatly.

'Trompeta' and his wife were driven to Belgaum, where, under relentless interrogation, they gave out Ram Das's name. Ram Das and his mistress were subsequently captured, and killed.

CHICO FERNANDES recalls how that night, his father and his doctor-friend had suddenly shut down their shoe-polish manufacturing laboratory and "spoke into some gadget". A few days ago they had tried in vain to hide Koch and his wife after learning that British agents had arrived in Goa and were on their track. Perhaps, they had relied overmuch on Portuguese neutrality, and 'Trompeta' was caught off guard.

After 'Trompeta' was killed, his work was continued by "people" (whom Chico Fernandes will not name) who would drive to a point on Dona Paula Hill, opposite Marmagoa, and send semaphore signals which Ehrenfels picked up and transmitted.

That meant another mission. So Pugh left his headquarters at Meerut and went to Calcutta again. It was clear the 'Tight' Horse were now going to find themselves in a tight corner. SOE's mission for them was explicit: "No medals if it goes right! You'll be disowned if it goes wrong." In any case, no one was to know of the plan at that stage, except Grice. He was to summon 18 volunteers and ask them to tell their wives that they would be for some time at Ranchi, for drill and exercises. Grice got 14 men from the Light Horse, and four from their peacetime rivals, the Calcutta Scottish.

Pugh's plan was for a hopper barge, the Phoebe, acquired from the Calcutta Port Commissioners, to take the 'party' to Marmagoa. Here they would seize the spy ships and get them out of territorial waters, failing which the ships would be destroyed. The Phoebe was built in 1912, was 206 feet wide, 38 feet long, and had just two bunkers. The only toilet on the ship resembled a telephone booth, except for its slatted floor. It was not oceanworthy. For camouflage, she had been fitted with a funnel and looked very much like an oiler, but the funnel gave her a list when she rolled.

To evade the obvious, Indian 'laskars' were to take the barge to Cochin, where the 'sahibs' would board it. Smaller risks and greater glory went together, after all.

Jack Cartwright, a heart patient who had offered himself for a number of assignments and had been rejected, was sent to Goa as a scout. His son had been captured by the Japanese and Jack wanted to avenge it, somehow. His task in Goa was to pre-empt possible German resistance. SOE's plans were to get as many of the German and Italian officers and crew out of the ships at the time of the attack by the 'boarding party', which was to be carefully planned.

It was carnival time in Goa — for all men and women. For the three days preceding Lent, the Portuguese and Goans just let themselves go. Before Lent's abstinence and penance, there was to be joy and merriment, with no holds barred. So Cartwright organised, through a Goan contact, a Grand Carnival Ball. Just then, two Portuguese sloops had arrived at Marmagoa with a total of 1,800 troops on their way to the Far East, to defend the Portuguese islands of Macau and Timor against the invading Japanese. The officers on all the ships in Marmagoa were welcome to the ball, which was to be a free show. Cartwright also organised, through a pimp in Vasco da Gama's red light area of Baina, a free bacchanal for all the sailors.

When after the arrangements were finalised, Cartwright returned to his hotel, his wife rang up to inform him that their son had been found, a POW in a Burmese camp.

THE Calcutta Light Horse had not seen action since the Boer War in 1900. The 'boarding party' comprised men well past their prime, all

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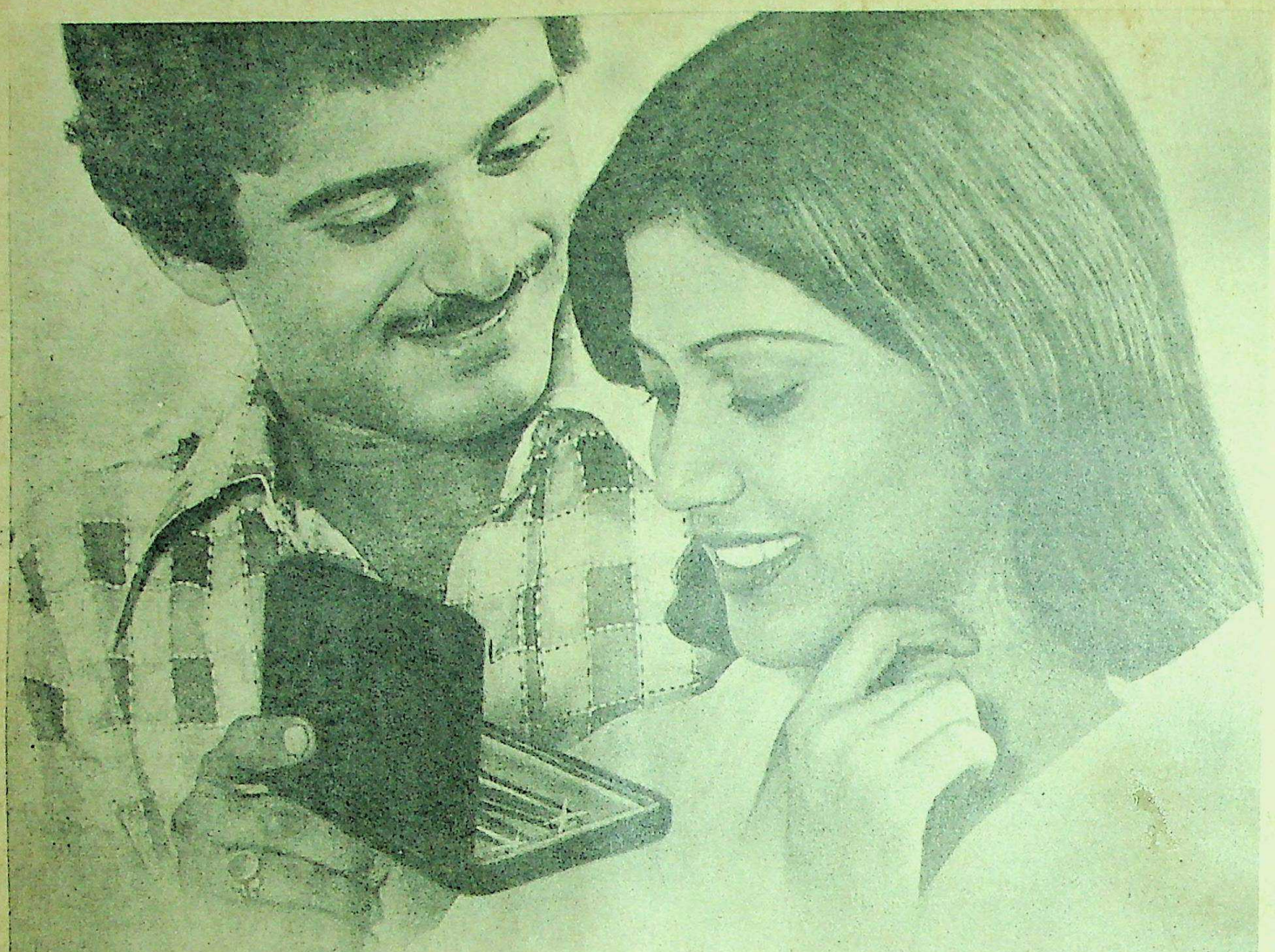

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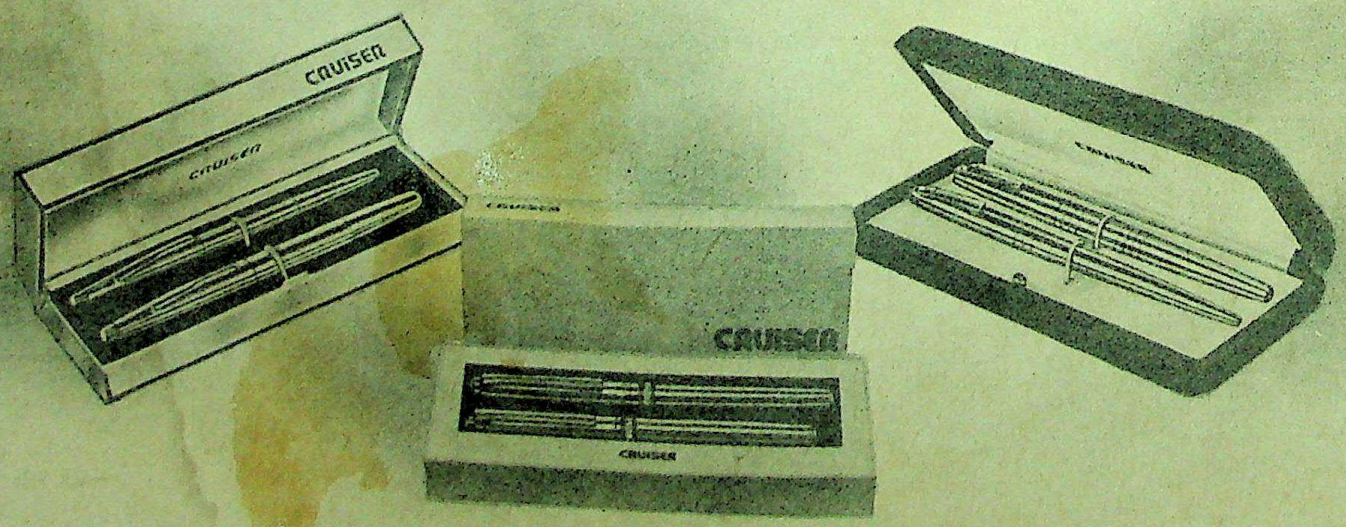

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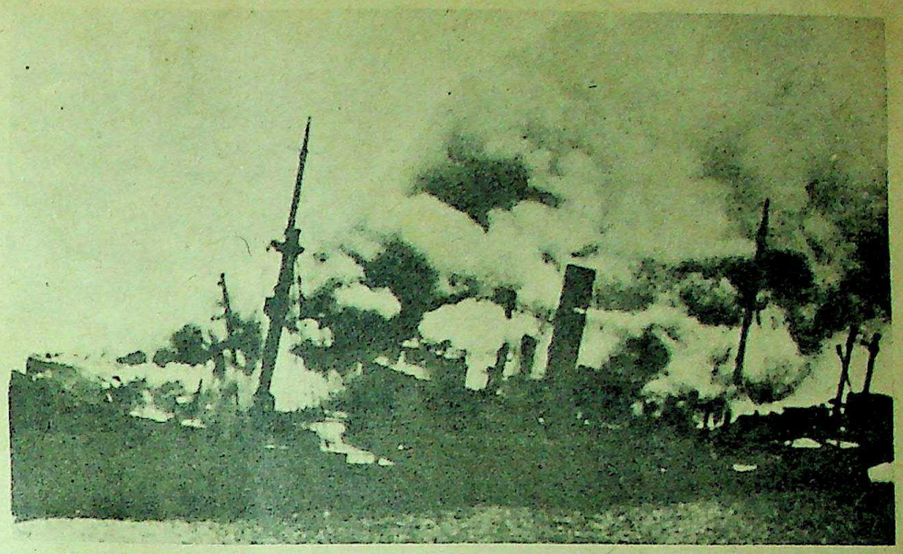
40 plus. And they were all men well placed, used to the best things of life —as *boxwallas*, then were. Here, in the Phoebe, they were just so many untrained, if daring, volunteers, in a huge "iron bathtub with an engine in the middle". They had to sleep on bedrolls spread around the huge hatch in the centre—in which, normally, the Phoebe collected the silt it dredged from the Hooghly to throw into the sea. But they kept their cool—and their sense of humour. Theirs was a mission with no rewards if they succeeded, nor liabilities to Britain if they failed. Bill Manners, a one-eyed volunteer, once a good hockey player (that's how he had lost his eye), every night, before he hit the sack, took out his glass eye, wrapped it in flannel and kept it in his pocket, lest it rolled out into the stormy sea.



Drachenfels in flames after the attack

ROFER "knew" something was in the air. He had been waiting for it, since Koch's death. He had a conference with the other Captains —the Anfora's Garibaldi, the Drachenfels' Schmidt, a man who suffered from chronic dysentery and had a paralytic leg, the Braunfel's Johan Biett—a "great man", according to Karl Brietloff, a sailor and a citizen of Kiel, now settled in Goa "for good".

Rofer took charge of all cargo in the hatches of the ships. The Drachenfels had brought in 2,000 bags of explosives for blasting iron ore mines. The Anfora had tin, aluminium sheets, marble slabs, wheat flour. The Braunfels had oil cakes which she was to take to Finland, and car batteries.

Karl Breitkopf, a crew-member of Braunfels, who still lives in Vasco near the Marmagoa harbour.

Rofer boobytrapped all the ships with the explosives and the car batteries; he covered up the traps with flour and marble. He had made devices which, at the sound of an alarm, would spray the decks with grease and diesel, making the boarding difficult, if not altogether impossible. And Schmidt's huge Kingston valves would be opened in the final act of the ships' scuttle.

"We will not give up the ships. We will die," Karl Brietkoff remembers Rofer saying.

"Those damn Italians cried," Karl recalls. "They were only good for music and women. You won't believe. They had made a garden in the ship and reared pigs."

The Phoebe made the trip from Cochin to Marmagoa on schedule. In the holds, they had chickens and goats. If the chicks stopped laying they were killed, so were the goats if they stopped yielding milk..

On March 9, 1943, under cover of pre-dawn darkness, the Phoebe emerged from nowhere and touched Ehrenfels. Rofer deliberately had not joined the Carnival revellers. He had stayed back. He had also seen the Phoebe, mistaken her for an 'oiler', but was, nonetheless, suspicious. The sentry was to sound the gong "if, she came too close for comfort," were Rofers' orders, before he retired to the bridge.

But the 'boarding party' was made of desperate men. They had nothing to lose—what they were about to do was sheer madness. And they did it well. Red Mac, a boozard of a Scot, shot dead the sentry. Pugh and Stewart who were the only professionals in the group, boarded Ehrenfels, spoke some German to confuse the crews, and the 18 British volunteers, soon enough, were all on board—on bamboo ladders, which were all they had. The Indian 'laskars' manned the Phoebe, all through.

And just then, hell broke loose. The siren in Ehrenfels went dead. The sailors on shore hurriedly picked up their pants and ran out of the whore shops. The officers deserted their waltzing partners, in midstep.

"Is it Carnival? That Thiga was asking me, man. He was so drunk, man, he tried to go forward and come back. Oh, how we laughed, man. But we knew what it was. It was no laughing matter." Karl tells me, his little eyes blinking in the hot sun of Marmagoa's jetty. "We were here"—and he points out to a portion of the Port. (Recently, Karl salvaged for the Marmagoa Port Trust 700 tons of steel scrap, which once was the hull of Ehrenfels.)

Rofer, almost singlehanded, faced the British. One by one, the ships blew themselves up. It was an inferno, to which the squealing pigs on Anfora added a touch of comedy.

"It was all over man, just like that" says Karl, and snapping his massive thumbs, more in sorrow than in anger.

Dimzak, also an ex-German sailor, and presently Panaji's best watch repairer—actually, he is an expert in musical boxes—is German enough not to admit that the British did it. "It was something I do not know." And 36 years have gone by. "People talk, you know," he says, without believing it himself, and shakes his ageing head.

CAPTAIN Rofer was killed during the scuttle. Captain Schimdt slit his wrists in the hospital, determined not to submit himself to interrogation. The Portuguese accused the Germans and the Italians of having destroyed the ships "after a drunken carnival brawl". And, for ten years, they were in jail—much after the war had ended.

Of the "boarding party", only two were injured, but they were retrieved and taken back.

And "as the paint of the burning ships burst in giant blisters", the Phoebe revved its engine. Back in the Phoebe, Pugh passed around bottles of rum, brandy and what have you—a good hard drink to a mission accomplished. For no rewards!

Bill Manners took out his glass eye from his pocket and fitted it into his empty socket. It was dawn. ■

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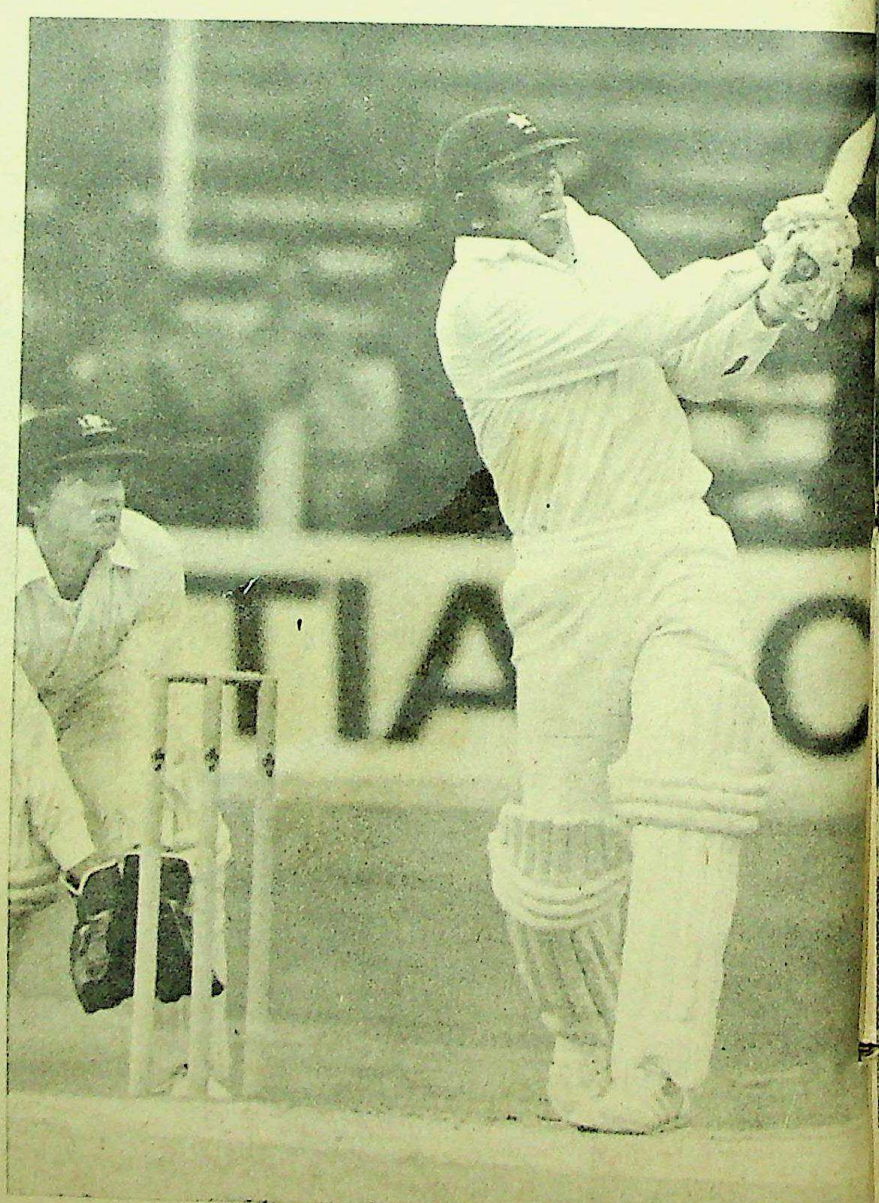
The Cup that cheered the West Indies

Photographs by Patrick Eagar



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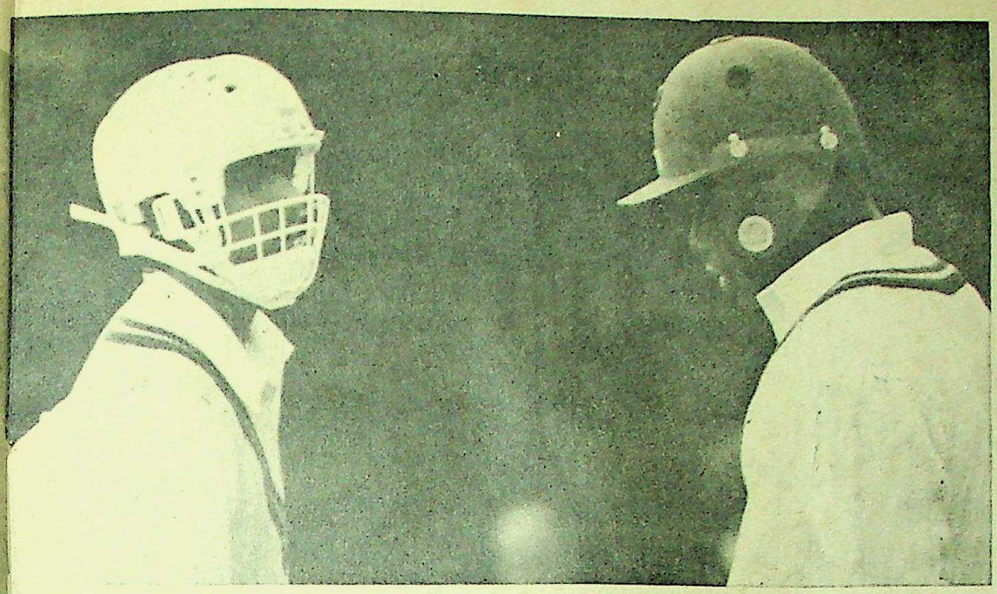
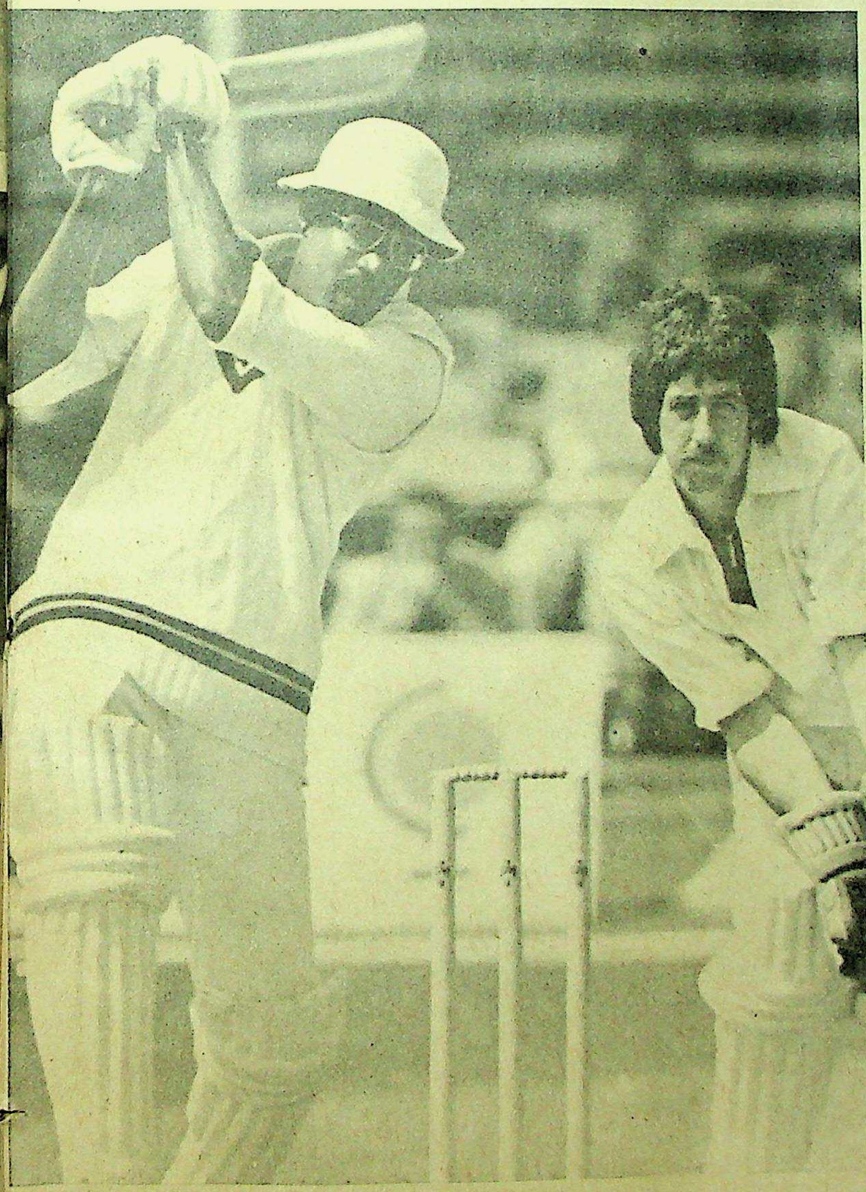


LEFT PAGE : Below right, Pakistan's Majid Khan savours a hit in the match with Australia at Trent Bridge. Below left, Geoff Boycott bowls in the match between England and Australia at Lords; Boycott took two wickets. Top right, Bob Willis clean bowled by Sikandar Bakht in the match between Pakistan and England at Headingley.

RIGHT PAGE : Top left, contrasting headgear. West Indians Faoud Bacchus (l) and Desmond Haynes (r) discuss tactics in a warming-up match against Middlesex before the start of the Prudential Cup. Below right, one of the many lusty shots West Indian Gordon Greenidge brought off in his sparkling 106 against India at Edgbaston. Below left, West Indian Clive Lloyd in action against New Zealand at Trent Bridge.



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KHAAS BAAT

THE one actor who is never short of new stunts, when it comes to getting publicity for himself, is *Ranjeet*. This guy had been complaining for a long time that his girlfriend-mistress, Pushpa, the leech in his life, Simple Kapadia and all the servants in his bungalow were taking undue advantage of his kindness, generosity and good nature. At that time, he claimed that he was fed up of all the *jhanjhats* and *teda* ways of the world. He stated that he wanted to live his life in peace, "just go for my shooting and come home and relax." He also requested his friends from the Press to stop writing about him because he wished to be a recluse. For a recluse, Ranjeet's latest behaviour is very puzzling. He has got himself a new girlfriend (he claims she is a foreigner) and it is with great pride that he has been attending every possible function with the girl hanging on his arm. But if Ranjeet knows what is good for him he will go only this far and no further. When I last met Pushpa, she was gritting her teeth in anger. She refused to comment on the new girl in Ranjeet's life, but I noted that she was filing her nails with great care that day. And Pushpa's scratches leave lasting impressions as Simple Kapadia can testify!

KAMALAHASAN, the superstar in the South, has been offered roles in Hindi films by many Bombay producers, but he has not accepted any of them. Rumour has it that it is wife Vani (ex-actress herself) who has been dissuading him from working in the Bombay industry. Why Vani? Don't tell us that grapes are sour!

HAS *Padmini Kapila* got a new godfather or something? She was glowing like a roadside neon when I saw her in a restaurant the other day. I overheard her telling her companion (and film stars automatically develop extra loud voices when they are in public places) that in another fortnight something really exciting was going to take place in her life, which was going to change things completely for her. Being a serious-minded person myself, I took it for granted that she was referring to her film career. But for all one knows, she may have merely been talking about her next trip to exotic Dubai. In case that has set you wondering, let me tell you that Padmini's famous Dubai trips have been commented on and suspected, in many Bombay film magazines.

Padmini Kapila : something exciting

EVEN before she has completely hooked *Rishi Kapoor*, Neetu Singh is trying to put on massive airs with her friends in the industry. When she goes for her shooting assignments, she no longer laughs and jokes with the unit workers as she used to do before. She holds her nose up in the air and pretends that all of them are worthy of nothing but her contempt since she is the great 'Mrs Rishi Kapoor' (to be). On the sets of *Chorni*, Sonia Sahni tried to chat with her, but Neetu answered in monosyllables and showed her reluctance to talk openly, by yawning, asking Sonia the time, etc.,. Any other person would have got the message, but not Sonia. She kept jabbering, quite oblivious to Neetu's *nakhras*. In the end, Neetu had to burst out laughing at the shameless Sonia, and join in the light-hearted banter. And as Neetu laughed, one could almost see signs of the old Neetu, the likeable, appealing Neetu who had been so popular with everybody!

AMRISH PURI, the character-actor who tried his best to scare the lights out of everybody in *Jaani Dushman*, is convinced that he is the Indian version of Christopher Lee. In fact, before he started shooting for that film, it seems he used to sit with books on the make-up of Count Dracula and study them intensively, late into the night. Though why he should require make-up, I don't know. He looks like Dracula as he is.

RITA BHADURI, the talented actress who is being ignored by Hindi film producers, seems to be doing quite well for herself. She is working in a lot of Gujarati films and doing a lot of TV work, too. It won't be long before the Bombay producers wake up to her true worth. If I were Rita, I would teach them a lesson by refusing to work with them.

SHIRJEE

Rita : food for producers' thought

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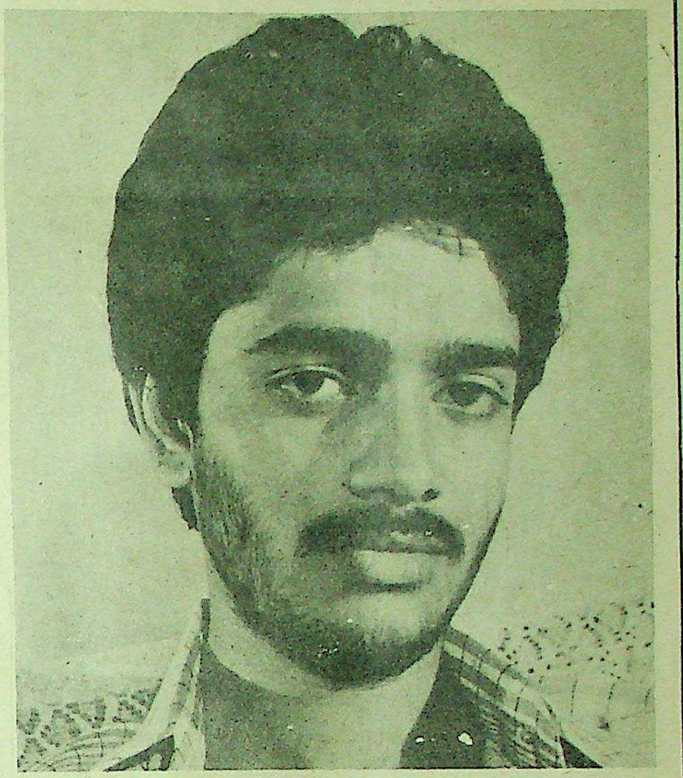
KHAAS BAAT

"SHOULD every call girl go around wearing blouses with plunging necklines?" asked *Sharmila Tagore*. In Madras, after a long gap, to act in a Malayalam film *Chuvanna Chirakukkal* being directed by N. Sankaran Nair, Sharmila declared that she won't wear revealing clothes. Ioman is cast opposite her : the film is being shot at breakneck speed and is being readied for release in August. Director Nair was a bit disappointed with Sharmila's refusal to titillate the audience, but he's confident that his film will sell as it presents "an altogether different kind of call girl", not the self-pitying, virtuous type but a spirited call girl who's not ashamed of her profession, who's obsessed with the idea of becoming the highest-paid professional.

SRIVIDYA, the wide-eyed heroine, is hoping that she will soon come out of dark tunnel which she is in at the moment. Due for immediate release is *Imayam*. Though it's dominated by Sivaji Ganesan, she hopes she will shine in a few good scenes. And there's the untitled Tamil film, rumoured to be a version of *Khatta Meetha*, in which she's paired with Vishnuvardhan. Vidya still has plenty of charm, but she should give serious thought to her figure. So what if Sripriya, K. R. Vijaya and many other "fatties" are accepted by the audience? It isn't as if Madras audiences do not appreciate slim, graceful heroines.

JAYAN has got an excellent boost through the fantastic success of his Malayalam hit *Sara Pancharam*, a story of a horse-keeper whose sexual passion wrecks the lives of a mother and daughter. The film is soon to be remade in Tamil, but Jayan may not play the lead role. His mannerisms are too close to those of Rajnikant: naturally, Tamil producers are wary of him.

Sheela played the role of mother in *Sara Pancharam* after the success of I. V. Sasi's *Yeetta* in which she played the role of a lusty woman. Producers are keen on casting her in similar roles. In fact, in *Sara Pancharam* it is she who arouses the passion of the horse-keeper.



Suresh : from Kenya with love

KENYA-born *Suresh*, a family friend of director Sankaran Nair, was quite impressive in *Tamburatti* one of those much discussed "sex" films from Kerala. After having crossed swords with the censors, and with many of the so called "hot" scenes butchered, the film is running again. And doing very well. Suresh, however, isn't keen on continuing in films — doesn't like the tense atmosphere. And he has plans to go back to Kenya, or maybe to the UK and plunge into business. In the meanwhile, director Nair is trying to feature him in one of his productions.

KRISHNACHANDER, the young boy who made love to Jayabharathy in *Rathi Nirvedham* looks like a regular sissy, but the producers in Kerala see in him the *desi* edition of Errol Flynn. Following the box-office success of *Rathi Nirvedham*, he was cast in a dozen films in which he was made to seduce and flatter women older than him. Maybe the women couldn't produce the excitement among the audience like Jayabharathy did, maybe the audience waited for Krishnachander to grow up (he didn't). All these films, *F14 Vayasile* included, failed at the boxoffice.

WHEN comedian *Nagesh* started hitting the bottle in a big way, a few years ago, his rivals said that he wouldn't last long. But something keeps Nagesh going. Despite many domestic problems, Nagesh has managed to continue to make people laugh.

Surulirajan and *Thengai Srinivasan* have benefited from Nagesh's personal problems. They have bagged many of his assignments. And yet the Nagesh fans are happy to see their favourite actor now and then. For, who down South, can so superbly blend pathos and humour? Nagesh even managed to get Telugu producer, Rama Naidu, to sponsor a film which he directed with Jayasudha as the heroine. The title of the film is *Murattadu* Naidu heard the outline of the story from Nagesh and gave him the green signal. The film wasn't a masterpiece, but it was a welcome change from the routine Telugu melodramas and it turned out to be an average success. More offers came Nagesh's way but he was somehow not too keen on taking up another film for some time. "Give me good roles," he asked the producers. Some of them did. Yet one wonders if Nagesh can produce the kind of comedy he did in *Kathalikka Neramillai*.

MADHU MALINI was featured in a small role in a Tamil film *Thayillamal Nanillai*. The advertisements proudly acclaimed that she was a Bombay "star"! Never mind the misleading ads, her sexy dance in the film was received with lusty wolf-whistles. And now she's busy stripping herself to glory, though some meaty, emotional roles are on her way.

IT's a pity that a smart actress like *Raji* hasn't gone places, but she seems to have made one good conquest. Upcoming actor *Chakrapani's* name is being increasingly linked with Raji's : the two met for the first time while working in a film being made by veteran actress Bhanumati. Soon assorted tongues started clattering about the impending marriage. No wedding bells have been heard, and a liberated Raji may not want a marriage so soon.

THEY called her the 'dark fluke'. They swore that she just won't click. And that her godfather, K. Balachander, would regret casting her in *Maro Charitra*. When the film turned out to be a golden jubilee hit, the so-called box-office pundits said, "Congratulate Kamalahasan, he's responsible for the super success".

But *Sarita* is going places. And how. This very 'plain' looking woman is now enjoying the success of two more films, *Vijaya* in Telugu and *Ponnu Oorukku Pudusu* in Tamil. Taking keen interest in her is Kamalahasan, who believes that Sarita is one of the most intelligent actresses he has ever come across. And knowing the general IQ of actresses down South, one is inclined to believe Kamalahasan.

PIOUSJI

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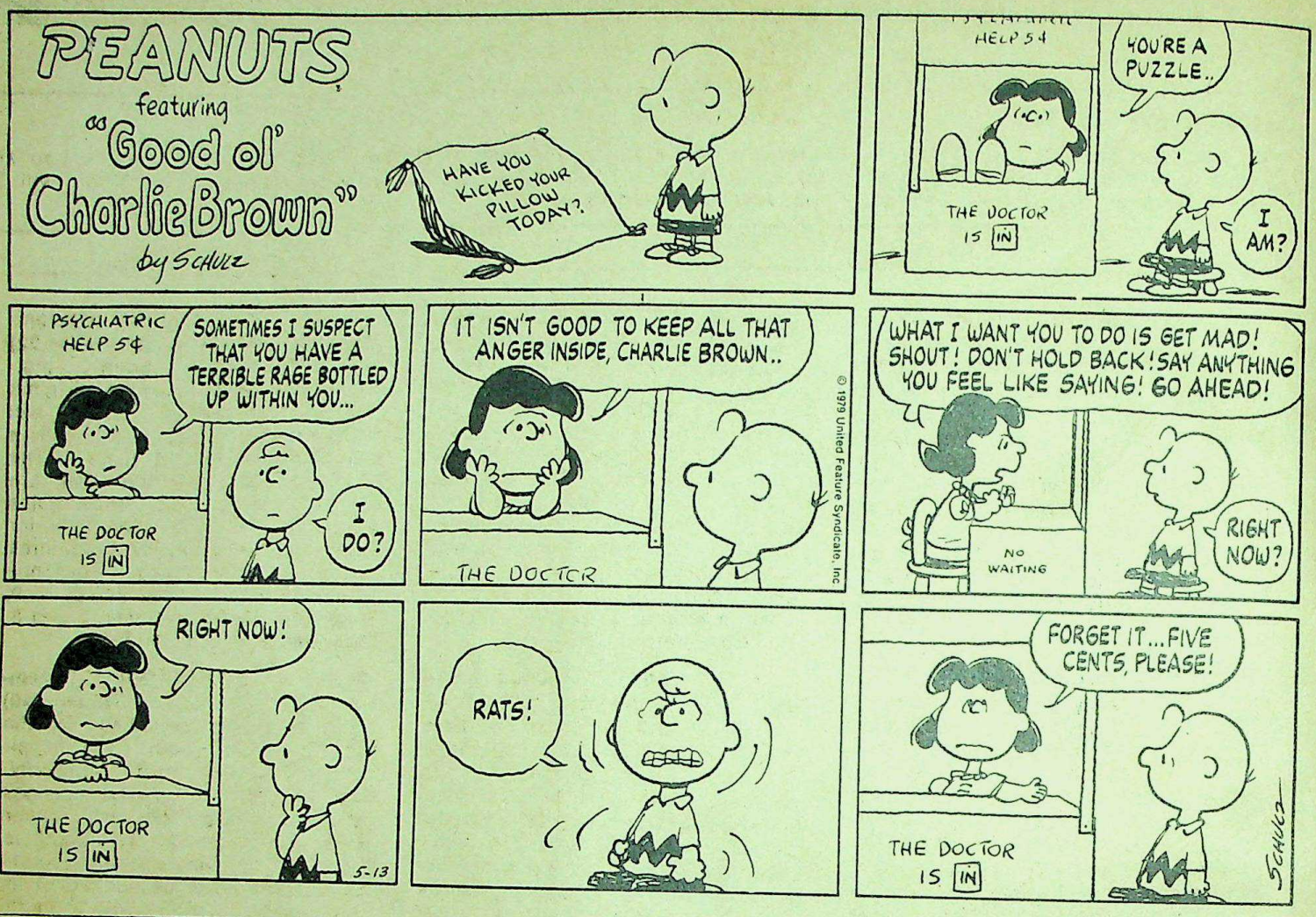

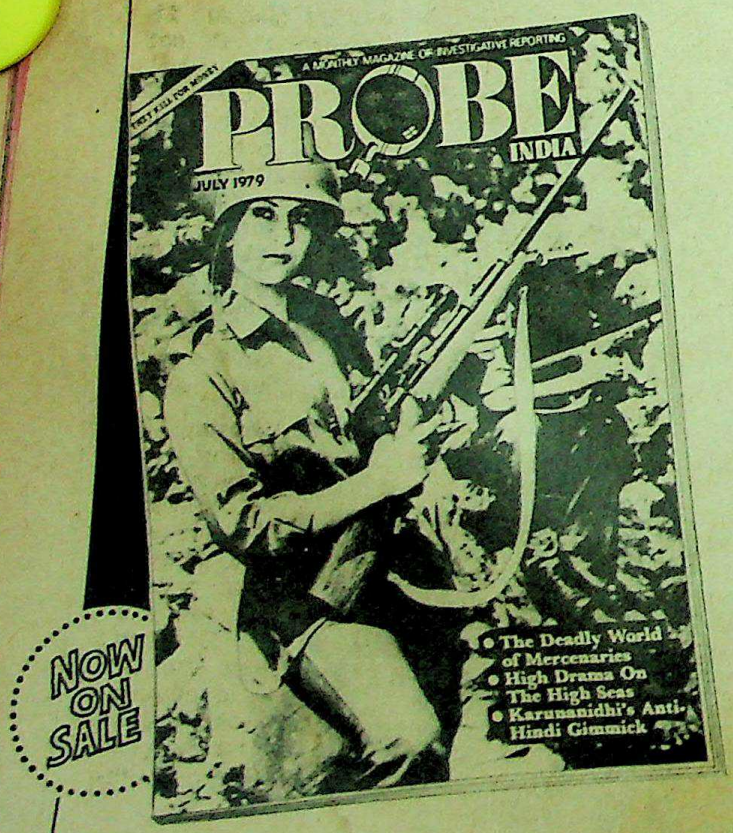

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Beginning July 8

This week the Sun alone is in Gemini, Jupiter and Mercury are conjoined in Cancer. Rahu and Saturn are in Leo and Uranus is in Libra. Neptune alone is in Scorpio, Kethu is in Aquarius and Mars is in Taurus. The Moon will be moving through Sagittarius, Capricorn and Aquarius from Scorpio.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) You are warned not to make sudden erratic changes. Watch finances carefully. Your success will be praised by your friends and relatives. Your health will improve. Some medical expenditure in the family is in the offing. Utilise your energy and initiative in your career. **Good dates:** 11, 12, 13 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 3. **Favourable direction:** West.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) The week is auspicious and a new friendship is in the offing. Guard against trickery and deception especially in financial matters. Your affairs make good progress towards the middle of the week, although there might be some anxiety and annoyance from family members. Love and social activity is forecast. In general, this is a week of happiness. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 10 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 6. **Favourable direction:** North.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Everything progresses on an even note this week. Health will need extra care. You might have to make some unfavourable decisions. Your own industry and initiative will help you gain fortune. You will not be successful in meeting people but you will be able to maintain your prestige with your juniors. **Good dates:** 9, 10, 12 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) This is going to be a week of mixed fortunes for you. An unexpected upheaval will result in financial gain. There might be chances of deception and misinterpretation from friends. Pending legal suits will cause you mental worry. Reply to letters immediately if they are concerned with love. **Good dates:** 8, 10, 12 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 9 and 10. **Favourable direction:** East.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) Don't neglect your job. You will have to strive hard and in the process you will gain a little. You need not worry about your family. Everything proceeds on a normal course. You will have to spend money on yourself for medical treatment. Businessmen are advised to make decisions after careful consultation with partners. **Good dates:** 8, 10, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) There will be many perplexing problems this week which you will have to overcome. There will be some sudden unexpected events beyond your control. Follow your intuition since this is a critical week for businessmen. Be sareful before entering into new contracts. Some might pe transferred. Take care of yourself since there is a possibility of a mild attack of cold. **Good dates:** 11, 12 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Some fortune is in the offing. Businessmen are advised to take care in matters involving law and property. Meet your relatives and discuss alliances regarding marriage with them. Some will gain through speculation, lotteries and betting. A letter from a distant place will bring good news. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) In the beginning of the week there will be new opportunities ani this will help you in gaining plenty of confidence. The end of the week sees a reversal of trends. You will have to spend some money in maintaining your status. Be ready to be a host at a social occasion. The end of the week will bring good news. Do not depend on others as regards speculation. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Stellar portents indicate success and happiness which will come through young people. Elders will cause anxiety at times. The first three days of the week are bound to bring you some gains financially. This is good time for attempting new business ventures and finalising contracts. Romance proves fruitful. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 11 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 8. **Favourable direction:** East.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) The beginning of the week will see happiness and prosperity. New friends, successful changes and travel are foreseen. Your health will be good. This week is favourabe for marriage and courtship. Children will be successful in their studies. Letters will bring in good news from far away. Sportsmen and technicians gain. **Good dates:** 9, 11, 12 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 5. **Favourable direction:** West.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Do not be afraid to adopt novel ideas in business. However, beware of arousing hostility by your impulsive actions. Concentrate on your vocation rather than on love and marriage, since some sort of disappointment is in the offing. An unexpected event will cause anxiety and expense in the middle of the week. **Good dates:** 9, 10, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 5. **Favourable direction:** West.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This week promises to be one of more than average good fortune. You will be able to complete some of your unfinished work. Beneficial changes in your professional career and travel are in the offing. Children will be successful in their studies. Businessmen are advised to acquire and stock new stores. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 12 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

M. B. RAMAN

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SUNDAY

NEXT WEEK

THE LAWLESS LAWMEN

The police-Government confrontation has assumed disastrous proportions. Has the Central Government become impotent ? SAUMITRA BANNERJEE, from Bokaro, and AJOY BOSE, from Delhi, report on perhaps the most dangerous revolt in independent India.

NADIA : COMMUNAL DACOITS

Another spark of violence, and this time in West Bengal, which has not known a serious communal riot for years. SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY describes another expression of mass insanity.

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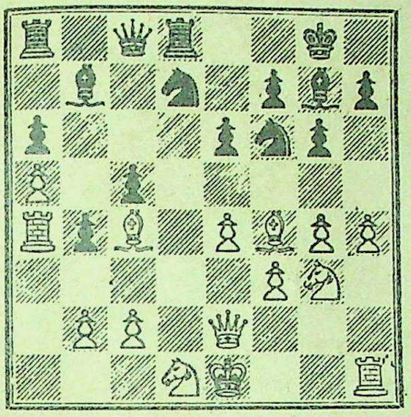
A galaxy of grandmasters

Nunn (Black) to play



Letzelter (White)
Position after White's 18th move

By winning a strong international tournament in Budapest last summer John Nunn became the fourth English player to qualify for the title of Grandmaster in a period spanning not much more than two years. John deserves great credit for his fine achievement. He is not only a leading chessplayer but also one of the country's most promising young mathematicians. How he finds time to concentrate on both pursuits I shall never know.

Why the sudden spate of English grandmasters? Until Tony Miles captured the title in 1976 England had never had a grandmaster in her history, yet since then we have produced more than the rest of Western Europe combined. Have we suddenly conceived a generation of bionic chessplayers, or is it the fluorine they put in our drinking-water? I think the explanation is rather simple. There always have been and always will be chessplayers of great potential in this country, but only recently have any serious efforts been made to develop their talents. A lot of people are doing a lot of work to provide strong, competitive tournaments for developing players and the results are almost inevitable. This is the first generation lucky enough to be given regular opportunities to compete against grandmasters and so acquire their special skills and techniques. There's no magic, just a simple question of practice making perfect.

The main quality of John Nunn's play is his incisiveness. The shortest distance between two points is a straight line and John will always find the most direct line of play. I give an example of his ferocious style taken from the Olympiad in Haifa 1976. Nunn's opponent is happily preparing his own attack when he is suddenly flattened by a series of tactical bombshells. A dazzling display.

White: J. Letzelter (France). Black: J. Nunn (England). Haifa 1976. Pirc Defence.
1. P—K4, P—KN3; 2. P—Q4, B—N2; 3. N—QB3, P—Q3; 4. B—K3, P—QR3; 5. Q—Q2, P—QN4; 6. P—B3, N—Q2; 7. P—QR4, P—N5; 8. N—Q1, R—N1; 9. P—R5, KN—B3; 10. R—R4, P—B4; 11. P x P, P x P; 12. B—KB4, R—R1; 13. B—QB4, O—O; 14. P—KN4, B—N2; 15. N—K2, Q—B1; 16. N—N3, R—Q1; 17. Q—K2, P—K3; 18. P—R4 (Diagram). White has successfully blockaded the queenside and seems well set for a standard kingside attack with P—R5, but Nunn produces a devastating counter-attack out of a clear sky.

18. . . . N—Q4! For if 19 P x N, P x P the opening of the K-file is disasterous for White.
19. B—KN5, Q—B2! 20. B x R, R x B! Deftly played. If 20. . . . Q x N+, 21 Q—B2 White succeeds in exchanging the queens. Black's onslaught bears the unmistakable signature of Tal.
21. P x N. P x P! White is now a rook ahead but his whole position is in flames.
22. N—K4. What else?
22. . . . P x N; 23. P x P, Q—N6+; 24. N—B2, B—Q5; 25. P—B3, P x P; 26. P x P, B x N+; 27. Q x B, Q x P+; 28. Q—Q2. Losing immediately, but there is of course no defence anyway.
28. . . . Q x Q+; 29. K x Q, N—N3+; 30. B—Q5, N x R; 31. K—B2, B x B; 32. P x B, R x P; 33. R—R1, R—Q5; 34. R—QN1, R x P; 35. R—N8+, K—N2; 36. R—QR8, P—B5; 37. R x P, R—N7+; 38. K—B1, N—B4, 39. R—B6, N—N6+ and White (belatedly) resigned

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

SOME 'equals' are not quite so equal as others. Would you think it could make any difference whether East, defending against Six Spades, played the King of clubs or the Jack on the opening lead?

Dealer, East N-S vulnerable

	♠ A K 8 6 4 2 ♥ A 10 5 ♦ 10 3 ♣ 9 4	
♠ 7 3 ♥ — ♦ Q 8 7 4 2 ♣ 10 7 6 5 3 2	N W E S	♠ 9 ♥ K Q J 9 7 3 ♦ 9 6 5 ♣ K J 8
	♠ Q J 10 5 ♥ 8 6 4 2 ♦ A K J ♣ A Q	

East, playing weak Two-bids, opened Two Hearts and the bidding continued:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	—	2♥
dble	No	3♥	No
3♠	No	5♠	No
6♠	No	No	No

It was as well that North did not become the declarer, because the spade slam cannot be made after a heart lead and a ruff.

Against Six Spades by South, West led ♣ 7, following the current style of second best from weak suits. East played the King and South won. Deciding that East had already shown his ration for a weak Two-bid and that West must hold ♦ Q, South played for a loser-on-loser elimination, arriving at this end position:

	♠ K 8 6 4 ♥ 10 5 ♦ — ♣ —	
♠ — ♥ — ♦ Q 8 7 ♣ 10 6 5	N W E S	♠ — ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ 9 ♣ J
	♠ J 10 ♥ 8 6 4 ♦ J ♣ —	

South led ♦ J. West played the Queen and a heart was discarded from dummy, leaving West on play.

When a defender who holds K J can be certain that his partner has not underled the Ace it is usually good play to put in the Jack. For one thing, you discover who holds the Queen. Here the play gains in a different way. If East plays ♣ J at trick 1 South may place West with the King of clubs and East with the Queen of diamonds. If he takes that view and finesses ♦ J he loses the contract.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

PIONEER Australian airmen are portrayed on four new stamps issued in Australia to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the first trans-Pacific flight. This one features Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Southern Cross, the aeroplane in which he and Charles Ulm, with two American airmen, flew in 1928 from Oakland, California, via Hawaii and Fiji to Brisbane. The other stamps portray Ulm, Bert Hinkler and Harry Hawker. All four men died in different air crashes, three of them while still in their thirties and Hinkler at the age of 41. The new stamps are also available in a miniature sheet containing one of each value with a map of the flight and a commemorative inscription.

C.W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. Where is the Airbus manufactured?
2. What was the name of the Soviet pilot who flew in a MIG-25 into a Japanese airport?
3. Who owns the French left-wing daily 'Liberation'?
4. What is the meaning of the word 'Id-ul-Fitr'?
5. What is the MIRV?
6. Who was the first president of China?
7. In printing terminology, what does an 'em' mean?
8. In which year was the SALT-I agreement signed?
9. How often is the Kumbha Mela held?
10. Who is the only man before Bjorn Borg to have won the Wimbledon title thrice in a row?
11. Where is the Orly airport?

ANSWERS

1. In Toulouse, France.
2. First Lieutenant Victor Belenko.
3. Jean Paul Sartre.
4. Id from Ida meaning holiday and Fitr means alms.
5. Multiple Independently-targeted Re-entry Vehicle.
6. Dr Sun Yat Sen.
7. A measure of width of a column.
8. 1960.
9. Once in every 144 years.
10. Fred Perry.
11. Paris.

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BP 4161

Suvega: still at the top–in mopeds

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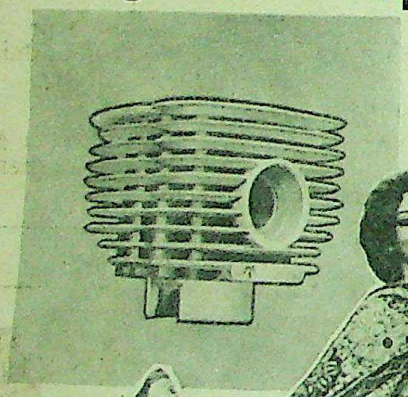

SAA/MIL/433

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Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

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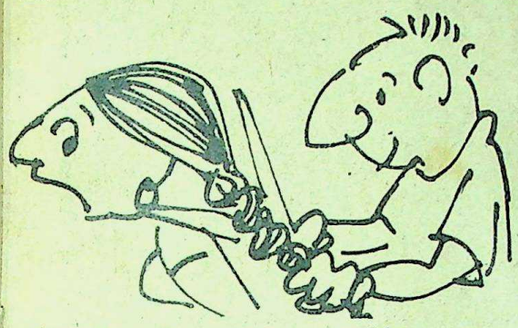
VARIETY

this india

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first



SURAT : A young superstitious man landed in custody after being caught while carrying out his vow to cut the braids of as many as 120 young girls to propitiate the goddess "Khodiar". The man, a petty hawker, was caught while going for a 22nd braid. He was held while working his scissors on his victim in a State Transport bus in Amod, a taluka town in Broach district adjoining Surat. The Amod police produced him before a magistrate in Broach who sent him to judicial custody. The police said that the culprit had told them that had he succeeded in offering 120 braids to the goddess his mother would have "died" and he would have lived a "prosperous" life. Except three, all the 22 girls who lost their beautifying plaits of hair to him were unmarried, the police said—*The Hindu* (S. Ignatius Mohan, Madras)

SIRSI : The change in name of two districts from North Kanara (Karwar) and South Kanara (Mangalore) to Uttara Kannada and Dakshina Kannada has caused confusion—at least to the postal authorities. Uttara Kannada is referred as U.K. in postal circles here. A letter written by the private secretary to the State Finance Minister to the Secretary of the Ankola Town Municipality last July travelled all the way to England and back here nearly after 10 months. The address was given as "Ankola, U.K.." —*The Hindu* (GN. C. Sailesh, Bangalore)

CALCUTTA : Customs authorities at Calcutta Airport were baffled when an Indian national who came in an Air-India flight from Bangkok, persistently refused to open his folio bag. A custom officer was only allowed to feel the bag from outside. It was soft. "What is it?", he asked. "Halua", replied the man. Everyone around laughed but not the Custom man. He suddenly gave a pull at the zip fastener and "Hiss...ss..."—a live cobra. The man and his snake, which measured four feet but had its venomous sting removed, were handed over to the police but before that he had to pay a nominal fine of Rs 50 for violating aircraft rules —*Hindusthan Standard* (Pradip Kumar Datta, Calcutta)

TRIVANDRUM : Believe it or not they wrote together and passed together the pre-degree examination of the Kerala University this year: a 55-year-old mother and her 17-year-old daughter. While the mother, Mrs Annamma Patil made it in the first class her daughter Gloria had to be content with a second class pass. As for the mother who is now a grandma, it was the realisation of a 39-year-old dream. She received the happy news from her own journalist son while her ten-month-old grandson was on her lap playing with the granny—*Indian Express* (I. K. A. Salam, Kerala)

TELLICHERRY : Four pieces of stone thrown to disturb a reception meeting organised by the Muslim Youth League, were auctioned for Rs 365. The function was held to felicitate Mr Ahammad Maniyur and others who had resigned from the Opposition Muslim Students' Federation. As the stone pieces were being auctioned the situation worsened when soda bottles were freely used. Police had to intervene and chase the miscreants and the meeting continued. The police have registered a case—*The Hindu* (S. Issias, Trivandrum)

india abroad

LONDON: Three Indian children have become a problem of the British authorities. They are unwanted by their grandparents in India. They are too old to look after them. Home Office officials say their mother who is here, is also not interested in them. Jayesh, 16, Sajesh, 13, and Dipesh, 10, should have already been with their grandparents by now but for the fact that two of the brothers suddenly fell ill. So the authorities decided that the third should not also go. The two brothers have not recovered from illness. They may be sent back to India next week, depending upon the outcome of an appeal by the former Labour MP, Mr Robert Bean. Mrs Patel, mother of the children came to Britain in 1975 having left her husband in Kenya and having sent the children to their grandparents in India. In March this year, the children came here to join their mother. Home Office officials are now sending them back because their mother could not look after them during the period. "This is not true," according to Mr Bean. He says, he has evidence to prove that Mrs Patel has been looking after them. Mrs Patel works for British rail. Mrs Patel came to Britain with an entry passport. Although she was able to stay in Britain the fact that her children came to the country in March makes the case complex. The children have Indian passports but are also registered on their mother's British passport. The Indian High Commission is looking into the case as well—*Patriot*

without comment

I HAVE seen enough, done enough, earned enough, wasted enough, so I thought let me do something for my country—Biju Patnaik

INDIRA "AMMA" (mother) finds an "Appa" (father) in Urs—Headline in *Blitz*

YOUR CONCEPT of command from above and implicit obedience from below, is a concept of the bygone ages—Devraj Urs to Mrs Gandhi

IN WEST Bengal, power shortage, like death, comes without any warning—G. D. Birla

JOHN PAUL II's not just a pop religious figure. He is a religious phenomenon for all seasons—A prelate quoted in *Newsweek*

WITHOUT Christ it is impossible to trace the history of Poland—Pope John Paul II

I SHALL return to Iran. I believe in Providence...I am a religious man—The exiled Shah of Iran

YOU CAN keep your technology, your problems and your evils, and we will just keep our oil—Colonel Gaddafi of Libya to an American interviewer

SALT II is not a favour we are doing for the Soviet Union—US President Jimmy Carter

WE COULD have had a good affair—Jane Fonda on her father Henry Fonda

humour in real life

A NEWSPAPER advertisement says : "Wanted a mad-servant for a mental hospital" — R. N. Senpati, Balasore

SIGNBOARD at a petrol station now reads — "EAT TYRES ... GIVES MORE MILEAGE — Kallikal Rahmu, Tellicherry

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

Illustrations/Ahi Bhusan Malik

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DELHI DIARY

EXPLOSIVE BUSINESS

THE Balasubramaniam raid case is giving Kanti Desai the jitters and his father some uneasy moments. The Union Finance Ministry is taking up the matter with the Prime Minister. And it is quite possible that the Minister in charge, Mr Charan Singh, will enter into a dialogue with Mr Desai on the issue. The famous Desai-Charan correspondence which ultimately led to his ouster from the Cabinet last year may be repeated all over again. Whatever the outcome, one thing is certain. Both sides are pretty cautious in launching moves and counter-moves, for this time there will not be any peacemakers and this will be a round which will be fought to the finish. Incidentally, the free Press has not exactly covered itself with glory by the way it has handled the Balasubramaniam story. It has generally refused to touch the case whose ramifications lead up to the doorsteps of the Prime Minister and treated it like the plague. The champions of Press freedom have been digging up the ghosts laid to rest long ago—the L. N. Mishra murder for one—but seem to have no time and patience for the shenanigans of the regime in power. An agency story put out from Madras following raids there in connection with the Balasubramaniam-Sanjay-Kanti axis was consigned to the dustbin by most newspapers and even when a single newspaper used it, the item was put on the back page among local titbits about stabbings and snatchings in the city.

CHAUDHURY : HOT, COLD OR LUKEWARM ?

SENIOR Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Charan Singh, is caught in a dilemma. His most vociferous supporters in the Janata want him to take a hawkish line and fight it out with the detractors of the former BLD, whereas the Chaudhury himself wants to take a more conciliatory approach and does not want to say or do anything that will plunge the Party into another crisis. Former Health Minister Raj Narain and about a score of MPs had virtually served notice on Charan Singh that if he does not scotch the attempts of the Jana Sangh-Congress(O) combine to knock out former BLD men from various positions of power in the Janata Government and Party organisation, they will walk out of Janata and form a separate group in Parliament. Now Mr Raj Narain has taken the plunge.

Mr Singh, aware of the incensed mood of his close followers, has decided to take the middle path: neither peace nor war. He would write a strong letter to Party President Chandrashekhar and also take up the issue with Mr Desai but would not go to the Press as he did last time when he made the famous "pack of impotents" statement. All in all, an ominous situation for the faction-ridden ruling Party. The Janata cookie seems to be crumbling once again. Meanwhile, Raj Narain is threatening to take the Balasubramaniam-Kanti scandal to the streets. One does not know how long Mr Singh will manage to keep the irrepressible former Health Minister on the leash.

Biswaranjan Rakshit

BUREAUCRAT ILL-TREATS CM

ASSAM Chief Minister Golap Borbora made a formal complaint to the Prime Minister, Mr Morarji Desai, that despite repeated requests to the then Railway Board chairman, Mr Rajan did not increase the supply of wagons to Assam and North Eastern Council States. He said that whenever he met Mr Rajan, he treated the Chief Minister as a subordinate. Mr Borbora told the PM, "How long shall I be treated like this?" After hearing this the PM personally called Mr Rajan and asked for an explanation. He found the explanation unsatisfactory and the ground for Rajan's removal was thus prepared.

WESTWARD HO !

THE summer exodus of VIPs from Delhi is in full swing. It has made no difference that the Janata Government is at the helm of affairs. Ministers and officials have found some excuse or other to escape from the Delhi heat. Yet, there is an unfortunate senior official whose proposal to go abroad has been turned down by the Cabinet Secretariat. Prof. B. Nag, who joined the Department of Electronics as secretary and chairman of the Electronics Commission in December last year, had chalked out a programme to visit some European countries from the first week of July. But the proposal was turned down by none other than the Prime Minister who is in charge of the Electronics Department. The reason given is said to be that Prof. Nag's presence in the capital is necessary in view of the stormy Parliament session beginning July 11. It would not be proper for the secretary to go out of the country "at this time". The proposal has been withdrawn and the trip "postponed". But no such consideration prevented our Energy Minister, Mr P. Ramachandran, from going to Egypt to advise its Government on electricity matters or our Housing Minister, Mr Sikander Bakht from going to several countries to solve their housing problems. We wish Egypt and the countries Mr Bakht is visiting a speedy recovery from the Ministerial advice.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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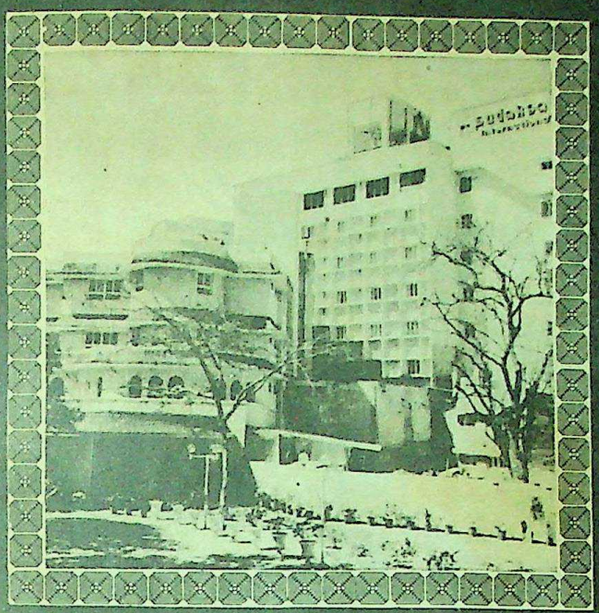

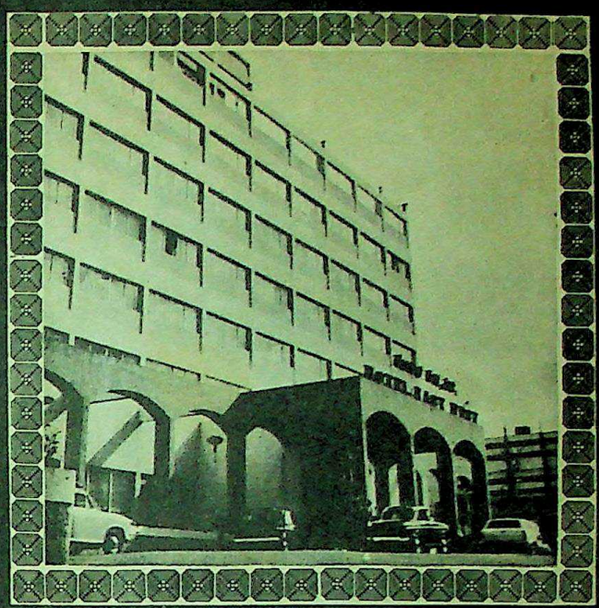

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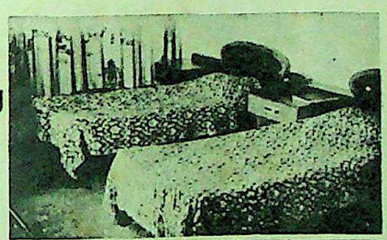

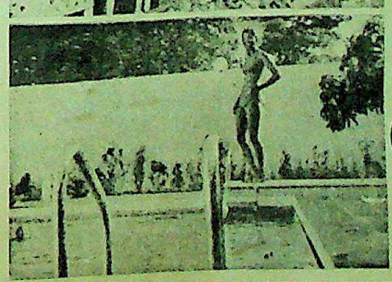

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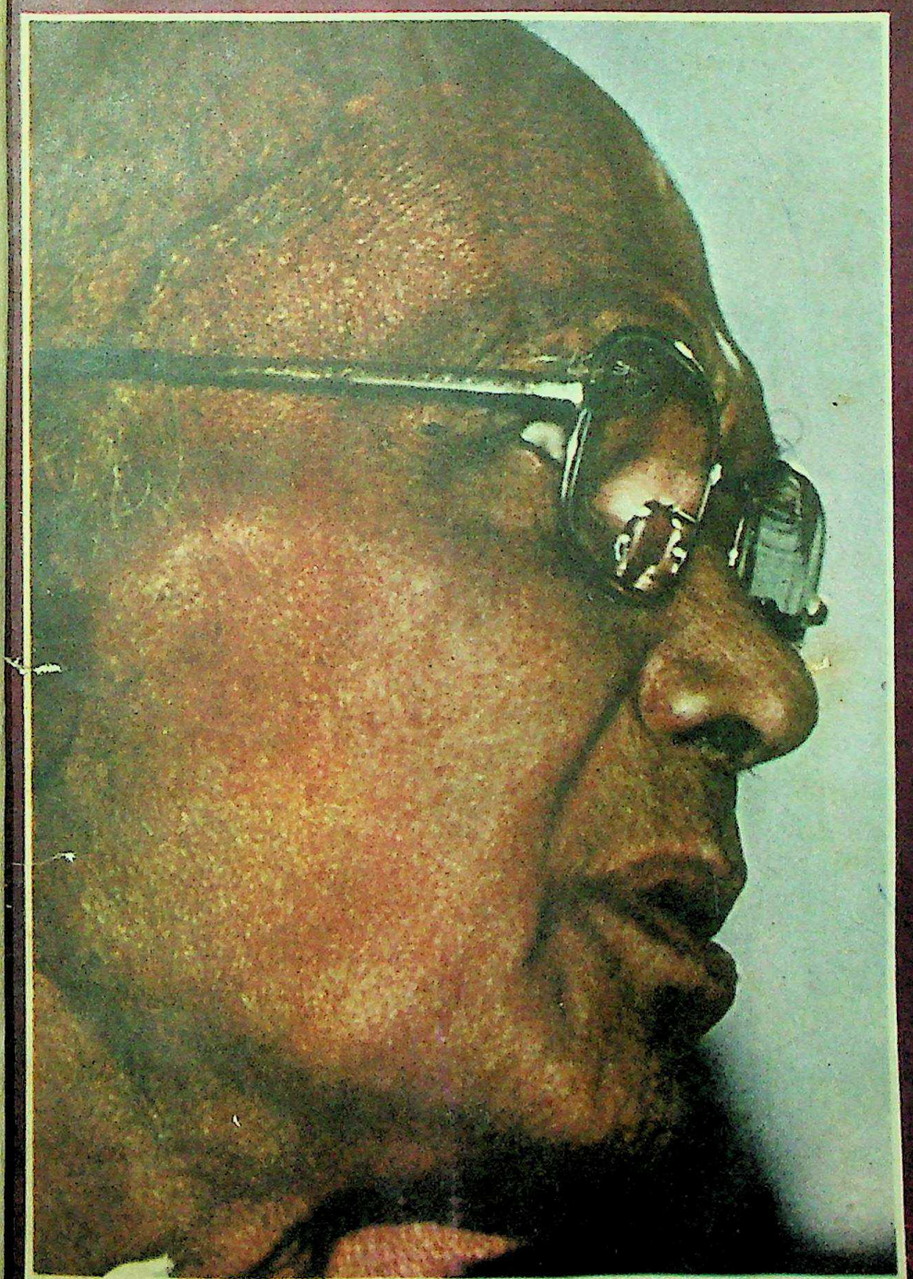
12 AUGUST 1979 AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION Re 1

SUNDAY

Politicians are cynically using his name

THE EXPLOITATION OF JP



HOW AYUB KHAN LOST IN '65

By Air Marshal Asghar Khan of Pakistan

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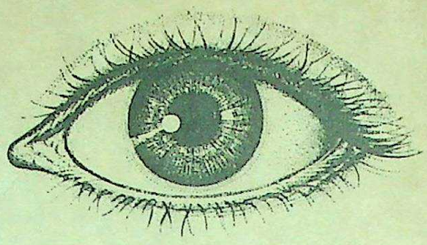

THE EYE-CATCHERS

HINDON

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HINDON RIVER MILLS

Fabrics from the Most Modern Mill

DCM TEXTILES

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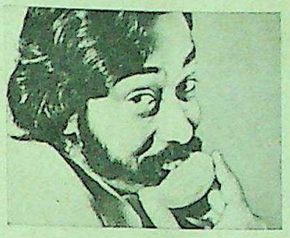
On toasts

Between breads

Over crackers

With desserts

Inside



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And 4 other fruity ways to toast yourself at breakfast

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NOGA - IT'S ONLY NATURAL!

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MAID 6/79

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CHAITRA-BLS-186

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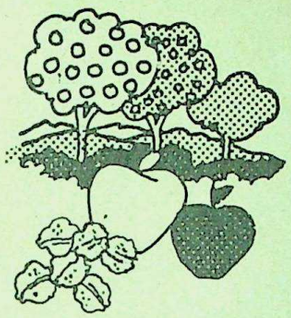
It's exciting ropeways, fruit-laden orchards, chinar leaves turning gold.

It's a refreshing holiday.

Kashmir in autumn is golden colours in a dreamland. With shady forest glades where yellow and gold leaves lie in a rustling carpet. There's such a lot to see and experience. Such a lot to do. Riding, boating, golfing, strolling... everything you've always wanted to do on a holiday.



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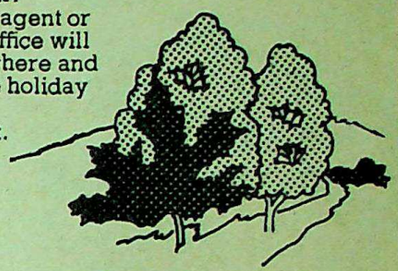

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Kashmir in Autumn
It's fun and frolic.

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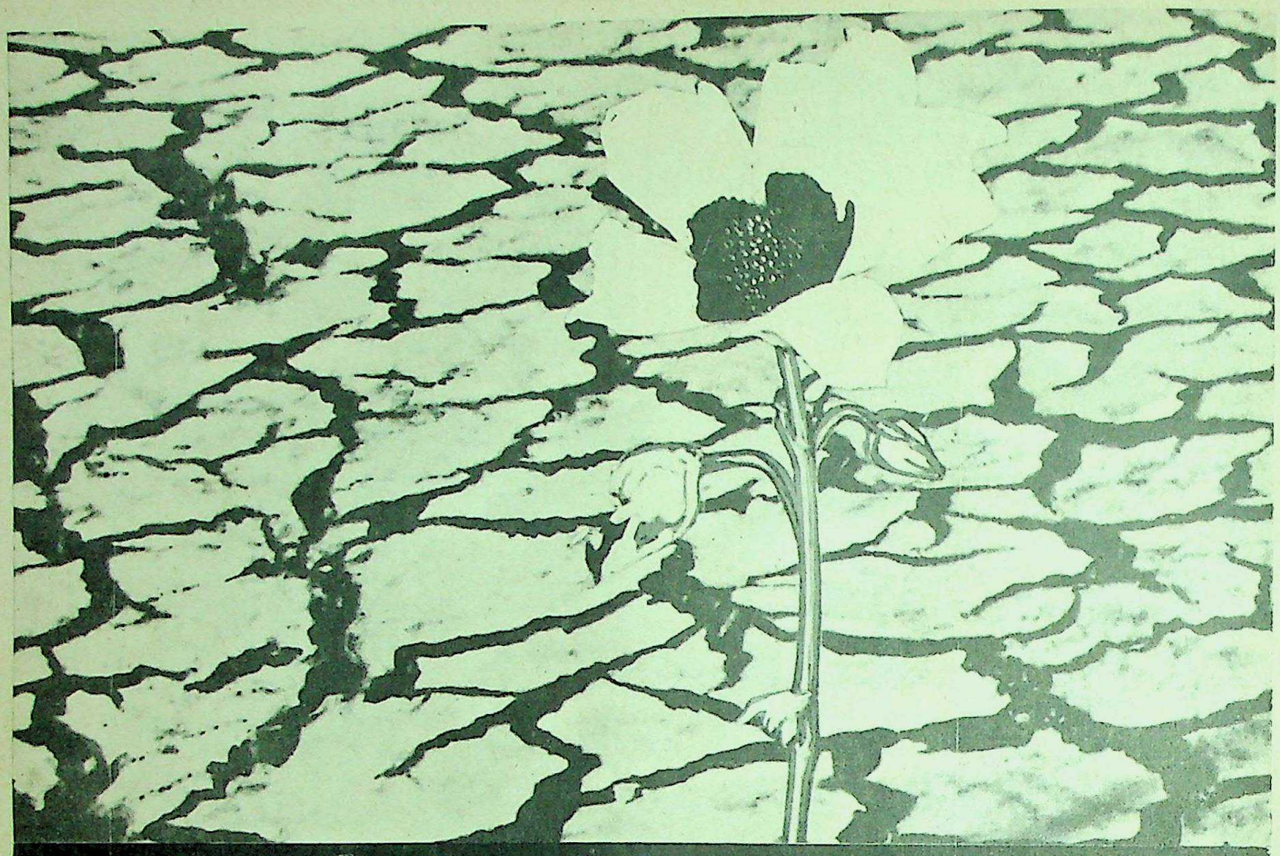

In a parched land Hope springs again...!

APDDC'S contribution to Andhra's Drought Areas.

Ever heard of prosperity in a drought stricken area?

The Andhra Pradesh Government brought it about when it implemented the Union Government financed Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP). Under this scheme the State Government spent Rs. 363.76 lakhs through the Andhra Pradesh Dairy Development Corporation for the development of Dairy Farming in the Rayalaseema area—Andhra's drought prone region.

15,000 milch cows and buffaloes valued at Rs. 150 lakhs were distributed under the DPAP to the small farmers in the region at subsidised rates. The vast farming community who till then had been praying futilely for rains, suddenly found itself a new occupation. Dairy Farming. APDDC launched a vigorous programme of assistance to milk producers—enabling them to get free land for grazing, providing nutritious and balanced cattle feed at controlled prices and ensuring free veterinary care. A complete Dairy Extension Service. The results were dramatic.

Milk production shot up eightfold —from 41 lakh litres in '74-'75 to 364 lakh litres in '78-'79. Small farmers haunted by starvation with no means of livelihood now had a minimum daily income of Rs. 7-Rs. 10. And most important of all, the dairy movement cut through caste and communal divisions. It became a crusade for the betterment of the community as a whole.

APDDC has set up a Milk Products Factory in Chittoor District and another is coming up at Proddutur. This will be in addition to the four District Dairies, and seven Milk Chilling Centres, that the APDDC already runs in the Rayalaseema Area.

APDDC: A new hope for the backward areas.

ANDHRA DAIRY

Breaking the limits of growth

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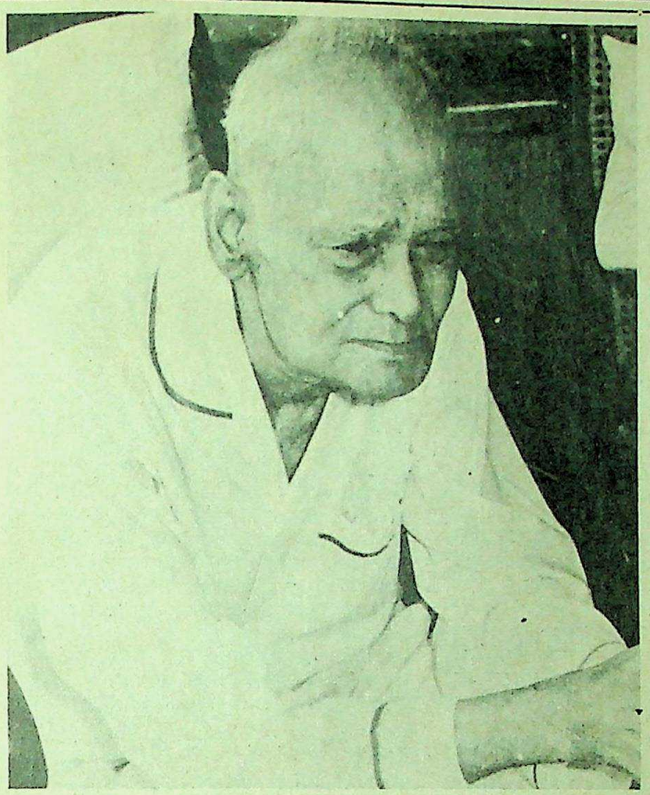
SUNDAY VOLUME 7
ISSUE 12
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

August 12, 1979

Bhola Chatterjee



Very late in his life JP came to occupy a unique position on the national scene. Without holding any official position he exerted considerable influence. Tragically his health has rapidly deteriorated in the same period. The nation has consequently witnessed the shocking spectacle of the name of the man, frail in mind and body, being dragged into partisan conflicts in aid of the contending factions. The exploitation of JP goes further—there are grave doubts about the way the Rs 75 lakhs (or is it 90 ?) raised in his name is being handled. A thorough investigation by a team of SUNDAY correspondents.

Could Pakistan have won the 1965 war against India ? Yes, says Air Marshal Asghar Khan of Pakistan. Though the national morale was high, lack of coordination and vacillation on the part of Ayub Khan made him settle for a ceasefire and, in the process, he threw away possibly the only chance Pakistan had of winning a war against India. Exclusive extracts from his book "The First Round, Indo-Pakistan war of 1965".

The Christian faith has been facing an unprecedented crisis of confidence in the last hundred years, the worst in its 2,000 years of existence. But Christianity survives —and flourishes—today, despite the dire prognostications of the sceptics. The faith somehow refuses to be buried in spite of many apparently terminal ailments.

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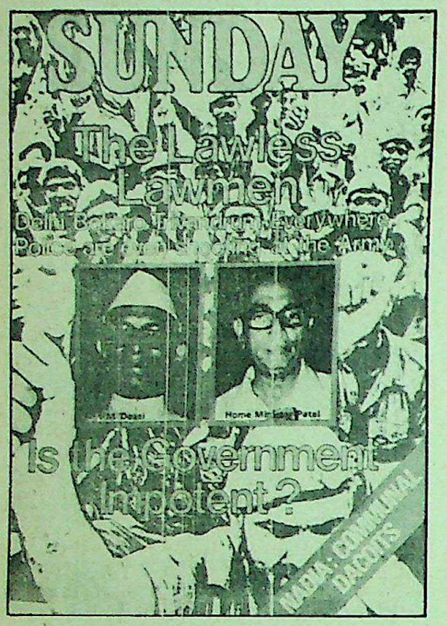

Revolt for uniformity

YOUR coverage of the police revolt ("The lawless lawmen" by Saumitra Banerjee, July 15) was factual and thought-provoking. The episode was the immediate cause of the Janata Government's fall, and also marks the watershed in our national life. A sweeper in Bokaro earns twice as much as a CISF jawan, and a peon in a bank more than an average doctor. Such distortions are bound to cause ill-feelings. The cue was too obvious for the policemen to miss. Our Governments should realise that it is impossible to maintain tiny islands of discipline in a sea of chaos. The jawans can see for themselves that a clerk in a bank or insurance firm is able to extort three times his pay by resorting to deliberate and organised dereliction of duty—euphemistically called a "democratic trade union right", "collective bargaining", etc. If that be so, how can one deny the same right to others, including men in uniform?
S. K. Bain, Calcutta

EVEN after 32 years of Independence, some police officers suffer from a superiority complex, and maltreat their subordinates. This often leads to insubordination.
A. Vincent, Sgt. (Retd.), Coimbatore

THE CISF jawans were "made aware" of their rights perhaps by the labour forces around them in the Steel City. You have rightly pointed out the dangers of employing other sister forces, and the Army in particular, to crush the police uprising. The police never took up arms against the state. They were demonstrating peacefully. The strike was started more for fun's sake than anything else, by some overenthusiastic young policemen. How this warranted a commando-type military operation cannot be understood. In the post-Emergency period it was emphasised that the law and order situation was in the charge of the respective State Governments. Yet the former Janata Government asked for and used the CRPF more frequently than the previous regime.
Nihar Ranjan Ray, Silchar

THE Army should be used to protect the country from foreign aggression, not to solve the country's internal problems.
A. Sagayarajan, Salem

WE are sitting atop a volcano which can erupt any time. There is no law and order in the country. The police and CRP personnel feel neglected, cheated and humiliated by the politicians, who use them to serve their own personal political ends. There is constant interference in their work by politicians. Now these same politicians threaten them and woo them at the same time.
Pramod Mishra, Convener, Hindustani Andolan, Orissa

AJOY BOSE's report "Is the Government impotent?" (July 15) delves deep into the background of revolt and agitation by the police, paramilitary forces and the Army. Right from the year 1950, the dreadful spectre of police revolt has been haunting everybody. Now, with the revolt having erupted, the Government tried desperately to placate the policemen by offering certain benefits. But the system of maintaining orderlies in the police and Army is bound to generate further mistrust, hatred and indifference toward the Government.
Soubhagyabanta Maharana, Bolangir

MR BOSE quotes the CRPF Director General, Mr R. C. Gopal, as threatening the agitating policemen: "If you don't give up your agitation, I'll blow you up with tanks." Such a remark is not surprising from a person like Mr Gopal. The Home Ministry should be blamed for appointing an irresponsible person like him in such a high position.
V. R. Purushothaman, Hyderabad

THE trouble and violence in police camps can be directly attributed to the senior officers who seem to have lost their equation with their men. Ajoy Bose would do well to spend a few days in an Army unit deployed in inhospitable terrain to understand how Army officers and their men live, work and rough it together with pride, little caring for better working conditions, the orderly system and changing times.
Radha B. Kunneth, West Hill (Kerala)

An apology

IN "Goa's secret war" (July 8) I portray Mr Chico Fernandes' father as one who "collaborated with Koch". While so doing I had in mind the general pattern of attitudes of staunch Indian nationalists—as the Fernandes family—in World War II, the Germans being regarded as "friends" because they opposed the British. Mr Fernandes has now made it explicitly clear to me that his father had no role as such in the spy drama. He was only a close friend and admirer of the Goan doctor, who, actually, was Koch's friend. Mr Fernandes' activities, if any, were only peripheral and with no other intention than of being helpful to a dear friend. In as much as Mr Chico Fernandes, who happens to be my personal friend, was unhappy at the manner of his late father's characterisation, I would like to unconditionally apologise to him for whatever inconvenience, even if unintended, I may have caused him and his family.
Mario Cabral E Sa, Piedade, Goa

The answer

IT appears VIP sons are just born to sin in this country ("Sins of a son" by A. K. Chakravorty and Udayan Sharma, July 8). Starting with Mrs Gandhi, those who have suffered in one way or another due to their sons include Messrs Morarji Desai, Jagjivan Ram, Devi Lal, Bansi Lal and V. K. Saklecha. And apart from VIP sons, privileged sons-in-law too have not lagged far behind: Messrs Charan Singh, Devaraj Urs, Mirza Afzal Beg and Sheikh Abdullah will bear testimony to this. How about making celibacy a prime requisite for holding political office in this country?
Nancy Koul, Jammu Tawi.

First lesson

MRS INDIRA GANDHI is the first Indian woman to become PM, the first to enforce the Emergency for so long, first for her cruelty, the first MP to be expelled from Parliament, the first PM to face a Special Court, the first professed democrat to believe in authoritarianism, and would stand first in any 'mother' competition. Now here is a tip to help her attain more distinction. She should teach her son Sanjay healthy politics, and persuade him that it is not birth, but the personality of an individual that brings him success.
Harshananda Mallik, Phulbari.

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Startling logic

B. GHOSH (Opinion, July 1) thinks troublemakers are behind the demand for *zabeeha* chicken, as though the Muslim boys had invented the practice. He has taken pains to twist a simple practice, and generalise about the religious susceptibilities of all minorities. The next thing he would say is: "Burn you dead and avoid trouble", proceeding with his logic of generalisation.

Sayed Shamsul Huda, Sardhapur

THE letter by Mr Ghosh exhibits contempt and lack of a sense of accommodation. I am pained to learn that some misunderstanding is spoiling the high traditions of IIT, Kharagpur, of which I am a proud alumnus, and am sure the problem can be resolved with some mutual understanding. Among meat dealers, the difference between meat and flesh is that meat is free from blood. Meat is considered tastier without blood, and many people prefer it that way. While slaughtering an animal or bird in order to ensure good bleeding, the spinal cord behind the neck is not cut. Only the two veins, windpipe and alimentary canal are cut. If the spinal cord is cut, the bleeding is incomplete, and blood clots and sticks to the flesh. As far as Muslims are concerned, blood is a prohibited item in food. For this reason, the slaughter must be done according to the practice of 'zabah' or 'halal', which ensures complete bleeding. The slaughter must be done, not for any cruel pleasure it gives, but as food permitted by God, so the name of God must be taken while slaughtering the bird or animal. I do not think any Hindu friend will fail to understand these sentiments.

Dr M. S. Abdul Kadir, Trichur

Bigoted, or blind

I WRITE, nauseated by Satish Mehta's letter (Opinion, July 15) in which he says: "Except for a couple of misdeeds, Hitler was one of the greatest leaders that Europe, if not the world, has produced". Mr Mehta means to say that the concentration camps in which millions of Jews were gassed to death vindicated Hitler's theory of Teutonic superiority, and all this was just a misdeed!! If he cannot see anything wrong in a closely knit organisation in the country idolising a man who could feel proud about such "misdeeds", he is either a fanatic or blind. As a rational human being, I am opposed to religion which transcends its purpose of providing fellowship in prayer. Further, as a culture, the characteristic attractive feature of Hinduism is its tolerance and melting-pot nature. The RSS and allied organisations negate both the above, and yet it has an important plus point: The fact that it is a disciplined body—so rare in our country now.

But for its foundation, its philosophy of Hindu rashtra being disgustingly narrow, the RSS would have been a most potent force—and unobjectionable too. To gain a firm mooring in today's polluted political ocean, the Jana Sangh seems to be ready to discard its ideology. It would be so much better if this change were genuine, and not merely dictated by expediency.

What is happening in many Islamic countries in the name of God and religion should be enough to warn us off a parallel path. The first thing to do is to put Hitler back in his place.

K. A. Paul, Trichur

TILL today I always thought of the RSS as an overdisciplined organisation with archaic religious ideas. But thanks to Mr Mehta, I have developed a rabid hatred for it now. If this is the way an RSS "sympathiser" thinks, I shudder to think of how the mind of an RSS fanatic works. Regarding the Aligarh riots, he talks about the "clean chit" given to the RSS by Mr Chandrashekhar as if it were any fitness certificate. He absolved the RSS only to appease the powerful Jana Sangh lobby. Regarding Mr Dinanath Pandey of Jamshedpur, Mr Mehta refuses to believe there are any RSS MLAs. What Mr Madhu Limaye meant by that term was MLAs with RSS affiliations. Surely no one can claim there are none of them.

D. Satya Murthy, Visakhapatnam

NO sane person can laud the barbarism of Hitler. Every single act of his against Jews was a blot on human civilisation. Hitler's madness should never be repeated. If people really know him, they would stop comparing him to Indira Gandhi or even Idi Amin.

T. Santhanam, Bombay

MR MEHTA says: "It was Hitler who from the brink of bankruptcy made his nation one of the foremost in Europe and the world." Perhaps he is not aware of the records of history. Hitler capitalised on a situation which may be described as the "darkest hour before dawn". The immediate post-depression era was undoubtedly a trying period for Germany but recovery was well within sight when Hitler came to the saddle.

S. K. Basu, Calcutta

IF the RSS's aim is to establish and encourage a nation in which people of different faiths can live in peace and harmony, why the emphasis on the word Hindu? I am sure neither Muslims nor Christians would like to be called so.

Abha Pandey, New Delhi

Correspondence on this subject is now closed.

Callous policy.

"INSURING uphappiness" (July 1) by Indeera Chand exposes the callous attitude of highly-paid employees towards the economically weaker sections of the country. If SUNDAY found it exasperating to help a poor woman collect her dues from the LIC, one can guess the plight of numerous other policy beneficiaries waiting on the staircases of LIC offices all over the country.

P. Ramraj, Erode

THOUGH the experience narrated by Ms Chand is an almost everyday occurrence all over the country, there is yet no provision for claim cheques to be personally handed over to any claimant. This appears to have been overlooked. It requires a massive public effort and a powerful campaign by the media to redeem the monolithic set-up of LIC and make it work for the benefit of the small policy-holder, which is the real motive for its foundation. Presently, the management, instead of managing the institution's affairs, is locked in litigation against not only its own employees, but also policy-holders. Though the former Janata Government appointed a panel to review the entire working of the LIC, the induction of bureaucrats and ex-bureaucrats in the panel will mean that it will be just another eyewash.

R. L. Jain, Agent, LIC of India, Satna.

MS CHAND forgets that LIC officers are to abide by some norms and procedures which are not their creation. At the time of final payment, it is understandable for the concerned officer to ask for the policy-holder/beneficiary's proper identity.

Pradip Hom Roy, North Lakhimpur.

Poor state of affairs

IT IS disheartening to note the problems faced by the poor and weaker sections in obtaining destitution and poverty certificates from Tahsildars. A destitute is admitted to an orphanage on the basis of a destitution certificate issued by the Tahsildar, when he is satisfied that the parent or guardian earns not more than Rs. 300 per annum. The voluntary organisations housing destitutes are given grants at the rate of Rs 14 per month per inmate on the basis of these certificates. But the redtapism in Government departments creates great difficulties in obtaining these certificates, for which reason the poor have to suffer in hardship. The system of obtaining certificates, starting from the level of the village munsif, is so cumbersome, it takes a month to cross all hurdles, by which time admissions to orphanages are closed.

S. Rajaram, Sivananda Orphanage, Kattankolathur

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It begins with the country's topmost leaders and has the connivance of his secretariat. BHOLA CHATTERJI and S. P. SAGAR detail how a sick man is being "used" for cynical personal gains.

THE EXPLOITATION OF JP

D. P. Sinha

IN the sunset years of his life Mao Tse-tung was said to have been a captive in the hands of the "gang of four". The policy statements and decisions which carried his signature were alleged to have been those of the three bad men and a woman and not his. Although everything was done in the name of the Chairman, the real voice behind the show was that of the "gang". For, both physically as well as mentally, he was an invalid. One theory was that the "gang of four" did this to keep alive the fiction that the all-seeing and all-knowing Mao was infallible, that he continued to be the nation's pace maker, his feeble state of health notwithstanding. This only betrayed the totalitarian character of the regime, the theory continued. This sort of diabolical play acting could never take place in an open society like India. For, in a democracy, it would not be possible to palm off such a fraud on the people.

But any such feeling of superiority that we may possess will have to be given up now. There are Indians who will not hesitate to stoop so low as to ape even the "gang of four". And they are located right at the place where a 77-year-old sick man, who was said to have saved Indian democracy from being consigned to limbo, is living on borrowed time.

First, how sick is Jayaprakash Narayan? Is it only the flesh that is giving up or are his other faculties also failing? This his doctors alone can tell, but they will not, hamstrung as they are by the eithics of their profession. But circumstantial evidence would confirm that he is sick beyond any hope of recovery. And his physical sickness has had its deep impact, much more than is generally believed, on his mind. So much so that it is beyond him today to arrange his train of thoughts and ideas as logically as would be neces-

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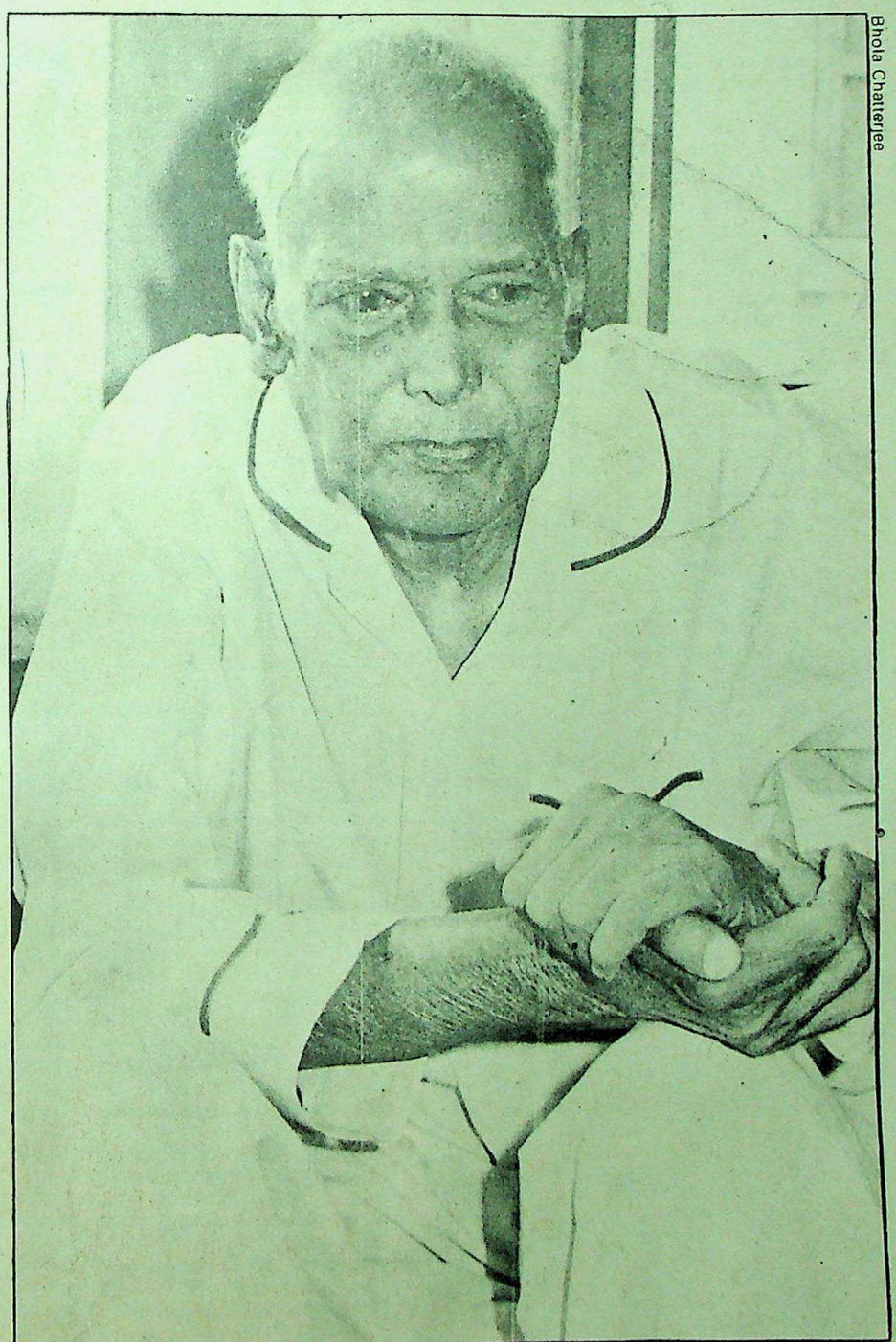
sary to correlate issues and events, see things in their right perspective and get to the heart of a problem. Perhaps the Janata Party president had this in mind when he observed sometime ago that JP should not be involved in partisan politics.

The point that must be emphasised is that JP's weakening heart condition since his return from Jaslok Hospital early last month has added a complex new dimension to his existing ailments. The administration of blood along with the dialysis complicates matters in that it forces the heart to overwork in order to assimilate the transfused blood. Again, repeated blood transfusions may have an adverse effect on his liver which surely is not in sprightly condition. As Dr M. K. Mani of Jaslok Hospital, who has been attending JP all these months, put it soon after examining him on July 25 : "This is a condition known as ischaemic colitis. There is no cure for this condition and the only treatment available for him is blood transfusion to make up the blood lost as well as to strengthen the blood to carry oxygen to the intestine." JP has an ulcer in his colon causing rectal bleeding, which requires a major surgery that his present health will not enable him to withstand. Because of the rectal bleeding he needs regular transfusions which have to be administered not in drips but along with the dialysis.

On July 23 as the Janata Party breathlessly waited to end its days, its chief architect hovered between life and death. The past 24 hours had been a critical time and the doctors attending JP kept their fingers crossed. What with rectal bleeding, nausea and breathing trouble, JP gave his friends and physicians a very anxious time. They had a feeling of fear and uncertainty about the future; and none made any effort to suppress it. But it was quite another story when it came to the question of the men who ran his household. One instance out of many will tell the tale. Around 11 in the morning of July 24 Devendra Prasad Singh, a former vice-chancellor of Bhagalpur University and one of JP's close associates, had to beg of the police security guard (JP's Kadam Kuan residence is literally crowded with security men, oddly enough) to allow him to go upstairs. He did so just to get a glimpse of JP from outside his room. What he saw was much too depressing for him not to agree with JP's younger brother, Rajeswar Prasad, that his condition had further deteriorated.

That touched Sachidanand, JP's secretary, to the quick. Rudely he told them that they should not indulge in such "defeatist" talk. The expression of anger, this 'more royalist than the king' attitude, was not a little embarrassing for the urbane Rajeswar Prasad. After all, he knew only too well all about the present state of his elder brother's health. There is no getting away from the fact that JP is in bad shape, both physically and mentally. But it is not very difficult to guess why some men are morbidly averse to letting the world into the truth about the present condition of JP's body and mind. The fact is that they have an axe to grind. Which is why they insist that the myth must remain in circulation that JP has complete control of his mental faculties that neither his mind nor his memory has suffered impairment despite the punishing ailment which afflicts him.

The cold fact of life is that JP is no longer in a position to address himself to the kind of rigorous and methodical mental exercise that would be required to comprehend and dissect any complex issue and pass judgment on it. The man's once alert, incisive mind, almost elephantine memory and the unique capacity for taking a dispassionate view of men and events are a thing of the past. One hoped things would get better, but as it is they are getting worse. That partly explains why Sachidanand stubbornly resists any request for a taped interview with JP—he does not want others to discover the truth. With the possible exception of the humane Thomas Abraham who administers dialysis to JP, none of the other decision makers in the JP household—Sachidanand, Janaki Bahen (JP's adopted daughter), her husband Kumar Prashant and former socialist Jagdish Babu who hails from JP's home district of Ballia—hesitate to treat him as an object of cynical exploitation. The touch of philistinism that is so evident at JP's residence and



Bhola Chatterjee

JP photographed after his reurn to Patna

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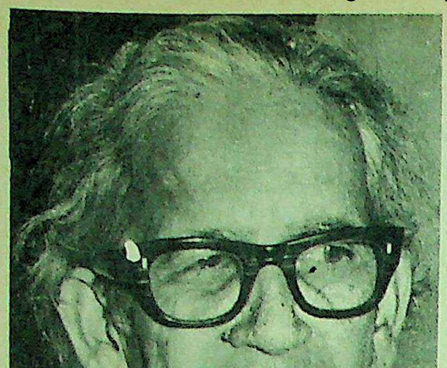
Bhola Chatterjee



S. M. Joshi

the utterly conscienceless use of his name that goes on day in and day out for small political and materia! gains are indeed sickening.

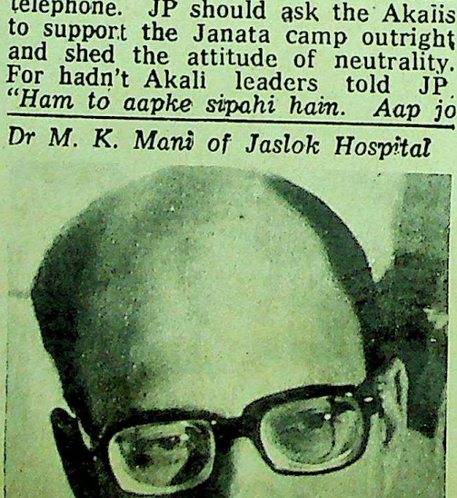
The most recent glaring example of JP being "used" is his letter to the then PM Morarji Desai requesting him to quit in favour of Jagjivan Ram as leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party. The sordid business was rigged up in a manner that would beggar discription. On July 17, Mr S. M. Joshi, had a talk with the Madhu Dandavate-Surendra Mohan group of former Socialists. If Mr Jagjivan Ram became the JPP leader, he would get many more MPs along caste lines even from other Parties, they concluded. Mr Desai was dragging his feet and clinging to the JPP leadership, almost "holding on to it physically". Mr Joshi broached this to Mr Gore at a dinner and the two decided to approach Mr Jayaprakash Narayan to enlist Babuji who gleefully said, *"Aap chahte hain to jaroor kijiye"* (If you so like, do it).

The problem was who would carry the letter of S. M. Joshi to Mr Narayan. Joshi had talked to JP's secretary Mr Sachidanand, and the arrangement was made that Joshi should detail the situation in a letter since he was not free to come to Patna. Joshi would have liked Mr Madhu Limaye's wife, who was like a daughter to him, to be the confidante to do the emissary's job. But right there was Mr Arjun Singh Bhadoria who suggested the name of his wife, Mrs Sarla Bhadoria. Mr Joshi drafted his letter to JP and described how Jagjivan Babu would be a better man in that situation. Thus came about the controversial visit of Mrs Sarla Bhadoria. The lightning speed with which she did the magic startled everybody. She came by the morning flight on July 18, and got back the same afternoon with Mr Narayan committed to support Mr Jagjivan Ram in black and white. It was July 18, Wednesday, a day for Mr Narayan's routine dialysis. This is a forbidden day for most visitors. The dialysis was delayed. Two letters, one for Mr Desai and another for Mr Chandrashekhar, were hastily drafted, signed by Mr Narayan and despatched through the courier. All this was done with remarkable rapidity. "We were even prepared to delay the dialysis for half an hour to ensure that Mr Narayan signs the letters", someone confided at JP's house. Indeed, when Joshi's letter was read out to Mr Narayan, he agreed to the line of argument. Yes, Jagjivan Babu should be the JPP leader and all others, including Mr Chandrashekhar, should support it. The letters were despatched through Mrs Bhadoria. She, it is said, telephoned Delhi at the first available opportunity. The contents were disclosed even before she had reached Delhi. Mr Arjun Singh Bhadoria had spoken all about it at Jagjivan Babu's residence and the Advani-run All India Radio was parroting it over and over again. The whole feat would not have been possible without Sachidanand's active co-operation.

The immature publicity given to Mr Narayan's letters even before they had been delivered deeply pained him. He chose to remain indifferent to the Janata squabbles. But the following day, Mr Prakash Singh Badal with three top Akali leaders, besides Sheikh Abdullah of Kashmir, arrived in batches to seek JP's "guidance in the hour of national peril". It seemed he was again going to be caught in a fresh controversy. The Akali leaders and the Shiekh in their separate talks urged him to visit Delhi to offer his good offices. They were concerned that instability at the Centre would badly affect the states. The Akali leaders suggested that alternatively JP should summon national leaders to Patna. But no. JP would not be drawn into it again. He had had enough of it.

The last to make a vain attempt at JP's house was Mr Harbhanjan Singh, a Socialist leader of Punjab. He came and later pursued it over telephone. JP should ask the Akalis to support the Janata camp outright and shed the attitude of neutrality. For hadn't Akali leaders told JP *"Ham to aapke sipahi hain. Aap jo kahenge ham wahi karenge"* (We are your soldiers. We shall do what you ask us to do.) But JP quietly replied *"Ab ham ye jhamele mein jyada nahin parna chathe hain"* (Now I don't want to be dragged in the controversy any more).

Dr M. K. Mani of Jaslok Hospital



It is a well known fact that seldom does JP take an initiative in either sending a letter or issuing a statement. It is always done at somebody's behest and all that JP does is to trim the wording to make it conform to his own feelings as much as possible. This holds good for the series of letters and statements that he supposedly issued out of his own free will in 1978 and afterwards. Those who know JP say that "he is too good a man, too simple, least assertive, most generous and obliging. Gandhi was greater than he was, but then Gandhi was shrewd too. JP is not shrewd and hence is often cheated, easily impressed by wheedling words."

A well known example of this is his message issued at the time of Mrs Nandini Satpathy's election. This is how the message was obtained. JP was in Bombay at the Express Towers. Mrs Satpathy was seeking election in 1977 against Mrs Malati Chaudhury. Someone on Mrs Chaudhury's behalf, counting upon the Sarvodaya links, pressed JP for an electoral message. JP was reluctant for on the other side was a Janata candidate. But he could not say no for long. He sent a mesage of good wishes to Malati Chaudhury making it clear that it was for Mrs Chaudhury only. Soon the courier rushed to the Press and gave the portion that wished Mrs Chaudhury all success. So after the courier had left the scene JP wanted the message to be withdrawn. But by then AIR had flashed it. The controversy became so bitter that even Mr Chandrashekhar and Mr Desai publicly commented against JP's supposed stand against Mrs Nandini Satpathy in favour of a non-Janata candidate.

It is a common complaint in Patna that the men who run JP's household are very choosy about whom he should meet, what letters should be read out to him or which messages or reports should be brought to his notice. The formidable list of people who have suffered indignities in trying to meet JP includes some of his longterm friends and close associates like Bihar's additional advocate-general Radha Raman, Sundari Devi, one of JP's relations, the late Phulan Prasad Varma's wife (Phulan Babu, a Socialist member of the Constituent Assembly, was among JP's inner circle of friends), and another close friend of JP, Brijnandan Azad, who was a former editor of the *Indian Nation*. The secretariat has made enormous contributions towards keeping JP away from the masses. People seeking appointments are needlessly harassed, for which JP has had to apologise later. People from all over the country write to him but seldom get replies thanks to a secretariat which has its own axe to grind.

Ever since the Janata Government came to power in Delhi people close

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to JP have aligned themselves with one faction or the other. He has become a virtual puppet in their hands. A statement supporting one group will be signed by an ailing JP and released promptly to the Press. Then the other group will get a contradictory statement signed and released to the Press. The more ambitious among the men around him have their respective politician and industrialist patrons who loosen their purse strings as and when necessary. One recent entrant to the secretariat, who is said to owe his allegiance to Mr Morarji Desai, sat beside JP for hours, dinned into his ears the virtues of the former Prime Minister, pried into all official correspondence and took objection to any statement issued by JP disapproving of Mr Desai. And with the fall of the Morarji Government this great social worker simply disappeared. He is of course none other than Siddharaj Dhadda.

Mr Jagganath Kaushal, the then Governor of Bihar received a letter signed by JP which requested that a certain person be favoured. The Governor, who apparently knew JP's signature well, found out that the signature on the letter was forged. The Governor sent the letter to JP's secretariat which confirmed that it was a case of forgery. The matter was immediately hushed up and there were no attempts to track down the miscreant.

Those in Patna know well that frequent letters would reach the Bihar government for favours of one nature or the other saying that "JP desires that.....". A bunch of such letters was carried by a Minister and shown to JP and after that the speed with which these letters surfaced slowed down. The last but not the least instance is one of a new recruit of the secretariat. The smart young boy wrote a letter to George Fernandes, then Industries Minister, for a job. The letter was written on JP's pad, and was supposedly signed in JP's own hand. Bad luck for him that the matter was referred back and the cat was out of the bag.

JP's house and his life have thus become a thoroughfare. Politicians will stop at nothing to use him for the fulfilment of their ambitions. when, if they had even a shred of decency, they would have left him to his peace in his last days among us. His modest house at Kadam Kuan, Patna, which could not have been further in anyone's imagination from a palace, is now a hotbed of intrigue. Sachidanand, his secretary, plays politics upto the hilt, Siddharaj kept watch for Mr Desai while he was in power, Kumar Prashant is not officially in anything but has a finger in every pie and Jagdish Babu is hardly there for selfless service. The final symbolic act that has removed JP and his secretariat from the public is the closure of the secretariat's office downstairs. (Some letters had reportedly disappeared from the files.) The stairs are blocked by a collapsable gate with security guards. But what good is that when the undesirables are all upstairs? ■

A fund to dishonour the Loknayak

That is how Sarvodaya worker, Baburao Chandawar, sees the Amrit Mahotsava Kosh, reports OLGA TELLIS.

WHERE has the Rs 90 lakhs collected on the eve of JP's birth anniversary celebrations in 1977 gone? This is the question that has been haunting the humble workers wedded to the fulfilment of JP's unfinished total revolution. These workers are pained, saddened and angry that this fund, collected to further JP's dream of a total revolution, is neither available to the humble mainstream workers nor does anyone know where the money is and how it is being used. There are vague indications that some of it is in Delhi, some in Bombay and Ahmedabad and elsewhere with the conveners who collected the money. In sheer despair, Baburao Chandawar, who has worked with JP for 30 years in Bhojpur district of Bihar and shoulder to shoulder with the Naxalites since 1974, has announced that he will go on fast from October 2 this year if the Amrit Mahotsava Kosh does not give an account of how much money it has and what it intends to do with it.

When I met Chandawar in his modest home in Bhiwandi about 50 miles from Bombay, he was at work on his book on Bhojpur. Surrounded by his teacher-wife Vanita and three children, Chandawar looked deceptively docile but was seething with anguish inside, his firm jawline underlining his determination to call a halt to the "deliberate attempt on

JP sells well: Jaslok Hospital bookshop

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the part of capitalists, Gandhians and liberal democrats to tarnish JP's image and kill the movement JP envisaged for the landless and the downtrodden."

Explaining the root cause of his decision to go on fast, Chandawar said, "those who were against the idea of total revolution and those who never participated in the 1974 Bihar Movement are today controlling the Amrit Mahotsava Kosh. None of them were ever in the Bihar Movement, yet they became trustees of the Kosh. The chairman of the collection fund was Acharya J. B. Kripalani until last year when he gave up all public posts. The managing trustee of the Kosh that was formed is Mr Radhakrishna, the secretary is Govindrao Deshpande and the other trustees are Mr L. C. Jain, treasurer of the Janata Party, Mr Siddharaj Dhaddha, Mr Ramnath Goenka and Mr Ramkrishna Bajaj. None of these were anywhere near the Bihar Movement. (Mr Goenka, of course, aided the movement but perhaps for his own reasons.)

"In fact Acharya Kripalani ridiculed the idea of a total revolution. In an article in *Dharmayug* he had said that he does not believe in total revolution because violence is involved. In fact, all Gandhians attacked the idea. Yet Kripalani was made chairman of the fund and the fund was meant to propagate total revolution."

JP, Chandawar continued, was aware that his total revolution was being ridiculed. That is why he wrote in *Navbharat Times* on April 13, 1977; "The total revolution has been mocked at and hatred and scorn has been poured over it. They said it is only a dream. Therefore I want to repeat again that I believe in total revolution and I promise that when I am well I will take up this work again."

From the very beginning the capitalists, Gandhians and liberal democrats sought to downgrade the idea of a total revolution. Says Chandawar, "In January 1977 when the elections were announced some others and I sat with JP for three days and discussed that the programme of total revolution should be put before the people when asking them for their vote. But people surrounding JP were quick to dissuade him. They said if you do this you will alienate the upper middle class and middle class people. So JP had no alternative but to bow to their thinking. You know JP is not an aggressive person. Besides, his ill health makes him submissive. These Gandhians, capitalists and industrialists therefore misuse him and his name.

"I will tell you something else. When the talks were on for the formation of the Janata Party, JP asked them all to resign first from their respective parties and then form a brand new Party. But Nanaji, Goray and Surendra Mohan did not agree to this. So JP sent a letter through me to Krishna Kant saying that since the Janata Party could never become a vehicle of total revolution because of the way in which it was constituted, all the socialists, Young Turks and Sarvodaya people should come together and form an organisation that would work for ushering in total revolution. But no one could proceed any further because Acharya Kripalanj intervened and put a stop to everything."

Asked whether he had ever approached Ramkrishna Bajaj or R. N. Goenka personally about the problems of the fund and its utilisation, Chandawar said, "How could I go anywhere near them. They are mighty people. It's so difficult to even get near them, leave alone talk with them. Besides when in Bihar the movement was started in 1974, JP sent me to these people several times but we got no response nor any cooperation from them. Therefore, I told Siddharaj that people like Ramkrishna Bajaj had no moral right to be trustees on the Kosh. That is why today the Kosh has no programmes for the landless, the weaker sections of the people oppressed by the evils of caste. I have been with JP for 30 years and he always thought in terms of the landless, the downtrodden and the victims of casteism. But none of these

Bhola Chatterjee

Sachidanand

have been incorporated in the Kosh for which money was collected in JP's name.

"In fact JP did not know anything about the trust. When the purse (a piece of paper) was presented to JP at the Gandhi maidan, Mr Ramkrishna Bajaj in his introductory speech announced the formation of the trust. When I met JP later I asked him about the trust and he said he hoped the money would be used for total revolution work. In his speech earlier he said that the method in which the money was to be spent should be discussed with the main stream workers. JP told me that no one had discussed the trust deed with him at any time. When we were talking, Thakurdas Bang and Siddharaj Dhaddha were seated with us. I asked Dhaddha why JP was not informed about the trust and he said within hearing of everyone that there was no time, 'We had to form the trust soon to avoid income tax'. However JP stressed the need to clear all this before the people but nothing was ever done. It was then that I had decided to go on fast on November 15, 1978. However, the Sarva Seva Sangh people, Dada Dharma Adhikari and others tried to dissuade me. They said they would find out the money that was collected. Even Acharya Kripalani, whom I informed about the fast, said he knew nothing about the trust that was formed and said it was a good idea to go on the fast. I had seen the trust deed in Delhi and I saw that they had made an institution and there was not a word about total revolution programmes. There was mention of work during floods, drought and some social work, etc, which would only help in boosting the image of the trustees. I was told about some work they are doing like having selected 100 areas for experiment and paying 200 workers for bogus work like spinning, weaving and about education. This may be constructive but it is not revolutionary like land reforms."

Talking about the background of the fund collection drive, Chandawar said, "I was against the manner of collection from the beginning. When I was invited by Mr Thakurdas Bang to participate in the deliberations of the committee set up for the purpose of raising funds I made it clear that it was wrong and the move should be abandoned. I gave them the experience I had with the Gram Swaraj Kosh (Village Self-government Fund) collected on the birth anniversary of Vinoba Bhave. There were large scale irregularities in handling the money and this became the order of the day. No accounts were maintained and nobody knew how the Rs 75 lakhs collected was ultimately spent. I understand the money was frittered away on a trader who wanted to start a business and on another official who wanted to buy a car, etc. But they went ahead with the collection. On January 28, 1978 I wrote a letter to JP expressing my anguish over the whole affair. In this letter I voiced serious misgivings about the move and its effectiveness in furthering the cause of total revolution. You know my fight is for values. If we want total revolution our strategy should be honest. Till you have a programme, to collect funds is a mistake.

"I met JP a number of times and also wrote letters to the Amrit Mahotsav Kosh on this issue. Once JP himself directed Siddharaj to place before the country the details of how the funds were being disbursed. When Thakurdas Bang submitted a report on the manner of disbursement it was so vague that JP asked Siddharaj to make the report more clear and specific. Yet the people were nowhere in the picture. A trust consisting of VIP's was formed and it was clear that there was a gap between the thinking of the trustees and JP. And the result is that there is absolutely no scheme in the entire budget of the Kosh which in any way touches the weaker sections of the people and as such the whole process runs counter to the basic assumptions of the total revolution."

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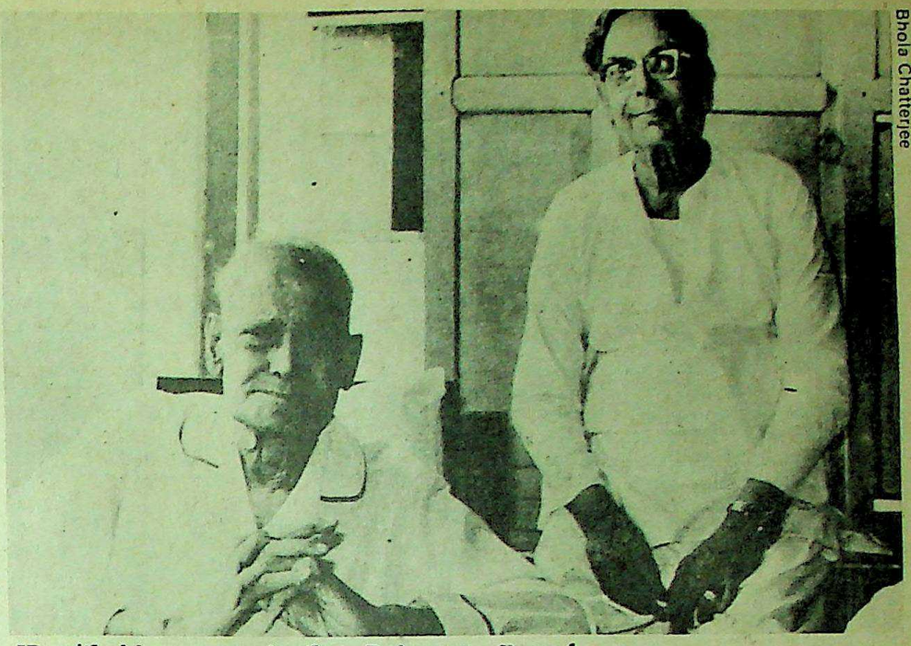
CHANDAWAR is also angry at the way the money was collected. "The rules framed for the collection drive stipulated that 60 per cent of the funds would come from subscriptions ranging from Rs 100 downwards and the rest may be subscribed by persons commanding greater resources. This was to avoid black money from coming in. But in practice, it was just the opposite. The 60 per cent came from Rs 10,000 and above and 40 per cent from the small contributions. This was disclosed by Mr Ramkrishna Bajaj, the treasurer of the fund, at the Gandhi Maidan speech in Patna, on the occasion of the presentation of the purse to JP. In fact some of my Bombay friends tell me that out of the Rs 40 lakhs collected in Bombay only Rs 5 lakhs came in small contributions. All the remaining came from big business and even from smugglers notwithstanding the fact that they gave in cheques. Large scale irregularities have been reported in fund collection and many friends think that over Rs 90 lakhs must have been collected. No one bothered to clear all these doubts that I and friends like me had and so I decided to go on fast on November 15, 1978. I then postponed it since everyone prevailed upon me and promised to get the matter rectified. Since nothing has been done to date, I have announced an indefinite fast from October 2 this year to express my feelings against the corrupt practices and irregularities in collecting and operating the fund.

"I am convinced that the capitalists, Gandhians and the liberal democrats are out to demolish the total revolution. JP told me recently that the movement started by Gandhi died after his death and the total revolution movement will also die. But I am determined to see that it does not. Ramkrishna Bajaj and Goenka and people like them are definitely against total revolution.

"I will give you an example of how we have been hitting our heads against the wall in trying to get their assistance. In November 1977 when I was to go to Bhojpur again for work, JP wrote a letter to the Gandhi Peace Foundation and others asking them to cooperate and assist me. He had wanted to start the second phase of the total revolution. In his letter he had written: 'The increasing social tension and its manifestation in sporadic class and caste conflicts and continued clashes in some parts of Bihar should set us all thinking. These are symptoms of a deep rooted malady which calls for revolutionary solutions. The student and youth movements which snowballed into a massive people's movement in 1974-75 was perhaps the beginning of what might have been a violent upheaval. Having sensed this I tried to channelise it in a peaceful direction. I called it total revolution. But the movement assumed the shape of a political struggle for the preservation of democracy against the totalitarian tendencies of the Congress regime. With the end of the Congress misrule and restoration of democracy under the new Janata regime the people heaved a sigh of relief. The Janata Government symbolised the aspirations of the people who expected it to solve their urgent economic and social problems. The Janata Government's inability to offer quick solutions is likely to make the people restive... I have always held that our basic problems cannot be solved except through organised people's power, youth power. A friendly Government can only extend a helping hand. I appeal to all social and constructive workers including youth and student activists who had participated in the 1974-75 movement to come together and carry forward the programme of total revolution. They have to organise the people, specially the weaker sections of society, along peaceful lines and show them the way to solve their problems. The exploited classes have no alternative but to unite to assert their rights. I am not suggesting that class struggle should be invited and fomented everywhere. But when it becomes inevitable it must be waged peacefully and firmly...I am particularly concerned about the explosive situation in Bhojpur district where in the last few years many landless harijans are reported to have been killed in the course of clashes with well-to-do farmers in the area...' In this context JP introduced Chandawar as a senior Sarvodaya activist worker from Maharashtra and asked them to help him in his task which he had undertaken in Bhojpur. But this brought no response. In fact it was anathema to the capitalists who were only interested in using and abusing JP's name and image. They saw to it that JP was separated from the people whom he loved.



Bhola Chatterjee

JP with his younger brother Rajeswar Prasad

Baburao Chandawar

In Jaslok Hospital and the penthouse of Mr Goenka in Bombay, only the rich and powerful were allowed near JP. The others were driven away. All these dinners and lunches they had for him with food from five star hotels were designed to tarnish JP's image of the man of the people, the man whose heart and soul was with the downtrodden and weaker classes. That is why, says Chandawar sadly, JP does not want to move away from Patna again. You know his people in Bombay cannot afford JP the treatment he needs nor the care and the food so he becomes a victim of the capitalists and industrialists. He has realised this and has pleaded that he should be allowed to remain and die in Patna.

Chandawar is now trying to build public opinion against the "treachery" indulged in by the trustees of the Kosh at the cost of the downtrodden and the landless. As he says, "There are many little groups working in Bihar, eastern UP, Orissa and elsewhere, but they need money for their work. Money is needed for little things like transport conveyance, letter writing, postage, etc. Mobility is very important. But ironically the money which is collected for this purpose has been kept out of the reach of the people who desperately need it. My fight is for making this available for the downtrodden for the second phase of the total revolution." ■

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JP had nothing to do with the fund

By BHOLA CHATTERJI

THE Jayaprakash Amrit Mahotsava Samiti was set up sometime after the March '77 elections to celebrate the seventy-fifth birthday of the Loknayak, which would fall on October 21. The sponsors of the committee also decided to present JP with a purse of Rs 75 lakhs. The people and organisations concerned, including the JP Birth Celebration Committee of which J. B. Kripalani was the chairman, enjoined that certain principles must be observed while collecting money for the proposed purse. That these principles were honoured more in the breach right from the word go is apparent from the statement JP issued in early October, 1977. "I strongly disapprove of unauthorised collections made by all sorts of people in my name. I warn the public against such persons". It is worth noting that JP was then in full command of his senses and in comparative good health.

But few cared to pay any heed to JP's entreaty. Soon after the Amrit Kosh Trust was formally launched, accusations of misuse of funds came in thick and fast. Also people began to approach JP for assistance from the fund. Once again JP had to clarify his position regarding the Amrit Kosh Trust. On September 18, 1978 he said: "I have been receiving requests for help from the Amrit Kosh fund that was collected on the occasion of my seventy-fifth birth anniversary last year. I take this opportunity to make it clear that although the fund was collected in my name and formally presented to me, it actually vests in the Amrit Kosh Trust that came into existence on October 11, 1977. This trust alone is responsible for and competent to disburse any part of the fund for purposes in keeping with the aims and objects laid down in the trust deed. I would, therefore, advise all concerned to send their requests for any help or assistance directly to the managing trustees of the Amrit Kosh Trust located at the Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi."

Here lies the rub. JP had nothing to do with the trust and yet his name continued to be exploited, as and when necessary, in connection with its functioning. The doubts that Chandawar has expressed about the way the fund was raised and its disbursement are not new to those who have kept track of the whole thing. *I found the Patna air thick with incriminating reports on the working of the Amrit Kosh Trust even as early as April 1978. It was in JP's residence that I chanced upon Sarva Seva Sangh leader Siddharaj Dhaddha, one of the members of the trust.* When I referred to the rumours and asked for his clarifications the following interview emerged. The point that needs to be stressed is that the doubts raised then have not been cleared up in the intervening period of over a year.

Q: How did you come to join the Sarva Seva Sangh and what was your politics before you joined it?

A.: From the very beginning of my college days I had been influenced by Gandhiji's ideas and my coming to the Sarva Seva Sangh was only a culmination of what I had been working and living for for the last 40 years.

Shiddharaja Dhaddha

Q: What's your age now?

A: I am now 70.

Q: Well, you look quite sprightly for your age. Incidentally, the Bihar Government State Guest House (where Mr Dhaddha was staying) is a relatively comfortable place. It seems a world apart from where the common man lives. Also, the arrangement and upkeep of the place do not appear to have changed much from what they were in the colonial days.

A: Well, so far as I am concerned personally, it makes no difference to me whether I am here or in a small hut in the village. It is the work and the mission that you have got that is more important.

Q: I understand that about Rs 90 lakhs was collected during Jayaprakash Narayan's Amrit Mahotsab year. I also understand that a trust has been formed and you are one of its leading members. How do you propose to spend that money?

A: The trust has had its preliminary meetings and it has chalked out a programme and decided upon certain items on which the trust money will be largely spent. The items naturally are those in which JP has been interested all these years. His programmes, his activities and his ideas form the main nucleus round which the activities that will take place will be financed by the fund.

Q: Have you already spent any money from the fund? For that matter, has anything been done so far?

A: No, not yet. The first meeting of the trust was held only early this month. We have decided to publicise this thing in the newspapers and call for suggestions from the people keeping in view the broad objectives, of which I told you. If anybody has got any plan, he will send it to the trust and then the trust will finalise it.

Q: Did you ever publish any list of donors, I mean people who contributed to the fund?

A: It comes out (inaudible) by the State committees. So far as the small collections are concerned, it is not possible to publish the list because they have been collected through coupons. And coupons had been given one rupee, two rupees, five rupees (denomination). So far as the bigger donations are concerned certainly a list will be published.

Q: Report has it that some of the large contributions to the fund were not clean money. It is even said that smugglers also contributed to the fund. Is there any truth in it?

A: Anything can be said in a democracy, we cannot prevent people from saying anything. Everything that has been collected has been collected by receipts. It is there for everybody to see.

Q: Don't you think that to take out the sting of that report, the best idea would be to publish a list of the big donors?

A: That is what we are contemplating to do.

Q: What about accountability? People would naturally like to know how the money is spent? You know, in the past there had been such trust funds, but when it came to the quesion of accountability one could see that there was not very rigid adherence to rules which ought to have been observed. What do you propose to do regarding that?

A: As I told you, the trust is a public registered trust. Its proceedings are there and everything will be decided by the trust. Loose talk does not help and, unfortunately, there has been quite a lot of loose talk during previous years. I do not say that undesirable things may not have happened. But for public trusts and public institutions, since their reports are always open, anybody can see them and derive a measure of satisfaction. ■

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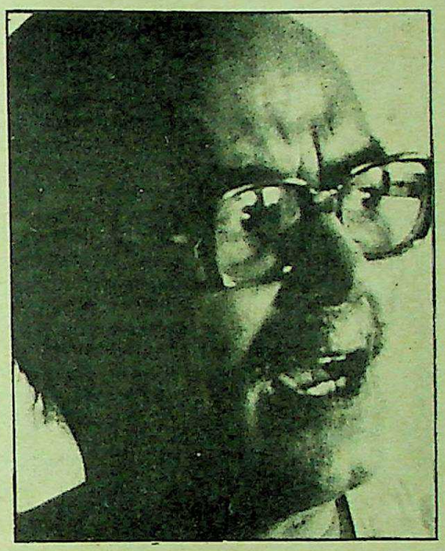
RAJENDRA SINGH: 'Mr Limaye's article contains many wrong and half-wrong facts'

The RSS General Secretary responds to our invitation to reply to Madhu Limaye's "The ambitions of the RSS" (SUNDAY, June 10)

A MAN who normally tells the truth and only occasionally an untruth is a dangerous man, because his untruths may be mistaken for truths. But one who has a lot of misrepresentation and distortion to his credit does not cause much damage because people learn to make discounts to his assertions. As such Shri Madhu Limaye's article contains so many wrong and half-wrong facts and surmises that it was not necessary to contradict it. People know the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh sufficiently well not to be misled by Shri Limaye's so-called scathing attack. We do not like to indulge in controversies because the nature of a constructive worker is essentially different from a political demagogue. Still, since Shri Akbar was very keen that some records must be set right, I am writing this brief reply.

Shri Limaye says in his article that RSS work was started with the blessings of the princely States. Why then did it not start or flourish in those States? Why was it confined to Nagpur and its vicinity in those early years? Then, without any proof, he asserts that we were great admirers of Hitler. One earlier edition of Shri Limaye, the late Shri Govind Sahai of U. P., even disclosed in his book that our founder had been to Germany and our work started on Hitler's instructions. People know that the RSS was started in 1925, eight years before Hitler was even heard of in India.

Shri Limaye feels that his meetings in M.P. have been disturbed by RSS people. Our swayamsevaks neither bother about his foreign policy nor are they trained for such activities. We never have morchas nor slogan-shouting of "zindabad" or "murdabad", and our branches, which are a must, mostly hold their get-togethers in the evenings when Shri Limaye must have been holding his meetings. He thinks we have become admirers of China. Let him remember that one of the first to bring to the notice of the people the Chinese invasion was Shri Guruji, and let me also refresh his memory with the words used by the USSR in those days: "India is our friend but China is our brother". We would



like every nationalist to look to our national interest and not try to become more loyal than the king himself.

Then he talks at great length about my affidavit about the RSS being a political Party. I have given a public statement that no such affidavit was given. First it was sought to be propagated that this affidavit was given to get exemption from income tax by the RSS, since political Parties are exempt from it. Now they have changed that stand and say that submissions have been made at the Nagpur court against the judgment of the Charity Commissioner ordering the RSS to register as a religious charitable trust. We are contesting the case on the basis of the famous Kesari Maratha Trust judgment of the Supreme Court. In order to clearly differentiate our work from religious and charitable, we have submitted that it is cultural social work with a patriotic purpose some of whose activities are akin to political. If, in clearly differentiating the human species biologically we say that it is akin to the ape, man does not become an ape. Tearing sentences out of context and presenting them to suit one's objectives may be cunning, but certainly has nothing to do with truth.

Then there is a reference to Shri Bala Saheb Deoras delivering an inflammatory speech at Jamshedpur, causing the riot. The Sarsanghchalak and myself visit almost two hundred and fifty places every year. Why do no riots take place elsewhere? He should also have tried to get an authentic version of the speech which is tape-recorded. I was present at the function and I am confident that Shri Limaye cannot point out one single sentence to substantiate his contention. Probably he himself delivers inflammatory speeches and naturally he thinks all others follow his methods.

Shri Limaye then goes on to make a fantastic assertion that 70 per cent of RSS workers had sent in apologies during the Emergency. How was it that in Maharashtra 8,000 RSS activists responded to the satyagraha call, and not so many hundreds came from Shri Limaye's camp? On insinuations from people like Shri Limaye a question was asked in the Maharashtra Assembly on October 18, 1977 as to how many people tendered apologies during the Emergency. The answer given by the then Home Minister Shri Sharad Pawar was—only two, one belonging to the Ananda Marg and the other to the Jamait-e-Islami. So far as U.P. and Bihar are concerned, where I was in direct charge, let him produce evidence of even one per cent apologies. Having not even a few hundred to offer satyagraha during Emergency, trying to denigrate others may be Limaye's logic, but does not do credit to a Gandhian which he swears he is.

Certainly Shri Limaye cannot be so naive as to try to understand the Sangh through Dr. Subramaniam Swamy. Dr. Swamy did some excellent work during the Emergency here and abroad but that does not make him an authority on the RSS and he need not be quoted.

The whole article is full of many such inaccuracies and untruths. Shri Limaye should fight out his political battles with his Janata Party opponents but need not drag in the RSS. Let us be permitted to do our work of nation-building quietly. ■

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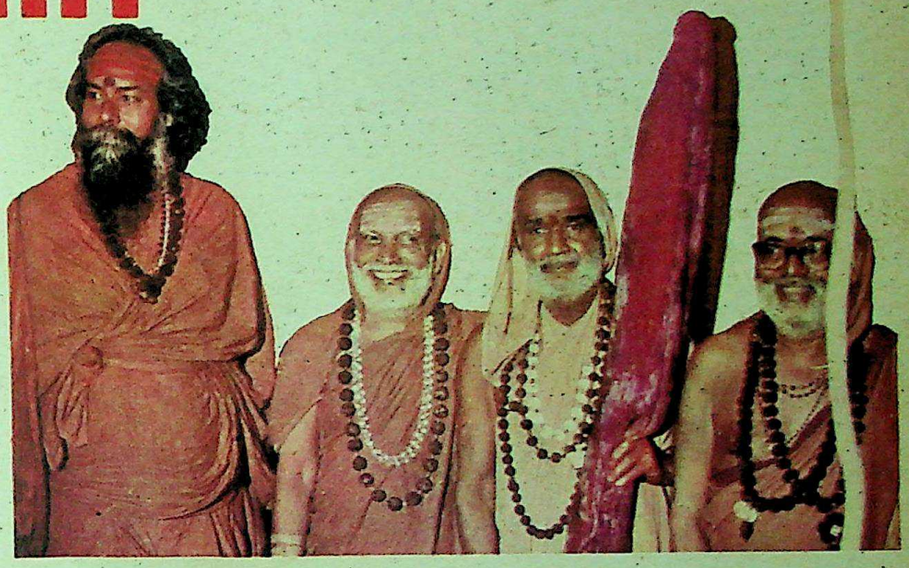
Revive Hinduism!

SUBIR ROY went to Sringeri to report on the meeting of the four standard bearers of the Adi-Shankaracharya : the Swamijis of Sringeri, Dwarka, Puri and Badrikshetra. The four were meeting for the first time in history to take stock of their common heritage.



SRINGERI math, set amid the green hills of pretty Chikmagalur, hills that turn blue when the heavy clouds of the south-easterly monsoons brood over them, is just about the finest place where anyone could have built a temple to god. It speaks volumes about the perspicacy and wisdom of the Adi-Shankaracharya that he selected this spot to plant firmly the standard of Hindu dharma in the south, to match the mountain-top math he built in the north at Badrikshetra. He also set up two more maths, one on the western coast at Dwarka and the other in the east by the side of the Bay of Bengal in Puri, thus staking out what he considered was an indisputable claim for Hinduism in what to him was Akhanda Bharat.

Twelve centuries later, on May 1, the birthday of the Adi-Shankaracharya, the four present standard bearers, the Shankaracharyas of the four maths, met for the first time in Sringeri. The event had all the pageantry of a Hindu festive gathering of its kind. At precisely 10 a.m. on the day the three guests of the Sringeri swami arrived at the portals of the math to be received by him and accompanied in procession to the temple. The milling crowd of bhaktas surged around as cries of *Shankaracharya ki jai* rent the air. The police struggled to keep a cordon around them as the bhaktas, a mixture of women in colourful South Indian silks and men with half bare torsos and wrap-around dhotis and bibhuti marks on the foreheads, jostled and pushed.

What immediately stood out through the crush was the sublime calm on the faces of the swamis. All of them were in flowing saffron and each carried the standard of his math, straight at the shoulder, with which he is never parted when venturing out. As the parade of the sages, the procession of the godly moved forward towards the main temple a group of musicians, with a quaint mixture of western saxaphones and South Indian drums, took up the strains of invocational, repetitive Karnataki music. Soon it was the half light of the temple interior that enveloped everybody. The crush was greater, the half light punctuated by the photographers' flashes and the TV camera's staccato blinding glares. Once within the inner sanctum, the swamis offered brief pujas to the ruling deity, Sarada. In a few minutes the arati flame was brought out and again it was a mass of surging hands trying to partake a little of the warmth and be blessed. The swamis then went round the inner sanctum in a ritual pradakshin and proceeded to the adjoining inner courtyard where in the centre was another temple. There in a room by its side, the four Shankaracharyas went into a secret conclave, assisted only by their closest junior swamis or incongruous modernisms in the persons of "private secretaries."

The frenzy dies down. People squat in the corridors and courtyards, the musicians recover their breath, the photographers mop their brows and the myriad sanyasis and junior swamis wait anxiously before the closed door for a call from inside to re-enter. For an hour the swamis sort out their problems. Suddenly, stirrings. A procession of bearahs carrying offerings of garlands, flowers and fruits troops in with a tall handsome man at its head, a little nervous. The State Governor sends his pranams through his secretary. He will be there shortly. The door is opened, photographers rush in, the swamis are disturbed, a little annoyed, but deem not to notice. Everyone waits. The Puri Shankaracharya keeps talking. (So it was *his* voice that was heard the most from the outside!) In a few moments the Dwarka swami gathers his angabastra with an air of finality, says something about a committee and that the time for his medicines has come. The photographers become active, questioning eyes turn to the private

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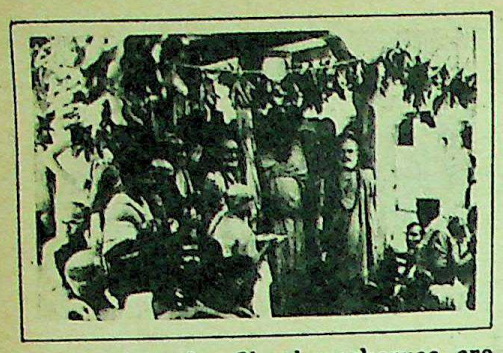

secretaries, the Shankaracharyas are requested to stand in a line please. The Joshimath swami towers over the Puri swami, the goodly Dwarka swami has a glazed look, the Sringeri swami is calm and perceptive.

Photographs over, they come out in procession again, the bhaktas send up their cries, more pujas at the temple in the courtyard. the swamis come out and stand at the edge of the raised temple verandah. It is like a small-town election rally where the candidate and his assistants take the cheers of the crowd. Brief speeches are made by the Dwarka and Sringeri swamis who both speak in Kannada: "We have come from the corners of this country to bless you." The flame comes out on the thali once again, the hundred hands lunge out again, the musicians resume their drones, the procession returns to the portals. The sun has ascended the zenith. The bhaktas disperse, tired but with an overbright gleam in their eyes. Something which has been in preparation for 12 years has come to pass. At last the four have met.

THE life of Shankaracharya, who was born twelve centuries ago, is a bundle of unverifiable legends. But his work is not. First the legend. Shankaracharya was born in a place called Kalti in Kerala. From childhood he was possessed with an urge to seek enlightenment and this made him leave his home, take up sanyas as a disciple of Bhagwan Gobindacharya. At the instructions of his guru, he wrote tracts like the *Brahmasutra* to enhance the knowledge of the people in Vedic matters. He then went on two journeys around India, visiting all the holy places and trying to rediscover their significance. He set up four maths in four corners of the country for the propagation of the Vedic religion. Historians are, however, undecided as to whether all the maths were set up in his lifetime. In a brief lifetime, he is credited with having turned the whole tide of Bhudhism and set resurgent Hinduism firmly on its tracks.

But by tremendous contrast with the unclear details of his life, Shankaracharya's writings have great clarity and there ought not to be any confusion about the message.

The revivalistic nature of the Adi-Shankaracharya's message and mission lives well in his late twentieth century apostles. Nobody should have gone to Sringeri looking for broad-minded reformism. On the afternoon of May 1, the four Shankaracharyas held a marathon public meeting which lasted over five hours, during which the lights went out twice and storm clouds menacingly rumbled once. Right through the meeting the mood was militant. The fundamentalist character of the creed was asserted in the most emphatic terms by the Sringeri swami who said that the Adi-Shankaracharya had no special personal credo to offer, there was no Shankar mantra as such, Shankaracharya merely revived the Vedic mantra.

While the morning's ceremonies were typical of such a religious gathering and full of impressive ritual, the evening's gathering was a concession to modern times. A resolution was passed, a committee was appointed, a joint communique was issued and many speeches were made. In style they were more akin to political speeches rather than religious discourses. But even there ritual added colour and mystery. Before every Jagatguru spoke, a disciple of his would stand up and intonate a long ode to the glory and many virtues of his illustrious master. If God's humble servant is also God's proud warrior, and king by his authority of the spiritual realm, then the latter characteristics were the more prominent.

The Shankaracharyas spoke at length on many matters frankly political but weren't veteran politicians enough to be circumspect on matters delicate. Perhaps they will live to regret a little their outspokenness, though never to doubt their convictions. Between them the swamis were a fascinating study in contrast, set forth against a common mould. All tended to command instant respect with their grave, sublimely peaceful manner and a kind of natural authority that lifetime's sadhana gives. But beyond that they were delightfully human and different. Sir Abhinava Tirtha of Dwarka is a goodly old man with a baby face who tends to meander a little. Sri Niranjanadeva Tirtha of Puri is an iracible old 'John the Baptist' who would rather walk up to the gallows than deny his faith, and said as much. Sri Swarupananda Saraswati of Joshimath is easily the most impressive, a towering bearded hermit who speaks the most simple, precise and terse prose. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswami of Sringeri appears to possess the keenest intellect which reflects clearly in his discerning eyes and a quiet assured manner.

That many current political developments in the country were seriously agitating the Swamis became apparent right from the word go. A printed one-page joint communique

that was issued spelt it out thus: 'From time immemorial it is the desirable thing to follow one's own religion. Therefore if someone tries to influence or change the religion of a person with the help of inducement, fear, force or harassment then that is a great wrong. May we always be engaged in the pursuit of our own religions'. The same fears and apprehensions that had been working on Mr O. P. Tyagi and caused him to introduce his Freedom of Religion Bill, were apparently visited on the Swamis. The Joshimath swami wanted phoney conversions among Adivasis stopped. The Dwarka swami spoke of his concern in a related field. He had just returned from a tour of North-East India where the balance in the population was being upset by a largescale influx of Muslims from Bangladesh.

But the one great issue that exercised all the swamis the most, other than the all-pervasive decline of religion (by which they of course meant Hinduism) was cow protection. The resolution that was passed made several references to it. They were happy that steps were being taken by the Union Government to ban cow slaughter and urged political Parties not to make it an issue of partisan politics but take it up as a national policy. They urged people to use cow energy, wanted the Government to prevent the sale of cows for slaughter and felt that only the hide of the dead cow should be utilised for leather. The Sringeri swami observed in his speech that the cow had done us so much good that he could not allow anyone to harm it. This drew the audience's applause.

The resolution made a reference to the solemnisation of marriage, which it felt should be done in the Hindu dharmik manner. The ceremonies should also be simple and not extravagant. The Puri swami added poignancy by narrating how thousands were spent on decorations and feasting but the poor brahmin priest was sent off with a five-rupee note.

Always hovering in the background was the question of the caste system. The resolution strongly asserted that the backward classes were on abhinya ang of our society. The Puri swami later clarified that the term "abhinya ang" was vital and he had insisted on its use in place of the word "ghatak". He even joined issue with the Karnataka Governor, Mr Govind Narayan's narration of an incident in the Adi-Shankaracharya's life in which he had met enlightenment in an "untouchable". Sri Niranjanadeva disputed this translation and favoured the word agraj, or, he who comes before— an elder brother—to describe the caste Hindu. Speakers repeatedly expressed themselves in favour of the Varnasram dharma or the caste system but asserted that untouchability was not a part of it. As Sri Niranjandevji would like to have it seen, it was really a matter of relationship between elder and younger brothers. The Joshimath swami felt that Varnashram didn't mean disrespect to anybody.

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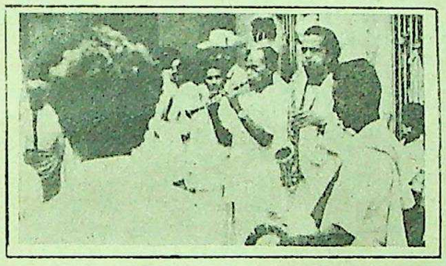
Right through the meeting certain views, familiar among one section of political opinion in the country, were repeated. Mr Gopal Shastri, an important office bearer of the committee formed to commemorate the Adi-Shankaracharya in various ways bemoaned the fact that Hindu society was not going forward. There were laws in the country only for the majority community. The Dwarka swamiji lamented that there was no Hindu rashtra in the world except in little Nepal. The Joshimath swami found it galling that while the nation recognised the Buddha Jayanti and Mahavir Jayanti it didn't take notice of Shankara Jayanti. The Puri swami didn't mind the minority community getting special treatment but there should not be discrimination against the majority community as through the Hindu Married Women's Endowment Act. He even raised the slogan, which was lustily taken up by the audience: *"Dharm ka jai ho, Adharm ka nash ho..."*

The smooth flow of similar viewpoints parading before the audience was interrupted only once when the Karnataka Minister of State for Information, Mr K. H. Srinivas, an invitee, embarked on what he thought was a free exchange of views. It almost became a free for all. Mr Srinivas said that the point to consider about the Freedom of Religion Bill was why people who had been with us for so many years had left us. Was it because we were unable to look after a large chunk of our society? Also, we had not really abolished in practice casteism and untouchability. At this point the Sringeri swami stopped him short. "Don't create a controversy here. I can answer your criticisms." From the audience there were shouts: "Don't make a political speech here. It is the Government that is sustaining the caste system." The Minister's speech quickly ended thereafter and the faithful went back to listening to what they were used to.



BUT by far the strangest aspect of the whole gathering was that while much was said in loud condemnation of the enemy without, there was the persisting nagging presence of the enemy within. Why had the Sankaracharyas met? To spread the good word, to bless the faithful, put the fear of God in the heart of the wayward? Certainly. But there was also this little matter of territorial claims, a problem of poaching, of pretenders and false prophets, a need to tell the faithful on whom the mantle of the Lord really rested. An inconvenient little problem of having to assert: We four and no more.

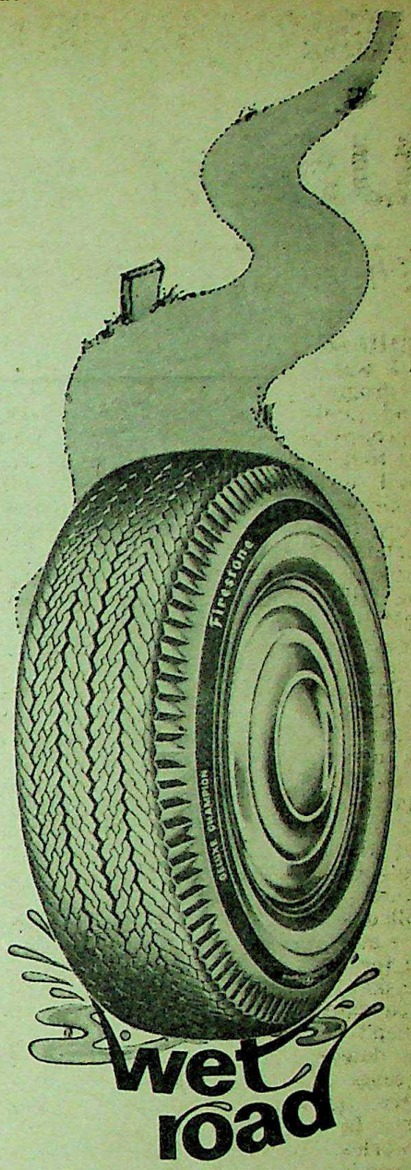
The biggest unseen presence at the whole gathering, in fact the man who perhaps made it all possible, was the Shankaracharya of Kanchi, Acharya Chandrashekharendra Bharati. His math is also known as Sureshwarapith and it is claimed that the first disciple of the Adi-Shankaracharya resided there after he died at that spot. Now the following paragraph comes fairly early in the joint-communique:

It is known that in order to spread the religion and learning that he had acquired through his own efforts, Shankaracharya established four maths in the fours corners of India... At the end of all his work he put an end to his physical form and work by leaving his human body in the cold and snowy Kedarkshetra. However, many people in order to enhance their own prestige have spread it about that Shankaracharya belongs to their province. In India there are many legends circulated about him in person. Naturally there are no proofs in these matters. This fact should be known by all. They should know that the swamis of the four maths believe firmly that Shankaracharya died in Kedarkshetra.

This 'fact' was repeated several times by several speakers in various oblique ways. One reason why the problem may have gained immediacy is that the present swami of Kanchipuram is a rather exceptional person who has developed a large following (reportedly among many top Delhi bureaucrats) and has been organising extensive philanthropic work. A more unseemly incident that came up for repeated mention was the throwing into a river of an image of the Adi-Shankaracharya that the Dwarka Swami had put up at Badrikshetra, presumably because some people resented the mention of the name of the Dwarka math at the base of the statue. Consequently the resolution stipulated that the memorial that would be set up to Adi-Shankaracharya at Badrikshetra should not bear the name of any math.

This has in fact been the state of organised Hindu religion in the country since independence. Any large denomination or sect is riven by internecine fighting among its followers. The end of the last century and early part of this century saw several reformist movements trying to rescue the essentials of the Hindu religion from the dead weight of sterile and repressive dogma. But that period is certainly over. The Sringeri swami, although Kannadiga bred and Kannadiga born, told reporters the next morning that there was a need for an Indian link language. The English had come across the seven seas and brainwashed us into losing our cultural identity. Maybe it was the continued use of English and our store of knowledge gleaned from English books that were causing the faithful to fight among themselves. Maybe. ■

Photographs by Subir Roy



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USSR sabotaged Bhaskara

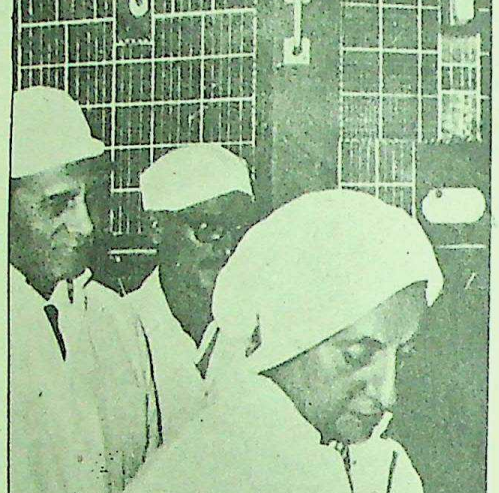
There's no other explanation for the failure

BHASKARA, the space satellite, was launched from a Soviet cosnodrome on June 6, amidst fanfare and jubilation. The excitement was unconcealed, New Delhi was pleased. At that time it looked as if India was well on her way to achieving self-sufficiency in her space programme Now, the Bhaskara project is almost certainly a 100 per cent failure. It is evident that the information about the failure of its TV cameras, X-ray detectors and other scientific instruments were passed on to the Press in a rather low key.

The major scientific programmes of Bhaskara project consisted of (i) mineral location experiments proposed to have been carried out on the Bihar mica belt, Chitradurga belt and the Deccan trap near Pune (ii) soil survey near and around Hyderabad, Hissar and Indore and (iii) evolving geo-climatic parameters for future planning. About 600 highly skilled and competent Indian scientists and engineers had been working for the last four years to build Bhaskara.

To date, the TV cameras set up haven't been turned on even once. The detectors designed to register the torrents of cosmic rays coming from outer space ended up in the same way. In effect, Bhaskara is numb, powerless—it does not seem to respond to any signal from the ground stations.

Is this another spectacular failure, like so many other failures in our scientific programme or is there something more sinister at work? From the evidence already available it looks as though Bhaskara programme was sabotaged by the Russians, right from the beginning. On the day of launching, the satellite was finally handed over to the Russians, who, as the report goes, insisted that beyond a certain point the security rules would not permit any Indian scientist to go. So, on that fateful day, Bhaskara was with the Russians and Russians alone, just before it was stationed on top of the Russian rocket—long enough for the Russians to pull out all the relevant connections to the power-pack.



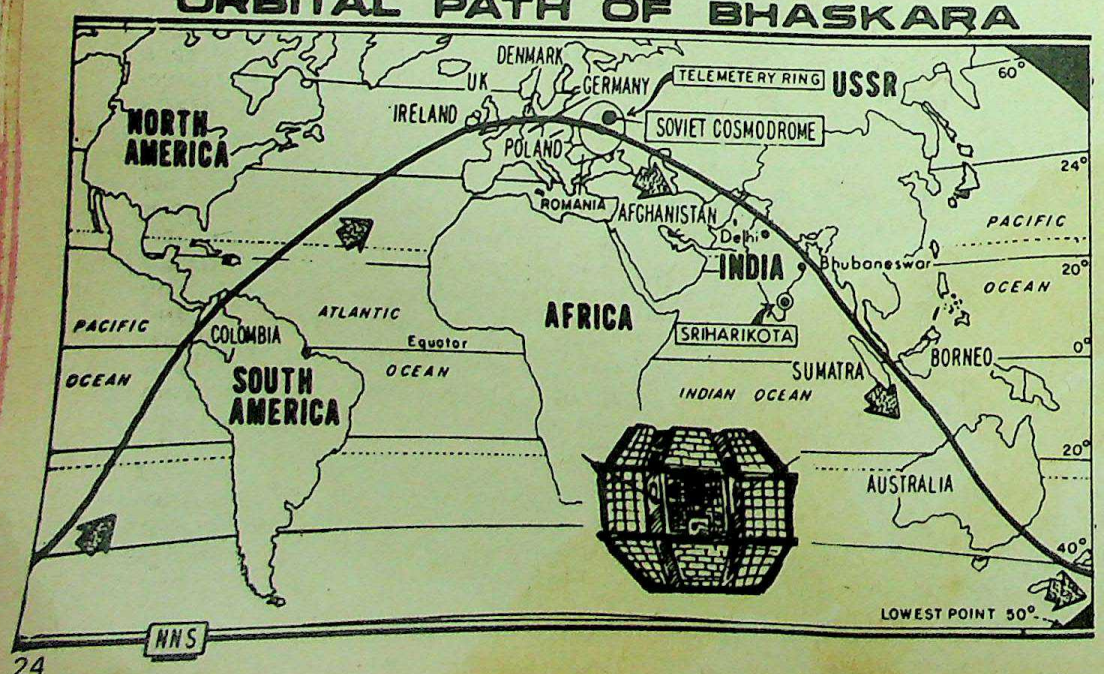
Ex-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at the Indian Satellite Project

No country in the world likes the idea of being watched by any foreign agent, especially if the agent happens to be a satellite taking pictures from outer space. As Bhaskara spins around the globe, there is no reason, at least theoretically, why a few pictures of Russian missile bases could not be flashed back to Bangalore or Ahmedabad; indeed, there is no reason why a few shots of PINSTECH in Pakistan could not be flashed back either. In simple strategic terms it is not in the Russian interest to have another satellite remote-sensing Russian soil. The response of Bhaskara to any signal being entirely negative leaves us with the only conclusion that the act of sabotage was neatly performed in the high security enclosure of the cosmodrome.

Why? The Russians, after all, helped to launch Bhaskara; so why should they destroy the power-pack? Why should they sabotage a space programme as prestigious as this? Ironically, the Russians have gained all the advantages, political and strategic, and India has lost out. If Bhaskara had been working that would have neither enhanced nor reduced Russian credibility. Soviet participation started and ended with the launching of the satellite. A 100 per cent functioning remote-sensing Bhaskara spinning round the globe would have been a slip in the equations of Russian strategy.

If Bhaskara had been sabotaged by the Russians, Indians have to swallow a grim message. In sensitive scientific activities, be it a space programme or atomic energy for that matter, it is not credible for our scientists to be competent only upto a point. No part of the programme can be left to the mercy of any foreign nation. Tarapur is the most famous example. India's scientific programme in sensitive areas has to be self-sufficient to the last detail. The decision to go all out for total self-sufficiency is, however, a political one and not entirely scientific; the decision for the financial resources, adequate for building up a self-sufficient space programme or atomic energy programme has to come out of the complex decision-making inner circle of the political hierarchy. It would be an illusion to think that any nation could usher in the progress of India in these sensitive areas. Charity is an unknown quantity in the murky equations of international politics.

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



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Ditchers from Deutschland

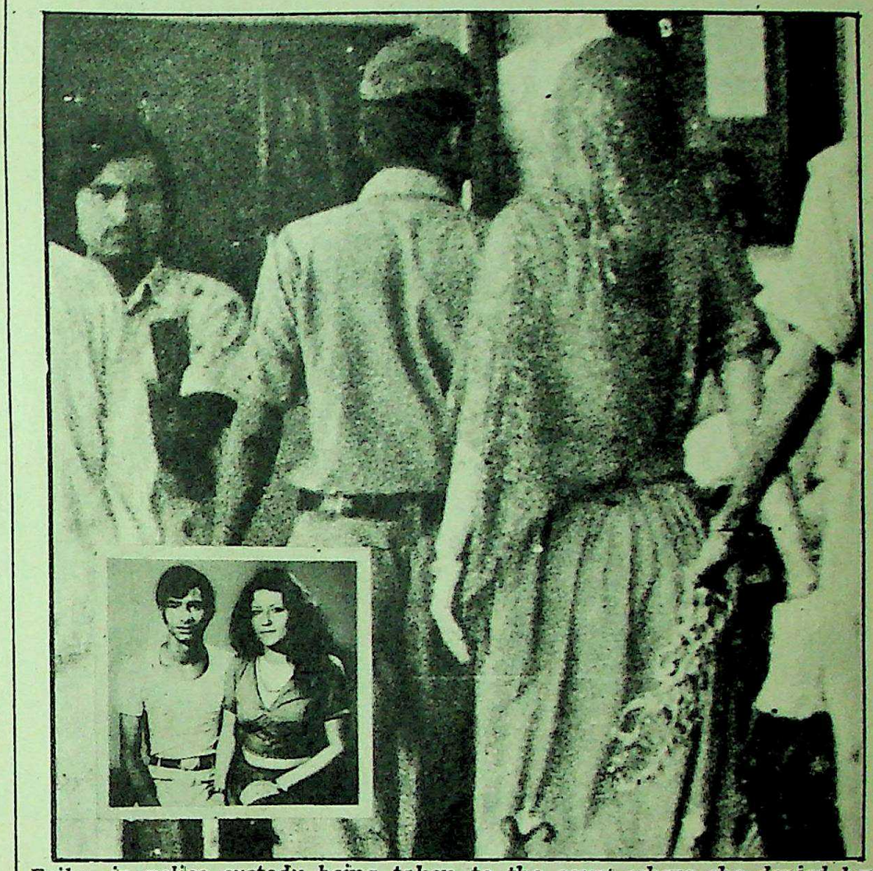
Rickshaw-pullers are being taken for a ride

PRETTY, young German girls have invaded Jaipur. Like the love stories of the harems of yore, their affairs are the talk of the town. They came into the limelight for the first time when one of them married a rickshaw-puller. Almost simultaneously another German girl too married an ordinary citizen of Jaipur. The third one is in a Jaipur jail along with the wife of the rickshaw-puller. As many as seven of these girls were reportedly in Jaipur during the same period.

Tall and shapely 22-year-old Erika, who wears a ghagra and choli and chain-smokes bidis, was the first West German girl to hit the headlines by marrying rickshaw-puller, Gopal Singh Chauhan. But she is now in jail. Her husband, who initially was overwhelmed with joy for getting a *gauri mem* (white-skinned lady) as his spouse, is now a broken man. Erika is under judicial custody for trying to forge her passport. Gopal Singh is making a desperate bid to get her out of the four walls of the Jaipur Central Jail. After marrying the German girl, Gopal Singh sold his rickshaw—his only source of livelihood—to get money for celebrating his honeymoon in a befitting manner. The girl had assured him that her parents were rich and they would send enough money to her. "After this there will be no dearth of money with us and we will leave for Germany."

As luck would have it, Gopal Singh's dream of settling in West Germany as the son-in-law of a well-off family appears to have been shattered with Erika being sent to jail. Back in the realm of hard realities, he has again started pulling a rickshaw which he has now hired at Rs 4 a day. Though Gopal Singh has succeeded in getting a court order for his wife's release on bail, the task of producing a surety of Rs 10,000 and a matching personal bond is not an easy one. But the rudest shock to him has come from Erika herself: She has now told the court that Gopal is not her husband, he is out to blackmail her, and any act of his to get her released on bail should not be taken cognizance of. This change of heart seems to have come about after officials of the West German Embassy visited Erika in jail.

What did Erika find in Gopal ? He is not her equal either economically or intellectually. Neither is he very obviously handsome. She spent most of her time with Gopal Singh for about 15 days before they got married in the Arya Samaj. In the words of her jail-mate, Miss Brigtte Preis, "Erika likes poor and simple people." But after the arrest Erika appears to have changed her views about India and Indians. She told one interviewer, "I am not an Indian nor do I want to live in India. I like to be called a German and want to go back to my country. In any case I cannot leave my parents." The couple was also sore over the publicity that their marriage had attracted in the Indian Press.



Erika, in police custody, being taken to the court where she denied having married the rickshaw puller. (Inset) Edith Erika and Gopal Singh

Interestingly, only a few days back she got herself converted to Hinduism to marry Gopal Singh. The Arya Samaj, where the marriage was performed, gave her a Hindu name—Sita Devi. But for the generous help from an office bearer of the Arya Samaj the Erika-Gopal Singh marriage would not have taken place since neither of them had the Rs 110 needed for the various rituals. The Arya Samaj official contributed the money to help perform this *punya karya* (noble work) of making a foreigner a Hindu.

What connections Erika has got with Brigtte Preis, her German jail-mate, who too is involved in a similar case of passport forgery is still to be found out. Brigtte Preis is reported to have come to India with a boyfriend. When they reached Varanasi, the boyfriend came into contact with a *sadhu* and under his influence got his head cleanshaven. Too much of intoxication had an adverse effect on his mind and hence Brigtte managed to send him back from India. Slim and charming Brigtte (26) is five months pregnant. She was remanded to judicial custody on June 29 this year. Eleven days later she was joined by Edith Erika under orders of the chief judicial magistrate. Erika, however, used to visit Brigtte Preis before she was lodged there on July 9. Both the girls have identical habits and are chain-smokers. But unlike Erika, Brigtte was not penniless when she was taken into custody.

Jail records show that at least Brigtte Preis is not quite unknown in Jaipur. After being in jail a German couple visited her. Two foreign students studying in Rajasthan University also visit her regularly and bring cigarettes and other presents. One of these students is said to be a Kenyan and the other one is from Uganda. One line of speculation, particularly after the new turn the Gopal-Erika matter has taken, is that there is more than love and the waywardness of western youth in this mini-invasion of Jaipur by rootless German girls.

MILAP CHAND DANDIA, Jaipur

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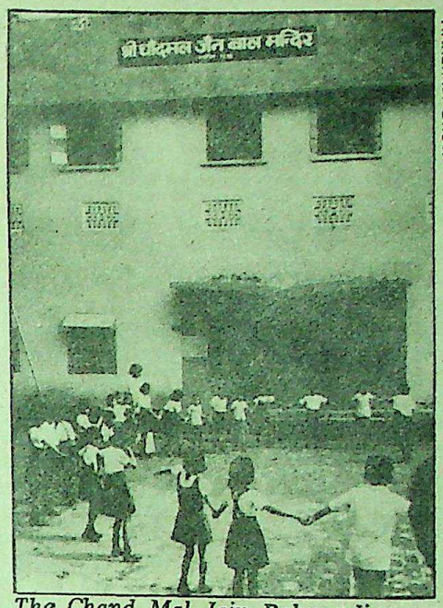
No skeleton in their cupboard

A school's reputation is being ruined

THE skeleton of a student of class IV was found in a school in Ranchi when it reopened after the summer vacation, according to the secretary of the Bihar Pradesh Congress(I), Mr Harinarayan Singh, said a news agency report sometime in the middle of July. It added that the student had complained of stomach ache to his class teacher on the last day of school before the summer vacation. The teacher had asked him to lie down on one of the empty last benches. At the end of school everyone seemed to have forgotten about the student and apparently he had been locked in for the whole of the vacation. When the school reopened after the holidays the skeleton of the student was said to have been found in the classroom. This news was guaranteed to cause widespread gossip. Such "news" is bound to spread fast, particularly in a place like Ranchi, which is not too large as cities go. Detailed investigations revealed that the story had no basis whatsoever, it being an unlikely one in the first place The Deputy Commissioner, Mr. B. P. Sinha, also felt that there was no basis to the rumour. He had not received any orders from the Home Department in the State capital, Patna, to look into the case.

Finding the school was a problem in itself since no one seemed to have a clear idea of the name of the school. After being misled a number of times I managed to reach the Shri Chandmal Jain Bal Mandir. The principal of the school, Mrs Leena Verma, acknowledged that the news I had heard indeed referred to her school. "I don't know who is spreading such stories about this school," she said. She offered to show us the attendance registers of all the classes in the school—Kindergarten to Class V. There are 435 students in the school—both boys and girls—and no name had "A" written beside it signifying "Absent", after June 18, 1979. The school's summer vacation had started on May 23 and continued up to June 17.

I asked her about the manner in which the students were sent home every day after school, to find out if any child left behind or locked up in a classroom could be accounted for. She explained that the school closed at 3.30 pm and the teachers stayed behind till every child had left—sometimes as late as 5.30. The cleaning staff of the school made up of five maids start their work around 4.30 pm. They go through each classroom meticulously since many children leave their books and sometimes their satchels behind. The principal also said that there was no reason why the child could not have been discovered during the holidays because the school classrooms were



Tirthankar Ghosh

The Chand Mal Jain Balmandir

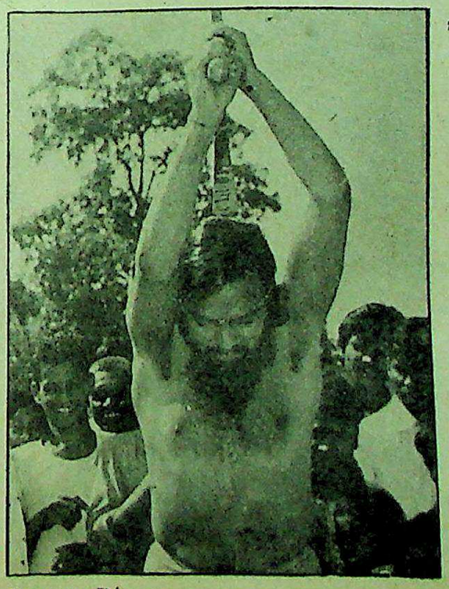
cleaned even during the holidays while the school office remained open for two hours every day. The school authorities did not receive visits or complaints from parents or guardians with regard to this case either during or after the holidays. In fact, Mrs Verma wanted to meet the person who had mentioned the news to the Congress(I) secretary. This rumour, she said, would destroy the reputation which the school had built up over a period of 25 years.

It was obvious that whoever had circulated the news had plans to finish the school. The principal said that hers was the oldest junior school in Ranchi. Just beside the school there is a factory, the Bihar Engineering Works, which is built on land owned by the school. Many years ago, the school authorities gave the land to the factory owner for his use: it was not sold or donated. A few months ago, when the factory owner started claiming that the land was his, the school started a case. Ultimately, the factory owner, Mr Nemichandji, lost the suit. The secretary of the school committee, Mr Basudev Kataruka, was of the opinion that the school's reputation was being tarnished by persons who had ulterior motives. In fact, the school is sandwiched between the factory and a Congress(I) office. If a rumour was to travel from the factory to the Congress(I) office, it would have to traverse only a block. Mr Harinarayan Singh, the Bihar Pradesh Congress(I) secretary owes everyone an explanation.

TIRTHANKAR GHOSH, Ranchi

Uncivil Ministers and civil servants

Ministers 'shoe' the way



Pawan Diwan

GAZETTED officers of Madhya Pradesh under the Janata Govment are faced with a new kind of hazard over which they are concerned and agitated. The members of the State Cabinet in a sudden fit of temper, when they lose all sense of reason and propriety, assault and publicly humiliate officials. The latest victim of such Ministerial wrath is Mr H. P. Siroliya, Block Development Officer of Geedum in the tribal district of Bastar. He was dragged by his hair in public by the Tribal Welfare Minister, Mr Baliram Kashyap. The Minister had even taken off one of his shoes to beat Mr Siroliya. This incident has created a wave of anger and frustration in the civil service circles of the State.

The story goes something like this. On June 13, the Minister for Tribal Welfare arrived at Geedum and was furious when he saw a well constructed near the bus stand. He had all along opposed its construction. He rushed immediately to the BDO's office, called the officer out, held him by the hair and asked: "Under whose

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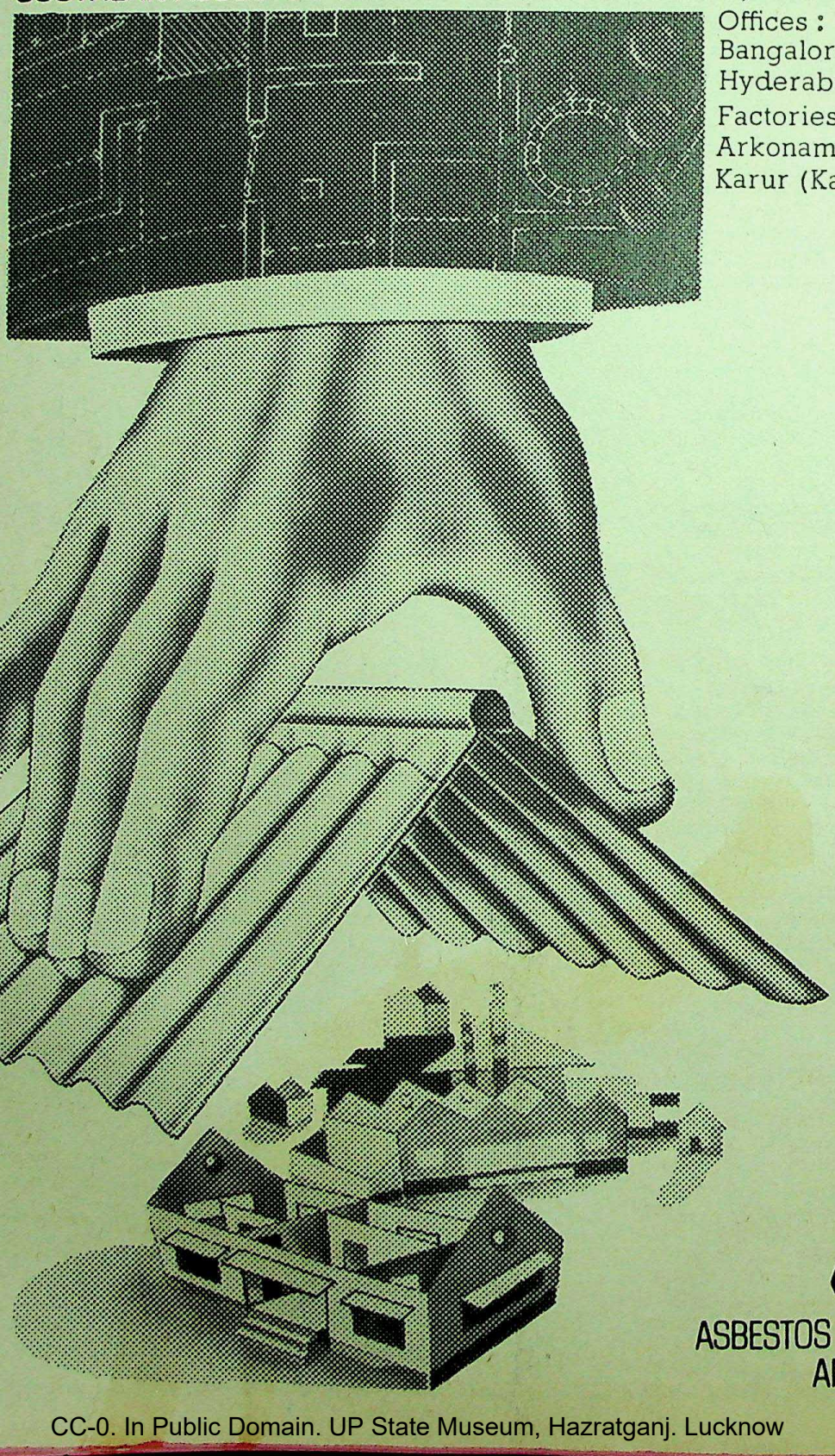

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instructions has the well been constructed?" While the BDO, Mr Siroliya, was explaining that the construction had gone according to a resolution adopted by the Geedum Janpad Panchayat and that he was dutybound to implement the decision, the Minister dragged the officer to his jeep and took him to the bus stand where he showered the choicest abuses on him. He then took out one of his shoes to hit the BDO. Meanwhile the Janpad Panchayat Chairman, Mr Jaya Kishore Sharma, along with about 100 persons reached the spot. They protested against the Minister's behaviour. Infuriated at this intervention the Minister treated the Janpad Chairman in almost the same manner. He roared: "I am a Minister and can act in any way I like. Nobody can intervene". But judging the mood of the crowd, which then wanted to teach the Janata Minister a lesson, he left the place in a hurry.

The Minister motored directly to Jagdalpur, the district headquarters of Bastar where he was to address a Press conference. He stayed with the Pressmen for a few minutes and abruptly left the place for some unknown destination. Neither had he spoken about the Geedum episode nor had the Pressmen been aware of it.

The Janpad Chairman and the BDO, meanwhile, lodged a complaint with Geedum police station the same day i.e. June 13. The Minister then chose to contradict Press reports about the incident on June 17. Mr Baliram Kashyap in his denial said that the BDO and the Janpad Chairman, who incidentally, is a Congress-(I) leader, were involved in a scandal of Rs 52,000 by showing an old well as a new one. To hide this fact they had circulated false reports in the Press.

Before Mr Kashyap reached Bhopal, the Press carried reports of the incident which were flashed all over the State including the State capital. On enquiry, the Chief Minister was informed by the district authorities of Bastar that the incident was true and any denial at the official level would create complications. The district authorities were then asked to get a written statement from the BDO that he did not want any further action on his complaint to the police. The Minister was advised to issue a contradiction on his own at the political level. The Directorate of Information and Publicity were directed by the Government bosses not to issue denials of the incident.

Mr Kashyap is not a loner in his actions. Ramanand Singh, Minister for Local Government (Urban) had shown his temper to the IAS Administrator of Indore Municipal Corporation—since the officer had told him that it was not his duty to see if the bathrooms of the Circuit House, where the Minister was supposed to stay had no soap and towel. Despite Mr Ramanand Singh's best efforts, the officer could not be suspended, though he was summarily transferred.

The sanyasi Minister of Jails Mr Pawan Diwan, is no sanyasi. He has become a terror among the officials. He once directed the students at Mahasamund to give his personal assistant a shoe-beating because the students had complained that the PA had not submitted their demands to him. However the students proved to be more sober; they did not act on the Minister's advice. The sanyasi Minister once got a trader of Mahasamund beaten by people when they complained to him that the trader had charged higher prices. He once suspended an officer because the officer was not present when the Minister went on an inspection.

Filthy abuse is the stock-in-trade of Thakur Darbar Singh Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies. And he is not miserly about using them on all occasions. He is also known for his loud voice. Sometime back when the returning officer appointed for the Rajnandgaon civic poll, rejected an application of a Janata candidate for a recount on the grounds that it did not have any valid reasons, Mr Darbar Singh Thakur personally joined the people in a protest demonstration against the officer. Taking his cue from the Minister's behaviour a Janata VIP along with his colleagues entered the office of a Chief Municipal Officer of a Municipal council in Raipur district and beat him up, with an announcement: "This is the beginning of a big show."

There is another instance where he created a scene. On June 23, he was to travel from Bhopal on the Chhattisgarh Express on which he had his reservation. The conductor of the railway coach could not give him correct information about his reservation. As a result he was delayed and missed the train. Some of his luggage which had been put on the train was carried away and had to be brought back from Itarsi. Mr Thakur Darbar Singh stormed into the room of the Assistant Station Master demanding an explanation for the act of the conductor. This was followed by filthy invective from the Minister on railway employees in general and the station staff of Bhopal in particular.

M. V. KHER, Raipur

WHAT A BLUMER !

UPI

It was a sight indeed! Miss Kristi Blumer of Pennsylvania is all surprises on being congratulated by Miss Jackie Houston from California after she was named Miss Nude World in Cambridge, Ontario, recently. In her unconcealed joy she covers her face and, of course, nothing else.

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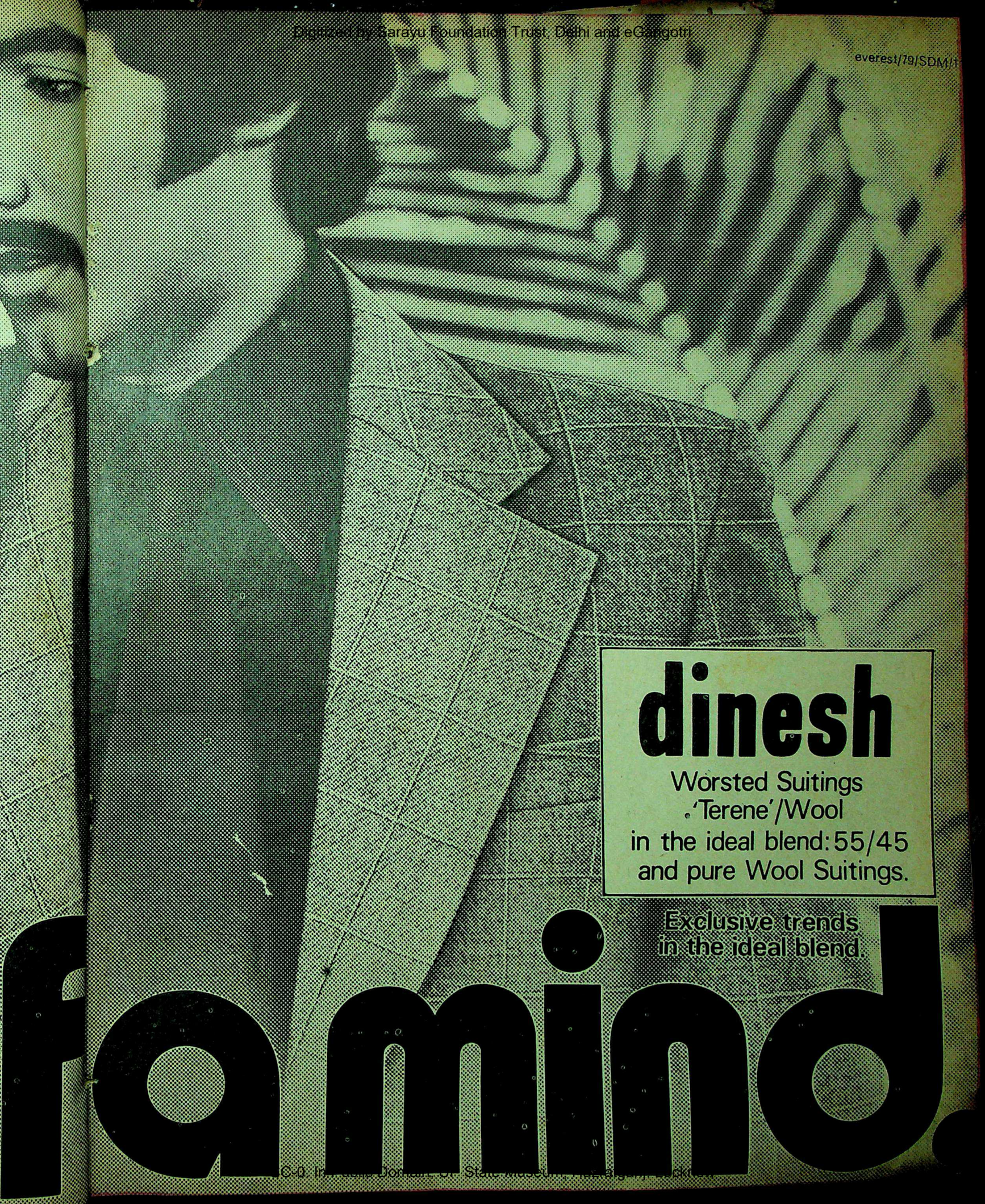

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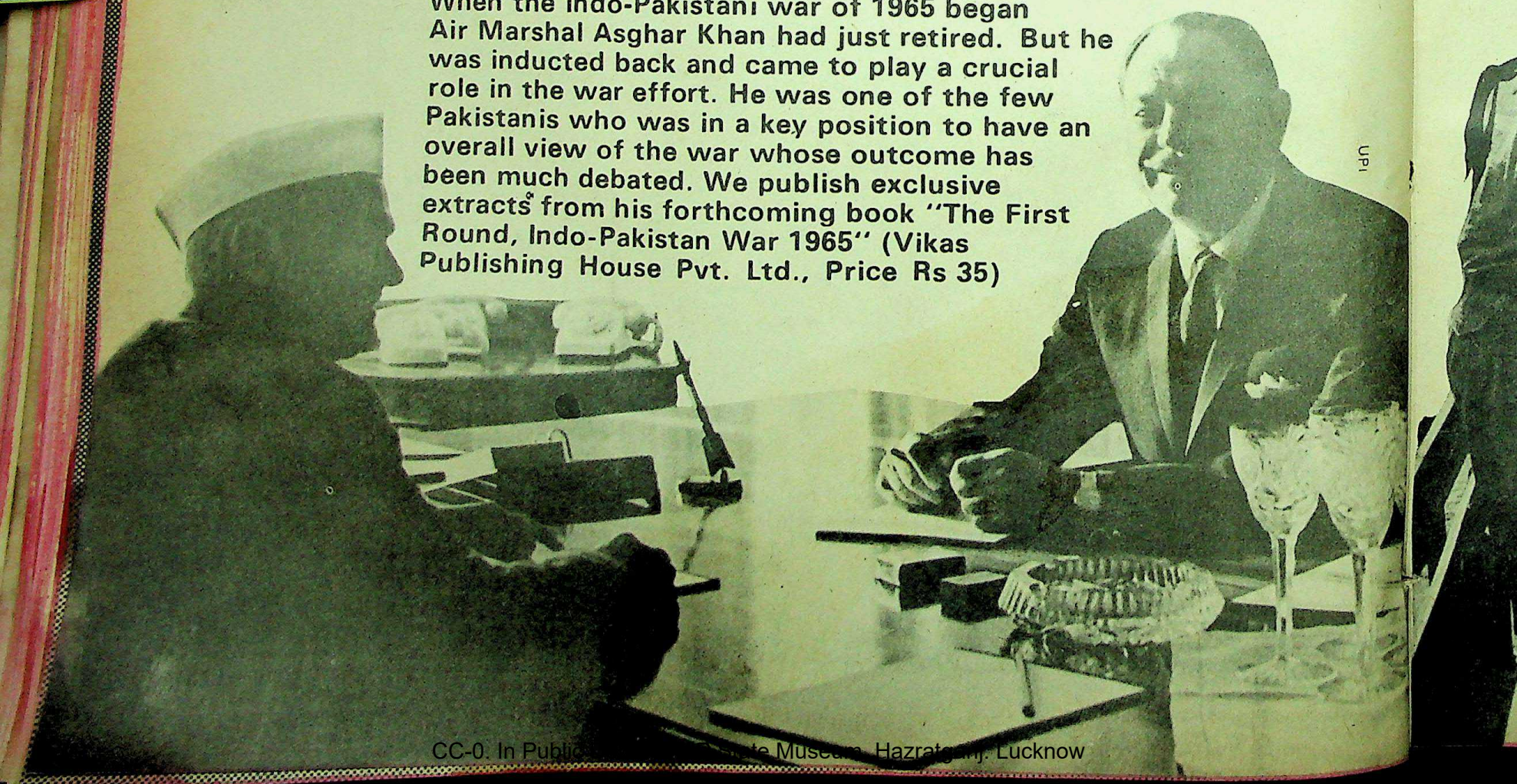
DURING my absence from Pakistan, the Indian Air Force had bombed Peshawar, and although they had done little damage to the airfield, a number of civilians had been killed in the city and in nearby villages. The air traffic control building and a portion of a hangar had been hit. It was lucky that no aircraft were destroyed because our bombers were at the time lined in strength on the airfield loaded with bombs and fuel in preparation for a raid on Indian airfields. Although a few aircraft received splinters, no aircraft was seriously damaged. The Indian raid over, our bombers took off to return the compliment, leaving behind more telling memories of their visit. The Indians also bombed Kohat and repeated the attack on Peshawar. In both these raids no serious damage was done to Air Force property, although civilians again suffered.

UPI

HOW AYUB KHAN LOST IN '65

By Air Marshal Asghar Khan of Pakistan

When the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965 began Air Marshal Asghar Khan had just retired. But he was inducted back and came to play a crucial role in the war effort. He was one of the few Pakistanis who was in a key position to have an overall view of the war whose outcome has been much debated. We publish exclusive extracts from his forthcoming book "The First Round, Indo-Pakistan War 1965" (Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Price Rs 35)



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Sargodha had also been visited by Indian Canberras at night. This airfield remained the main target for Indian attacks at night throughout the war. Although the Indian Air Force dropped an estimated 500,000 lbs of bombs in the area around Sargodha airfield, it did remarkably little damage. The net damage on the airfield was one fire-crash tender damaged and its driver injured, a twenty-five foot crater near, but not on, the landing strip. One bomb hit a village about six miles away from the airfield killing twenty-one inhabitants.

Apart from these night bombing raids, the Indian Air Force had been relatively inactive and the Pakistan Air Force was in command of the situation. Indian aircraft had given up day-time adventures. Sporadic raids at night were to continue for another few days with little more than nuisance effect. The situation on the ground was less encouraging. Our armour, which had been moved to the Gujranwala-Wazirabad area, was being used to contain the Indian advance towards the Lahore-Rawalpindi railway line. The Indians had made some gains in the Lahore and Sialkot sectors but the momentum of their attack had been lost and the battle was now static.

The Army had been using up its ammunition faster than expected and it was considered desirable to arrange replenishment of these stocks. Our weapons were American supplied and the only countries that had similar weapons and could be expected to help were Iran and Turkey. They were also operating the same aircraft as we were and I thought it necessary to visit Teheran and Ankara. Armed with Ayub's letters for President Gursel and the Shah of Iran, I left for Karachi on my way to Ankara and Teheran. Karachi was a transformed city. Black-out was effective and complete and trenches had been dug extensively for use as bomb shelters. A few Indian aircraft had flown over the city but no part of Karachi had been bombed or damaged. I understood that All India Radio, in reporting the success of these bombing raids over Karachi had said that Bunder Road lay in ruins and that serious damage had been done to the Lyari Air Force base. Lyari is well known for its fishing colony, for its odours and for a few other unattractive characteristics, but not for its air base. The airfield at Mauripur had been untouched. In Karachi I saw Admiral A. R. Khan at his headquarters and then left for Ankara.

President Gursel received me kindly and, after an exchange of views on the military situation, said that Turkey would do whatever was possible to help us in this emergency. I later called on General Tansel, the Air Commander-in-Chief, and the Prime Minister, Mr Orguplu. It was obvious that the Turks were under some strain and were embarrassed by the situation. All their equipment was American and they were wholly dependent on the United States for their day-to-day military needs. They were members of NATO to which all their military forces and resources were allotted. It was not proper for them to supply any weapons to Pakistan without informing NATO and obtaining their consent. It was also unlikely that they could send major items of equipment such as aircraft or tanks without their NATO allies getting to know that this had been done. The Prime Minister explained that he was the head of a coalition and, like most coalitions, his Government had no common views on many issues. On the issue of the Indo-Pakistan war, he said, they were unanimous in their support of their Pakistani brethren, but they were divided on the manner in which this assistance could or should be given. One party would like to go all the way in their support of Pakistan; a second party would prefer to adopt a cautious approach, giving us all possible material assistance without in any way jeopardising Turkey's own international relations or military commitments; and the third party, more mindful of U.S. reaction, would like to follow an even more cautious approach. Considering all these difficulties, he said they would supply us whatever they had by way of munitions, arms etc., but he expressed his inability to give us either combat aircraft, aircraft spares, or tanks. I thanked him for his frank expression of views and was a little disappointed, though not surprised, at the Turkish reaction to our predicament. On reflection, I have felt that it would not have been realistic for us to expect more help from Turkey than she gave. She gave generously and kept PIA busy, flying all we could into Pakistan.

UPI

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Pakistani armymen loading a truck with the dead bodies of their jawans at Dogria

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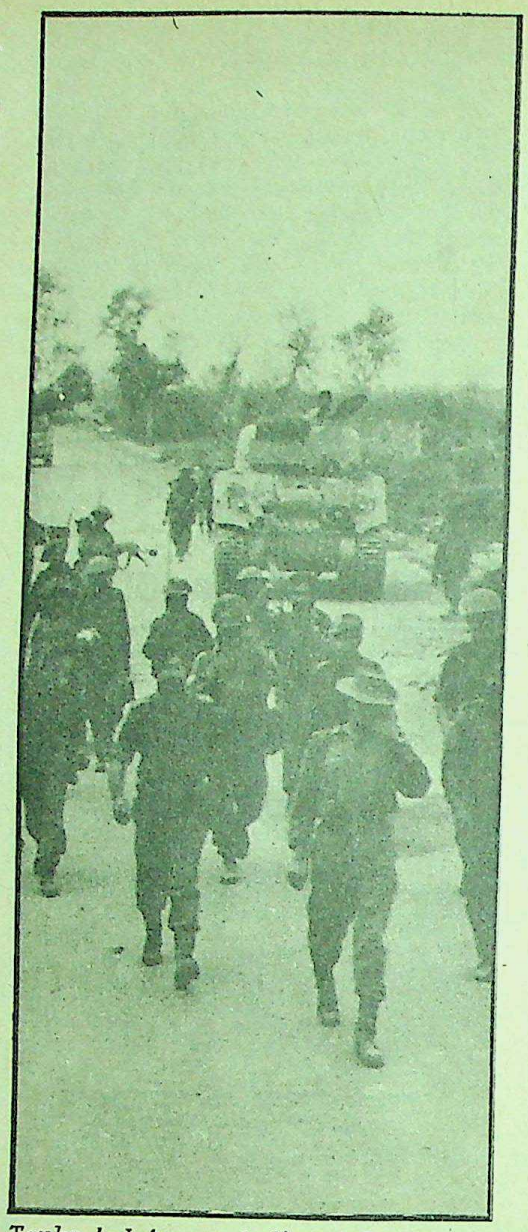
AT TEHERAN the Shah received me soon after my arrival. In his letter to the Shah, Ayub Khan had expressed disappointment at Iran's attitude towards the Indo-Pakistan conflict. A meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Iran and Turkey had taken place a few days earlier, at the conclusion of which a communique had been issued. In this the Foreign Ministers, whilst expressing sympathy with Pakistan, had concluded that both countries should accept the United Nations' proposal for a cessation of hostilities. Many in Pakistan felt that we had a right to expect more vigorous diplomatic support from these two countries than this communique indicated. Our Foreign Office, moreover, had understood from our Ambassador in Turkey that this lukewarm attitude of the Foreign Minister had been conditioned by the Shah of Iran's insistence that Iran and Turkey must not adopt a partisan attitude in this conflict. Iran, like Turkey, was the recipient of military and economic assistance from the United States, and her ability to stand up to American pressure in such a situation was, to say the least, doubtful. The Foreign Office had concluded that Iran had played a leading role in wording the communique in a manner that put us at some disadvantage in adopting a stronger negotiating posture. Thus Ayub Khan in his letter had expressed disappointment at Iran's role in these talks and had said in plain words that Pakistan had a right to expect a more positive response from Iran in this, our hour of tribulation. The Shah read the letter over twice. His face showed that he was hurt that Ayub Khan should have addressed him in such terms and that Iran's role or motives in these talks should have been suspect. He said that it was a pity that he could not say all he knew about this matter. If he could, Ayub Khan would be satisfied that Iran had not been responsible for the effect that the communique had produced. He showed great concern over the situation and congratulated me on the performance of the Pakistan Air Force. I had arrived in the midst of their national holidays and we had experienced some difficulty in getting certain military stores that had already been allotted to Pakistan by Iran. I therefore asked if he would order his people to work throughout the holidays to meet our needs. He issued instructions in my presence that all personnel connected with the programme must work night and day to keep the stores moving and that our entire needs in explosives and ammunition were to be met until their own stocks were reduced to zero. He, like Orguplu, did not see his way to giving us fighter aircraft as these were closely watched by the United States Military Assistance staff, but he agreed that we should let them have a list of our requirements in aircraft and equipment. I had brought this with me and handed it over later to Iranian officials.



Tanks led by an Indian infantry platoon

Having seen the Shah, I returned to Karachi and then to Rawalpindi. In both Turkey and Iran I had been received with sympathy and warmth. It was obvious that the people of Iran and Turkey were greatly disturbed by the situation. It was not unnatural that, notwithstanding the deep brotherly sentiments that existed in both these countries for Pakistan, the Governments of Iran and Turkey did not find it possible to adopt a more positive attitude in this conflict. Both were too deeply involved with the United States and both had a certain mistrust of the People's Republic of China. They could not, in the face of such conflicting pressures, have been expected to do much more than they did in these troubled times. Since the conflict had been unexpected — at least by our Government — they had not received from us any prior warning of a situation arising which necessitated their active support. Considering the short time that had elapsed since the outbreak of hostilities, their support must be considered speedy and effective. International involvement in such conflict is usually a gradual process. In this case, when the war lasted only 17 days and peace talks and feelers were initiated within the first ten days of the outbreak of hostilities, it would not have been reasonable to expect any serious commitment on the part of Iran or Turkey.

Whilst in Turkey I had heard of the appointment of Ghulam Faruque as Defence Adviser to the President. On my arrival in Rawalpindi a message was awaiting me that he wanted to see me as soon as possible. Having briefed Ayub Khan, the Foreign Minister, and the Foreign Secretary about my mission, I met Ghulam Faruque the same evening. A man of great energy and drive, he appeared excited about his new job. He explained that as Defence Adviser he was required to deal primarily with the procurement of explosives and stores to keep the armed forces supplied so that the war effort was not interrupted. I had, without being appointed, already begun to perform these functions and had collected an inter-services staff which was by then functioning in the Ministry of Defence. I therefore told Ghulam Faruque that I would be available for advice and assistance, and I briefed him on what had been done so far and what had been planned for the future. The situation was, I felt, satisfactory and although we were running short of stocks in certain types of explosives, I was confident that with the ships that were on the way and the PIA Boeings and Constellations that were bringing equipment and stores, the Army would not run out of essential weapons and explosives. I continued to function in this role of a self-appointed coordinator until the war ended, when I returned to Karachi.

His appointment, Ghulam Faruque told me, had been suggested to the President by the Governor of West Pakistan, Nawab Amir Mohammad Khan of Kalabagh and by Air Marshal Nur Khan. Nur Khan had said that Ayub Khan, like Churchill in the Second World War, needed a 'Beaverbrook' and that Ghulam Faruque would be eminently suited to fill this role. Alas, if we also had a Churchill, Pakistan's destiny might indeed have been different today.

War without a GHQ

IN RAWALPINDI, the control and direction of the war was woefully lacking. At a meeting of the Commanders-in-Chief with the President, some six years earlier, I had suggested that we should give serious thought to higher command and control in war. It was important that we should be clear where the Government would function

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from during war. Who would direct the national war effort and where would the Commander-in-Chief of the Army normally be? This was necessary because the control of modern war is made possible only by a complex communications system. This communications system has to be laid down in peace time and at considerable cost. The staff at a headquarters functions as the extension of a commander's brain, and the brain must have speedy and efficient communication with the limbs or the formations that a commander controls. These communications between the field formations and the headquarters are not single lines but an intricate network of radio and telephone circuits connecting various people dealing with logistical and operational matters at different places. Similarly, the commanders of the three services require communications not only between themselves but also with their staffs. The three Service Commanders have also to be connected with the person or persons who control and coordinate the overall war effort. All this should be common knowledge for people possessing even an elementary knowhow of modern warfare. I was, therefore, a little surprised when I was asked why it must be decided in advance where the war would be controlled from. When I explained the requirement, Ayub Khan replied that he would be conducting the war personally from the battlefield. Almost as if to clarify the situation, he added that he would certainly not be in Rawalpindi. General Musa (Commander-in-Chief of the Army) always quick to follow Ayub Khan's lead, had added that the only place he was certain not to be in was the General Headquarters (at Rawalpindi) and that he would be in the field, conducting the Corps battle from the Corps Headquarters. These views would have been comic if they had not been expressed by people who were responsible for the security of the country. I argued that I thought it most unlikely that the President could remain for long in the field, and that the many calls on his duties would inevitably force him to spend most of his time in the Capital. The coordination of the overall war effort, the hour-to-hour assessment of the military situation, the need to mobilize the nation's resources, such as food, rail and road transport, and the need to keep civilian morale at a high pitch were some of the things that would require his presence at the seat of Government. Similarly, I tried to explain that the Commander-in-Chief of the Army was responsible for coordinating and directing land operations from Sindh in the south to Baltistan in the north and was also responsible for the situation on land in East Pakistan as well as the entire North West Frontier from Chitral to the Baluchistan coast. It was to me inconceivable that he could perform these functions efficiently away from his headquarters. I also did not see the need for him to sit on top of the Corps Commander, unless, of course, the Corps Commander was not fit to perform his functions. I was appalled at the complete lack of understanding of this basic problem of control in war.

Twice again I raised this point at the meetings of the Commanders-in-Chief presided over by Ayub Khan. Although I failed to get my point of view recognised, I proceeded on the assumption that contrary to the direction that I had received the control and direction of war would be from Rawalpindi and that the President would not be in the field. Similarly, I assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the Army would be based for most of the time at his headquarters at Rawalpindi. The Air Force then proceeded to lay all its communications to fit this situation. Since it had been assumed that the President and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army would be in Rawalpindi, it was important that the Air Force Chief should also be there. In war there are numerous calls on the Air Force. It is, therefore, important that the Air Force Commander should be readily available to advise the Supreme Commander on how the Air Force is being used. If this is not done and this advice is not readily available, the chances are that under the many pressures that are likely to arise, the Air Force will be misused and the air effort wasted. This is more likely to lead to serious consequences when the air effort available is small. It was thus necessary that the operational element of Air Headquarters should function from Rawalpindi. Suitable arrangements were, therefore, made by the Air Force to make this possible and an elaborate communications system was set up for this purpose. When the war broke out, the Air Force, which had its permanent headquarters at Peshawar, was able to function from its operational headquarters at Rawalpindi with ease and efficiency. The communications that had been laid between the operational headquarters of the Pakistan Air Force and its

Indian Air Force pilots

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other formations, as well as the other services had been tested and tried and been brought to a high pitch of efficiency. The speed with which the Pakistan Air Force was able to react to a fast changing situation was due in large measure to this preparatory work in the field of communications.

As I had anticipated, Ayub Khan [illegible] no move out of Rawalpindi throughout the seventeen days of war and Musa's travels were restricted largely to his sorties between his house, his office and G.M.Q. Operations Room. The occasional visit to the President's House in Ayub Park was, apart from one visit to a Corps Headquarters, perhaps the nearest he got to the battlefield further east. The war on the ground was run by Brigadiers Gul Hassan and Bilgrami. A Lieutenant-Colonel of the Pakistan Artillery helped these two in directing the effort of the Army. Considering the lack of direction from the top, and considering the generally negative nature of this guidance whenever it was forthcoming these officers did admirably well. Whatever guidance the Army was able to get was largely the result of the initiative shown by these officers who worked under great strain and under frustrating circumstances. They were, however, not alone in this predicament, for this feeling prevailed also in the lower echelons of the Army. Ability had not been the yardstick in the selection of commanders and for too long had lip-service and mediocrity been at a premium. This business of selecting the right type of officers for senior appointments is so vital to a nation's ability to wage war, and so crucial to a nation's security, that I may be permitted a slight digression from the main course of events.

Changing horses in midstream

I FOUND it difficult to believe that the President, who had always been cautious in his approach to international relations, particularly as they affected our contacts with India, should have agreed to a policy that had the germs of a conflict on major scale. In the first week of August we read in the newspapers of the incursion of Azad Kashmir volunteers across the cease-fire line into Indian held Kashmir. As these incursions began to increase in intensity it became obvious that a major shift had occurred in our policy towards Kashmir. Until a few months earlier, Ayub Khan had recoiled whenever a suggestion had been made that we should encourage just such a development and accept the risk that such a move entailed. What had happened to cause this change in his thinking?

Ayub Khan, like most other Pakistanis, had felt exasperated by India's attitude on Kashmir but he, more than the rest of his countrymen, had believed in seeking a peaceful solution to the issue. When his overtures towards India, culminating in his meeting with Pandit Nehru in 1960, produced no results, his sense of frustration increased. During this period of disappointment certain international events had a gradual but nevertheless significant effect on his thinking. The heroic struggle of the Algerian people and the eventual withdrawal of French power from North Africa, the conflict in Vietnam and Indonesia's confrontation against Malaysia influenced his thinking. The failure of a big power like the United States to win a military victory in Vietnam, and Indonesia's success in keeping British forces in South-East Asia fully stretched showed the inherent strength of well led national movements against outside forces.

The sharp and successful encounter of the Pakistan Army with Indian Forces in the Rann of Kutch area further reinforced Ayub Khan's rising faith in our inherent strength. The Rann of Kutch operation also did much to bolster Musa's morale and his assessment of the Army's strength rose in proportion to Ayub Khan's increased faith in the military superiority of our forces. The unlimited capacity of some people for flattery found full play in the wake of successes in the Rann of Kutch operation. Other well-meaning and honest observers were genuinely proud of our Army's performance and they expressed these feelings whenever the opportunity arose. The Press also played its part in creating an atmosphere of triumph and invincibility. This would have affected lesser mortals than Musa, who now began to show greater confidence in his own ability and that of the Army to deal with India. Finding the President more receptive to a bolder course in relationship with India, the Foreign Office began to take a tougher line. Senior civil servants supported this line of thought and G.H.Q. was persuaded to produce a plan of action. The task was entrusted to Major-General Akhtar Hussain Malik, the General Officer Commanding No. 12 Division, who was responsible for the defence of Azad Kashmir. A bold and imaginative officer, the plan reflected his outlook and character. Thus was operation 'Gibraltar' born. The President's approval of the plan was acclaimed by top civilian advisers and Musa, seeing which way the President was inclined, lent it his full support against his basic instincts and military judgment.

This decision was based on three important premises. It was assumed that widespread support existed within occupied Kashmir to make such a guerilla campaign a success. It was also considered unlikely that, as a consequence of this action, India would be inclined to attempt a large-scale military offensive against Azad Kashmir territory. Lastly, the possibility of India crossing the international frontier either in East or West Pakistan was ruled out.

Whereas it was true that widespread goodwill for Pakistan existed in occupied Kashmir, it was unrealistic to expect that this feeling of resentment against India could be mobilised within a very short time and thereby make the execution of large scale operations behind Indian lines possible. The selection of personnel, many of whom knew neither the area nor the language, made the operation in occupied territory a difficult task. The operation was launched as hurriedly as it had been conceived, and it was surprising that with all these drawbacks it was such a success. The stepping up of the tempo, however, was not gradual enough to give it the character of an internal uprising, nor was it controlled sufficiently to keep it within the bounds of Indian political and military acceptability. When the Indians were faced with a rapidly escalating situation, which endangered their position in Kashmir, they were persuaded by the Army to retaliate. This they decided to do in an area in Azad Kashmir which would be strategically important enough to recapture some of the lost prestige that India had suffered and the loss of which would place Pakistan militarily at a disadvantage. The Haji Pir salient, which provided Pakistan with a link between the northern and southern sectors of Azad Kashmir, was a natural region which fitted this pattern. On 24th August the Indians launched a strong attack on Azad Kashmir positions in this area, which were relatively lightly held, and by the 28th they were in control of sufficient territory to cut the shortest line of communication between Mazaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir, and Kotli, a major communication centre in the southern half of Azad Kashmir. The attack on Haji Pir Pass was the first major violation of the cease-fire line by organized military formations in eighteen years and gave a fresh dimension to the conflict. Pakistan was left with little alternative but to retaliate in an area in which the Indians were vulnerable and where a relatively small effort could produce decisive results. The Chamb-Akhnur area, which permitted the use of armour and which would provide a base that could threaten the vital Jammu-Srinagar road communications to the valley, was selected for the purpose. No 7 Infantry Division, located south of Lahore, was ordered to move to the Chamb area. The attack was, however, to be carried out initially by a brigade placed under No. 12 Division, commanded by Major-General Akhtar Hussain Malik. The move of No. 7 Division from its concentration area south of Lahore had far reaching consequences and was a decision of great significance. This division, along with No. 1 Armoured Division formed our main counterattack force

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and thus the main punch of our Army. Its move away from the area of concentration could only mean that the use of this force against India was not considered likely, at least until after No. 7 Division could return to its concentration area.

As formations of No. 12 Division moved swifty towards Akhnur, India was faced with a difficult military situation. Just as we had not expected an attack on the Haji Pir Pass, the Indians did not expect an attack in such strength in the Chamb-Akhnur Sector. The use of tanks and heavy artillery was, moreover, unprecedented in the Azad Kashmir conflict, and Pakistan's initial successes created considerable panic in Jammu and throughout occupied Kashmir, and shock and surpise in India. The capture of Akhnur by Pakistan would seriously threaten the lines of communication between India and the Kashmir Valley and it could result in the loss of a large portion of the Indian Army in northern and central Kashmir. Its effect on the morale of the Indian Army could have been catastrophic and the effect on the nation's will to face Pakistan would certainly have suffered a serious blow. The Indians were left with little choice but to remove this threat to the security of their vital strategic areas and rather than confine the contest to Azad Kashmir, decided to extend the area of conflict to West Pakistan.

Of all the places in West Pakistan, Lahore was the natural choice. An important communications centre and the political and cultural capital of West Pakistan, it has a special place in the hearts and minds of all Pakistanis. A threat to its security could not fail to draw forces to its defence, and this could well remove the threat to Jammu and Akhnur.

It is possible that the Indians started their offensive with this limited objective. They had not, I believe, reckoned on the all-out retaliation that this attack caused. Only thus can their decision not to use their Air Force on 6th September—except to attack a railway train near Wazirabad—be explained. When the attack on Lahore triggered off a full-scale war, their armour, which had already been moved to the Jammu Sialkot area, was launched in what turned out to be their main offensive against Pakistan.

NO. 7 Division's move to the Chamb area was completed on the morning of the 2nd, about thirty-six hours after the offensive launched by No. 12 Division. On the same day, Major-General Yahya Khan, the General Officer Commanding No. 7 Division, was given command of this sector and Major-General Akhtar Malik was ordered to return to his earlier location further north. This had a profound effect on the course of operations in this area and on that of the war with India. Akhtar Malik had conceived the general strategy of operations in his area of responsibility, which included the Chamb-Akhnur sector. He had been instrumental in persuading the President to embark on a course of action which had led to this situation and he felt a personal stake in the outcome of this contest. By temperament and outlook, moreover, he was suited to lead an operation that required boldness and vigour. Above all, he was on the move and was making satisfactory progress. Yahya Khan, with part of a force located about two hundred miles away, had been preparing for months now for a completely different role. His move to the Chamb area involved a major administrative and logistical switch which was completed with speed and with the inevitable problems that attend such unplanned moves of large military formations.

No. 7 Division arrived after two to three days of continuous preparation and movement and made contact with Indian troops on 3rd September. As it joined battle, the General Officer Commanding No. 12 Division was withdrawn to return to his headquarters farther up country in Azad Kashmir. Just as Akhtar Malik resented being removed from the scene of battle at a critical time, Yahya Khan was not enthusiastic about the thought of implementing a plan with which he had not been associated.

The decision to change commanders in the midst of the Chamb battle was as ill-conceived as the decision to withdraw No. 7 Division from the main force farther south in the Punjab. It was clearly based on the assumption that the Indian retaliation to an attack on Akhnur would come in the Azad Kashmir area in the north and not against Pakistan territory in the south. Whatever the political appreciation, to have weakened the main offensive force of the Pakistan Army at a time when, to say the least, our relations with India were strained, was a blunder of the first magnitude and to have replaced a successful commander in the midst of battle was also indicative of an unrealistic approach to military problems that has seldom been precedented.

As Pakistan changed horses in mid-stream, India began to make a last desperate bid to stiffen her crumbling defences in the Akhnur area. The change of formations slowed down our advance sufficiently to allow the Indians time to consolidate their positions, and as they crossed our borders in the Punjab on 6th September, the morale of the Indians in the Chamb-Akhnur sector began to recover.

The *Mujahid* operation inside Kashmir had in the mean time gained momentum. Pakistan's support of the liberation movement rekindled fresh hope amongst the people of occupied Kashmir, and open war with India appeared at last to provide the opportunity for which many had waited for these long years. Seldom have a valiant people been betrayed in this manner by a nation in whom they had complete trust. This was perhaps the darkest chapter in Pakistan's history and one which patriotic Pakistanis will long remember with a feeling of shame and guilt.

Superiority of numbers

BY ABOUT 17th September, the situation on land had stabilised. Apart from some operations in Azad Kashmir, in the Ferozepur area and the Sind-Jodhpur border the main Indian thrust had been in the Narowal-Sialkot sector. By launching their main offensive in that area the Indians hoped to cut our main lines of communication between Lahore and Rawalpindi, outflank the defences of Lahore, and also provide protection to their vulnerable supply lines between Pathankot and Jammu. Opposite Lahore the Indian advance had been contained about seven to eight miles from the outskirts of the city but we were not able to regain much of our lost ground. Nor did the Indians have the strength to push further forward. The battle in the Narowal-Sialkot sector developed into a struggle for control of the Narowal-Wazirabad railway line. Partly because of lack of imagination at the top, we had been forced into a defensive posture with the initiative largely with the Indians. In the Sialkot-Narowal area they had one armoured division and three infantry divisions as against the equivalent of one armoured division and one infantry division of ours. They were also numerically superior on other fronts. In war, whether it is in the air, at sea or on land, the only way a numerically inferior force wrests the intiative from a numerically superior enemy is by bold offensive action.

It was inevitable that the personality of the commander should have a profound effect on the course of land operations, and our response reflected his outlook. Because of our lack of resources and numbers, it was tempting to be cautious rather than bold, to be on the defensive rather than take the initiative. This for a weaker force is the road to disaster. That we managed to avoid disaster was a tribute to the fighting qualities of our men and the leadership of our younger officers who showed great heroism in difficult circumstances.

The restraint and timidity that was forced on our Army ran counter to the natural inclination of our men and the judgment of our commanders in the field. In most cases they were forbidden to take the offensive even if their assessment showed that they could do so with advantage. It is not necessary in war that a commander should have to ask his superiors before he can attack on his own front. Yet this is what was

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frequently happening. Commanders in the Lahore and Sialkot areas had been told to obtain approval of G.H.Q. before taking offensive action. Such a request would, therefore, emanate from a Company or Battalion Commander, and by the time it travelled to Brigade, Division and Corps Headquarters, valuable time would be lost. If all these commanders thought that it was a sound idea, it would reach G.H.Q. The usual answer from G.H.Q. would be to wait, or not to attack at all.

The decision to attack is taken by a commander as the result of his assessment of the factors as he sees them. Some of those can be measured, others are based on certain intangibles that only he can judge, such as the behaviour of the enemy, the lay-out of their positions, the terrain, the morale of his men and their mood. These things are difficult to convey to higher Headquarters. In any case, if you are fighting a war, you do not have to ask before you fight. This attitude caused a general paralysis in the field, making the timid commanders more timid and the bold more cautious. I am amazed how, in these circumstances, our Army was able to do so well.

Partly because of shortage of infantry but largely because of unimaginative and timid leadership, we were forced to use our armour in an anti-tank role. The battle in the Sialkot-Chawinda area became a slogging match between tank formations. Tank casualties were heavy on both sides and it soon became evident that a stalemate had been reached which only superior generalship could remove. This appeared to be lacking on both sides. The Indians, though greater in number, were unable to do more than make small and cautious moves to by-pass our defences. In the main, their effort was directed against our primary defensive positions. Their strategy and their determination were not equal to the task, and they were unable to make much headway. The war of mobility appeared to have ended, a period of consolidation had begun.

The launching of our armour in the Khem Karan area was the high spot in Ayub Khan's career. He had expected great things from this move. So unrealistic had been the appreciation, so faulty the timing, and so inadequate the preparation that success in the venture would have been, to say the least, most unlikely. With the failure of this armoured attack his spirits began to flag and as the battle in the Sialkot-Narowal area reached a stalemate, his morale began to suffer. It was obvious that he had begun to reproach himself for having got into such a situation and was harbouring doubts about the chances of a military success. In situations such as this, when the nation watches and waits on every move, action and word of their leader, his attitude was infectious.

Defiance and faith sustain a country's will to continue the struggle, while defeatism seriously weakens the will to resist. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the Foreign Minister Nazir Ahmed, the Defence Secretary and I made it a point to visit the President every evening when he usually sat on the lawn of his 'blacked-out' house. We tried to paint an encouraging picture of the battle situation and of India's difficulties, while Nazir Ahmed often talked of what Napoleon and Churchill had said and done in similar circumstances. Thus was Ayub Khan's morale sustained for a few days longer than it would otherwise have been. It was clear that it could not go on much longer. After Bhutto's departure for the United Nations, Nazir Ahmed and I kept up this talk and attempted, as best as we could, to sustain the President's morale and his will to continue the struggle. Since I had taken upon myself the responsibility for the movement and supply of stores, explosives and weapons from abroad, I assured him that the position was generally satisfactory and that the flow would be maintained. The Army would have enough for its needs.

On about 18th September, the President addressed a Press Conference in which he made a very poor showing. His shaky performance gave a clear impression to those who were present—amongst them many foreign correspondents—that he was weakening. The British High Commissioner, Morrice James, had been making frequent appeals to the two countries to agree to a ceasefire. The President had begun to see him alone, which was rather unusual and indicative of his desire to express views that he did not wish his own advisers to hear. This, and his general attitude and mood, clearly indicated that he was seeking a settlement. Morrice James, an experienced diplomat, had been quick to assess the President's mood and had used the opportunity presented by these solitary interviews to warn him that Pakistan would suffer serious consequences if the war was not stopped immediately. In this testing hour the Service Commanders were of no help. Musa had for years acted as the faithful deputy. His cardinal principle had been to assess the mood and view of his boss and agree with these even before he had fully understood what they were. Realising that the situation was difficult and knowing Ayub Khan's feelings in the matter, he painted the picture Ayub Khan already had before his eyes—a small Army fighting against great odds, short of ammunition, outnumbered and without adequate resources. He maligned the civilian advisers who, he said had led the President into this situation and he suggested an end to this madness.

Nur Khan was not timid like his Army colleague, but with him other considerations weighed more heavily. The Air Force had done remarkably well and its reputation was at its zenith. A prolongation of the war would inevitably result in attrition and unless losses were replaced a stage would be reached when the Air Force would perforce be grounded. The Indian Air Force could, he felt, outlast the Pakistan Air Force, by sheer weight of numbers. This would be a sorry postscript to a spectacular performance, and one he naturally did not relish. There was also the very weighty advice of Nur Khan's uncle — Nawab Amir Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh, the Governor of West Pakistan—to whose charm both he and Ayub Khan were susceptible.

NAWAB Amir Muhammad Khan was a typical nineteenth century landlord Feudal in outlook and conservative by temperament, he exercised great influence over Ayub Khan who regarded him as a practical and down-to-earth person in whose judgment and advice he had implicit faith.

The Nawab saw things from Lahore and to that extent was nearer the battlefield. But he, no more than Ayub Khan, reflected the mood of the people. He saw in the continuation of the struggle the possibility of the crumbling of the social structure of which he was so staunch a pillar. There is no question that his advice was an important factor in deciding the course of events.

At about this time Afghanistan announced mobilisation and recalled military personnel from leave. This was done ostensibly to prepare for any disturbance that might occur during their national elections, but more probably it was a gesture to India to offset, to some extent, the effect of Chinese moves on her northern borders. Afghanistan's relations with India had always been cordial, and her claims on certain portions of our territory were well known. This move by Afghanistan was, therefore, not a surprise. Though coming as it did when the President appeared to be looking for just such an excuse to step up negotiations to end the conflict, it had a significant effect on the situation.

I have often wondered what Afghanistan would have done if the struggle had continued much longer. I believed then, and I still hold the view, that Afghanistan's active intervention was not likely until a complete collapse had occurred in Pakistan and until India had made spectacular advances in the Punjab. It is true that our north-western borders were very lightly held. In that difficult country, however, even lightly equipped forces could have offered effective resistance. Moreover, the Pakistan Air Force could operate even more effectively against Afghanistan than it had against India. But even more relevant than these military considerations was the general political philosophy of the Afghans and their ethnic and religious ties with Pakistan. It would be difficult for any Afghan government to arouse enough enthusiasm for a war against Pakistan when we were engaged in a war for survival against India. The reaction of the Afghans

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to the war in Kashmir in 1947, when large numbers of Afghan volunteers came to fight along with Pakistanis in what many considered a holy war against injustice and tyranny, would certainly have been remembered in Kabul. There was also the unknown factor of the Chinese attitude and the very real threat that she posed along frontiers where, barely three years earlier, she had inflicted a military defeat on India, which had shaken the very fabric of Indian society and had almost toppled its Government. Lastly, the attitude of the Muslim world, which almost without exception was now giving full and effective diplomatic support to Pakistan, could not be easily ignored. This attitude would have certainly influenced the Afghan people, if not their Government. There must also have been the lurking thought in the Afghan mind—so well trained in international diplomacy — that militant Hinduism was now on the march. If allowed to overrun Pakistan it could not be contained for long on the banks of the Indus. It would be only a matter of time before Afghanistan would also be threatened. Although Yusuf (Lt General Mohammed Yusuf), our Ambassador in Kabul, had been assured by the King and the Prime Minister that this mobilisation was not directed against Pakistan and that the Afghans could never stab their Pakistan brethren in the back, Ayub Khan was not convinced of Afghan intentions. Such was the background when I saw Ayub Khan early on the morning of 21st September.

First steps towards a ceasefire

ALTHOUGH I entertained little hope of being able to swing him round to my way of thinking, I did want to try. The situation on land and the increasing tempo of peace talks required early and effective treatment. I started by saying that I was concerned with the situation as it was developing. The performance on the ground had not been satisfactory, and I attributed this to poor generalship and, in particular, to the lack of direction the Army had received. Ayub Khan asked me to explain what I meant and I went on to say that I was surprised that certain officers had been appointed advisers to corps and certain divisional commanders to guide them in the discharge of their functions. This indicated that the commanders could not be relied upon to conduct the battle. I suggested that if this were so, it was essential that these commanders be replaced by people—the advisers if necessary—who could run the show. I also said that he must no doubt know that the Army could not do much unless it was led by persons who had the requisite professional qualities. Ayub Khan felt that I did not appreciate the difficulties the Army had to face. They had been fighting against heavy odds and had done remarkably well. I tried to explain that I did not in any way underestimate the heroic manner in which the Army had fought, but I did feel that given better leadership, they would have done and could still do greater things. Ayub Khan was not convinced and I then switched to the other matter which weighed heavily with me.

I had reason to believe that Ayub Khan was contemplating reaching a settlement on a cease-fire with India and I felt that it would be a mistake if this were done at this stage. I explained that there were three things in our favour which we might never have again. National morale was extremely high and the will to fight so great that the country was prepared to suffer any amount of hardship. The state of national fervour had to be seen to be believed. Its intensity exceeded our expectations and constituted an asset of inestimable value. The Air Force had already won the air battle and had complete mastery of the skies, and the Indian Navy was confined to its harbours. This situation, when the enemy had both qualitative and quantitative superiority in equipment, had been achieved by training and preparation for almost a decade. I was not certain that this situation would be repeated a second time. Lastly, China had moved her forces to India's borders. I knew of what had transpired before this had become a reality, and the decision of the Chinese could have a profound effect on the course of our struggle. I said that China might not repeat this gesture a second time.

I urged the President that if he believed, as I did, that Indian expansionism must sooner or later only lead to conflict, then this was as good a time to fight as any. I also reminded him of a military truism, that in war the side that shows greater stamina is usually the victor. War is a matter of nerve, and the side that shows greater determination and endurance will usually achieve decisive results. When things do not go well, it is easy to magnify one's own weaknesses because those one knows well. In such circumstances it is well to remember that the enemy has his difficulties too, and that these could be more serious than one's own. I expressed the view that history might well show that in this war, at this point in time, the Indians were in an even more unsatisfactory situation than we were, and that a prolongation of the struggle might have serious consequences for their over-stretched resources in logistics and communications. I also pointed out that their morale was not as good as ours and that they, rather than we, would benefit militarily from a cease-fire.

Probably because these views were so different from what he had heard from his advisers during the last few days, he appeared to welcome the discussion. He listened to me with patience, but it was clear that his mind was made up. 'We are under pressure', he said repeatedly. Pressure is something that is difficult to define. It is a state of mind. If a person believes that he is under pressure, it is difficult to convince him that he is not. I saw the futility of continuing the discussion and left his office, disappointed but not surprised at the results of my efforts. As if to put a seal on Ayub Khan's rejection of my views, Morrice James was waiting to see him and was ushered in as I left the room.

As the tempo of negotiations increased, the President began to feel the pressure even more. The Army, which had been under considerable restraint, was placed under even greater control and what little initiative the commanders had enjoyed was withdrawn. The Air Force also became a little less active. There appeared to be little purpose in wasting men and material if a cease-fire was just round the corner. There was widespread disappointment in official circles in Rawalpindi and, as the United Nations met to discuss the matter in New York, those of us who knew the trend of events waited for the announcement that was made by the President on 23rd September. Shortly after Bhutto had announced the acceptance of the terms of the cease-fire in the United Nations, Ayub Khan addressed the nation. Millions of people heard him with surprise and anger. Many in the armed forces, who felt that they could have seen this thing through to a successful end, wept as Ayub Khan spoke. They were baffled to know why, when the Indian advance had been arrested, and before we really had an opportunity to retaliate effectively, a cease-fire had been ordered. Why, when the Air Force had gained such decisive success, was the situation not exploited to its logical conclusion?

Ayub Khan gave the answer in his broadcast as best as he could, but it was not convincing. In fairness to him, however, it must be said that in acting as he did, he had nothing but the security of Pakistan in mind and that he saw in the prolongation of the conflict danger to the safety of the country and the well-being of its people. Whether he was right or wrong, time will show. The answer will, I feel, hinge on India's ability to live in peace and harmony with her neighbours. Should India succeed in showing a change of heart, Ayub Khan's decision will have been vindicated. If, however, a more militant India, increasingly industrialised and better equipped, should embark again on a military adventure against Pakistan, when our economic and military resources are in comparison even less favourable than they were in 1965, my fears will have been justified. The war of September 1965 would then have been only the first round. ■

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An Asterix Adventure

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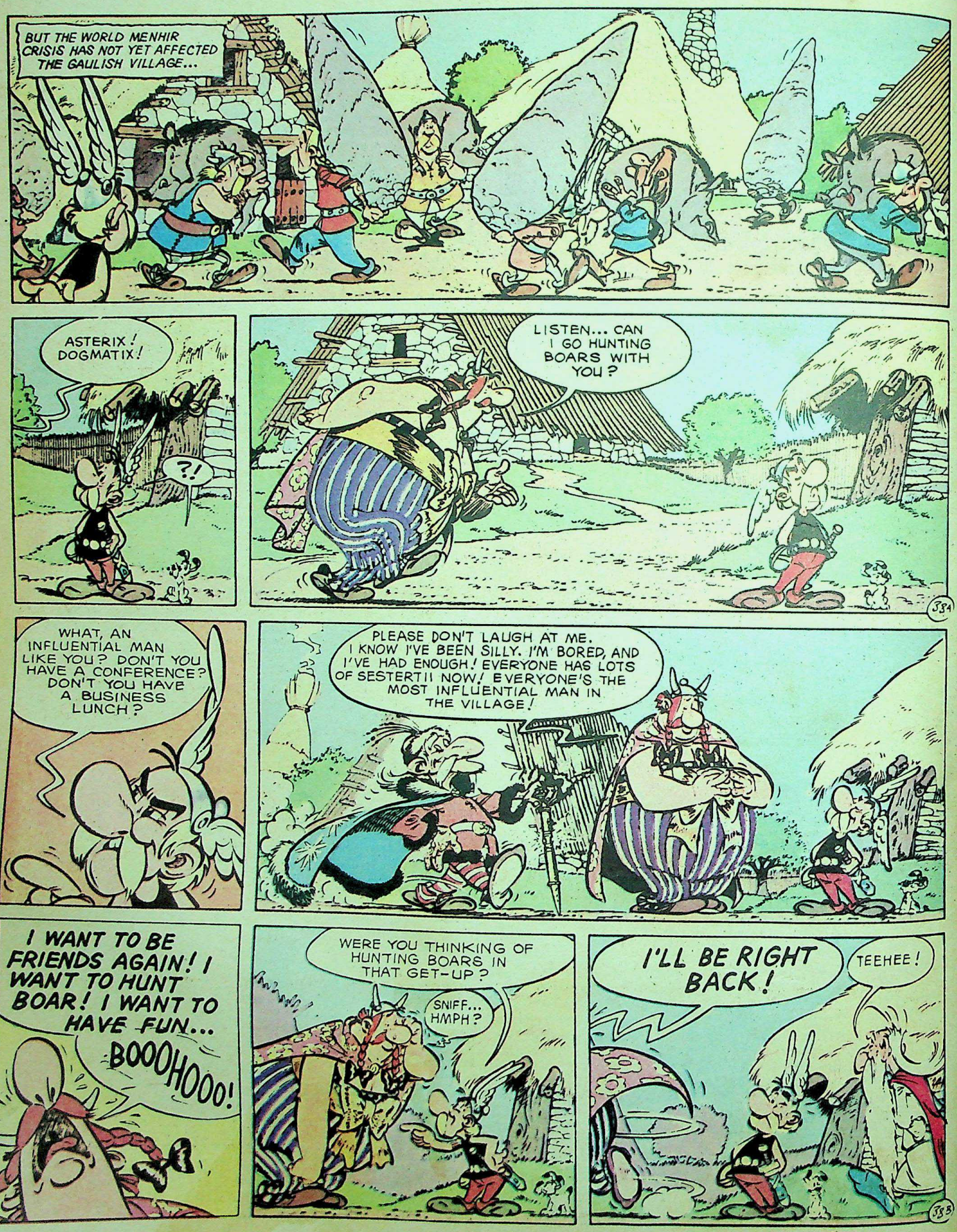

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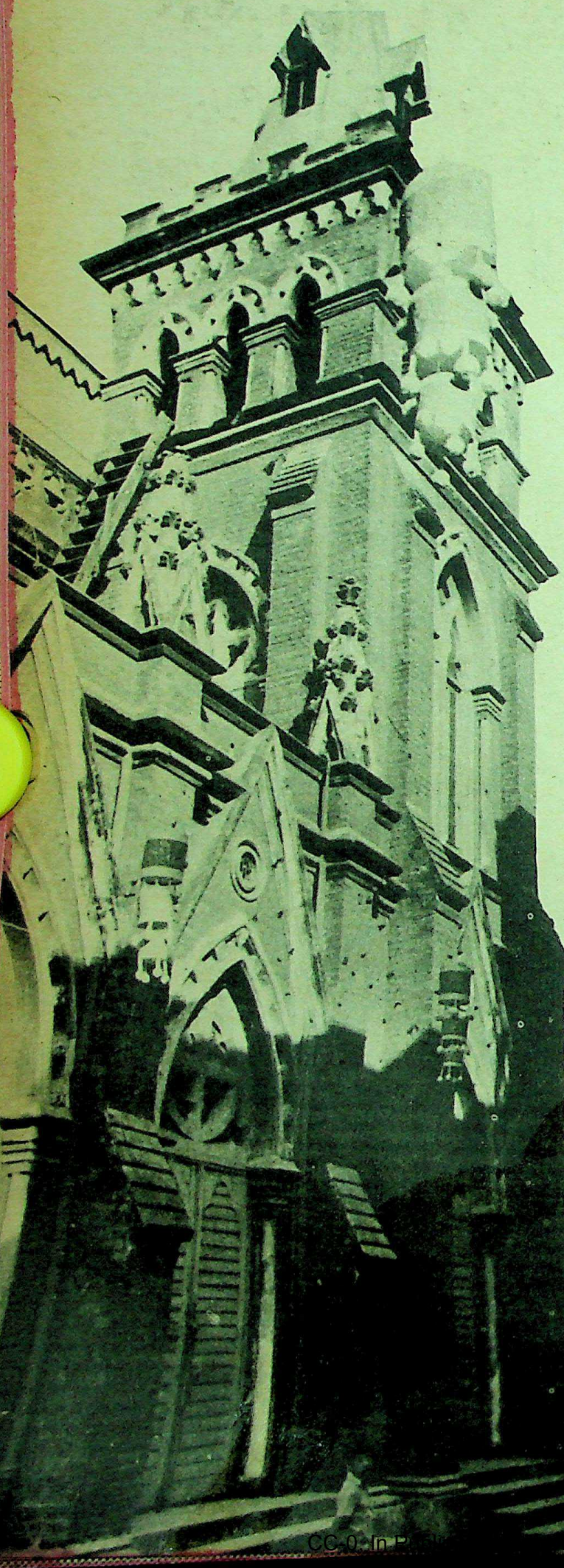

Devi Prasad Sinha

Why I am a Christian

PAUL JOHNSON explains how the faith continues to defy critics and sceptics.

NEAR the city of Luxor, the Egyptian police recently found the bones of a 35-year-old Canadian lady, who had disappeared two years before. She had stumbled into a deep labyrinth of archaeological diggings, 16 feet below the surface; and, unable to escape, had died of thirst and hunger. Before she did so, however, she described on a postcard what had happened to her, and added that she was preparing herself for death. This pitiful tale, lit up as it is by the calm resolution with which the woman faced lonely and terrible extinction, underlines the awesome continuity of human attitudes. For it was near Luxor, more than 2,000 years before Christ, that the theologians of Thebes first clarified the concept of individual death and judgment.

Preparation for death is a commentary on the notion that life is a mere prelude, and death itself no more than a judicial gate through which we must pass. This notion is perhaps the most powerful and indestructible idea ever conceived by man. What implemented it in the first place is not immediately obvious, for immortality does not flow from any process of reasoning from the facts of nature—on the contrary. But once grasped, the idea has enormous strength and leads mankind to impose upon itself dolorous disciplinary systems. As Albert Camus puts it, in *The Myth of Sisyphus*: "The certainty of God giving meaning to life far surpasses in attractiveness the freedom to behave badly with impunity."

The strength of Christianity, derived in part, but only in part, from its Judaic origins, lies in its chrystaline eschatology: its notions of death, judgment, hell and heaven were proclaimed with absolute clarity, and superb self-confidence, from the start. St Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, relates the speech of one of King Edwin's earls, when Paulinus first proposed Christianity to the Northumbrian court. The earl compared life to the flight of a sparrow, in winter, through the king's hall, from icy darkness into light, and then into darkness again; "This life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before and what is to follow, we know nothing. If, therefore, this new teaching gives us certitudes, we should follow it."

BUT God is always dying. Atheism is not an unrepeatable event but a recurring phenomenon. God dies but somehow never gets buried. In the second half of the 19th century the rapid progress of natural science produced an acute attack of deicide. There was an event known as the "secularisation of the European mind', a process which Dr Owen Chadwick, in an entertaining course of lectures, has shown was neither so straightforward nor so conclusive as we had supposed. The "crisis of religion", if that is the right expression, is more than a century old. We think of ourselves as tossed in a sea of doubt; but the supposedly placid mid-Victorians felt no less giddy and insecure. "My belief," wrote Cardinal Manning to Gladstone in 1871, "is that faith is gone.....morals are going.....The end of this must be anarchy or despotism." "Our own," wrote John Morley in 1874, "is characteristically and cardinally an epoch of transition in the very foundations of belief and conduct." Frederick Harrison described his loss of faith as "but

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one case of the dreadful anarchy in which we live" (1863); and six years later: "There is abroad a strange consciousness of doubt, instability and incoherence." People, said Morley, had the "hurried, uneasy mien" of those who live "amid earthquakes...all is doubt, hesitation and shivering expectancy".

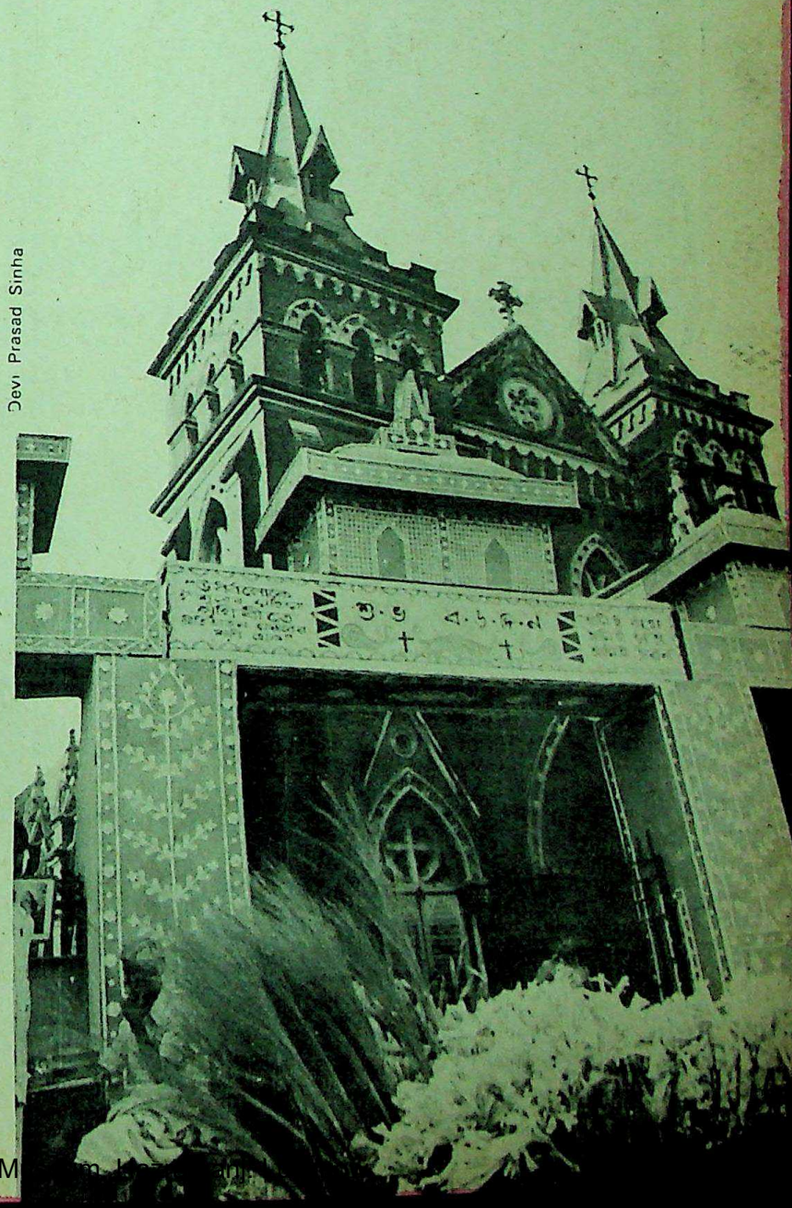
Yet it is an illusion that "progress" and "secularisation" inevitably go hand in hand. Such was the fear of Pio Nono; and, at the other end of the spectrum, the hope of Holyoake and Bradlaugh. But progress has always been a two-edged sword. In the 16th century printing led to the expansion of faith, as well as its contraction. While the scientists of the 1850s and 1860s were forcing theologians to reconsider Genesis, the new railways were reviving the mass-pilgrimages of the Middle Ages and so re-establishing the Ultramontain papacy—just as, today, cheap jet-flights have universalised the journey to Mecca and rekindled the fervour of Islam.

Looking back from the vantage point of 1979, we find it is the slogans of the anti-Christians that have worn badly. "Theological religion", wrote Voltaire in 1764, "is the enemy of mankind." I doubt if anyone thinks that today. In *The Martyrdom of Man* Winwood Reade insisted that "the destruction of Christianity is essential to the interests of civilisation." Who would now agree with him? Renan laid down that history could prove "beyond possibility of contradiction" that Christianity was not "a supernatural fact". We still await such evidence. The more positive statements of the Victorian atheists stand up no better. Thus, Karl Vogt: "Thoughts come out of the brain as gall from the liver or urine from the kidneys." Jakob Moleshoot: "No thought without phosphorus." Huxley said that the thoughts he was uttering were "the expression of molecular changes in my body". Tyndall believed that all of life was "once latent in a fiery cloud". Taine said "Man is a spiritual automation...Vice and virtue are products like sugar and vitriol." Littre, in his dictionary (1858) defined "soul" as "anatomically, the sum of functions of the neck and spinal column" and "physiologically, the sum of functions of the power of perception in the brain". Haeckel, by contrast, asserted "We now know that...the soul (is) a sum of plasma-movements in the ganglion-cells." All these men were highly respected intellectuals in their time.

THE trouble with these science-based systems of belief was that they inevitably tied themselves to a transient view of nature; their god got out of date and died too. The 'advanced thinkers' of the 19th century both overestimated and underestimated the potentialities of science. Comte offered as an example of unattainable knowledge the chemical composition of the stars; the conventional scientific wisdom was that atoms were immutable and to suppose wisdom was alchemy; but it also assumed that natural science advanced by a series of steadily improving approaches to the truth. Few grasped that the new knowledge would progressively raise as many problems as it solved. Thus the new "alternative religions" were founded on illusion, and their pathology underlined Newman's claim in *The Idea of a University*: "True religion is slow in growth and, when once planted, is difficult of dislodgement; but its intellectual counterfeit has no root in itself; it springs up suddenly, it suddenly withers." Comte ended up reading *The Imitation of Christ*, while his followers splintered under the impact of odium theologicum; Wells, a great peddler of science-based systems in his day, spent the last year of his life painting a mural depicting evolution on the wall behind his house in Hanover Terrace: the final panel showed horned devils, and beneath Man he wrote: "Time to go".

The only one of these alternative religions to survive (so far) is Marxism, thanks to its adoption as a state faith. It was close to Positivism in that it analysed history according to laws of evolutionary determinism—the notion of social laws similar to scientific ones was common to all these intellectual systems. Like his master, Feuerbach, Marx thought religion a social phenomenon: "Religion has no content of its own and does not live from heaven but from earth, and falls automatically with the dissolution of the inverted reality whose theory it is" (1842). It is "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the soul of a soulless environment. It is the opium of the people" (1843). It enables us to bear what would otherwise be unbearable; and because it makes the sickness of society bearable it removes the motives for curing and the will to cure. Marx saw Judaism in terms of opium (a fashionable analogy in the 1840s because of the Opium War), but he hated Christianity more because it encouraged the vice he detested most, servility: "The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-contempt, abasement, submission, dejection, all the qualities of the canaille."

The stigmatisation of religion as a form of social control was not new. Throughout the 18th century, there had been constant talk, among rebels against the Ancien Regime, of strangling the last king with the entrails of the last priest; and it was a cynical commonplace among well-to-do rationalists not to discuss atheism in front of the servants lest they steal the spoons. Voltaire called religion "the salutary yoke". Some Christians, like Kingsley, conceded the point. Marx's analysis at one end of the political spectrum was echoed by Archdeacon Wordsworth at the other: "What, Gentlemen, is Conservatism? It is the application of Christianity to civil government...I say it with reverence: the most Conservative book in the world is the Bible" (1865). But equally, others had pointed out the demonstrable fact that the system of social control (if that was what religion was) plainly did not work. Such was Milton's view: he saw among the Mob (1673) nothing but "Pride, Luxury, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Cursing, Swearing, bold and open atheism everywhere abounding." And Swift said he was "not of the least of opinion with those, who hold



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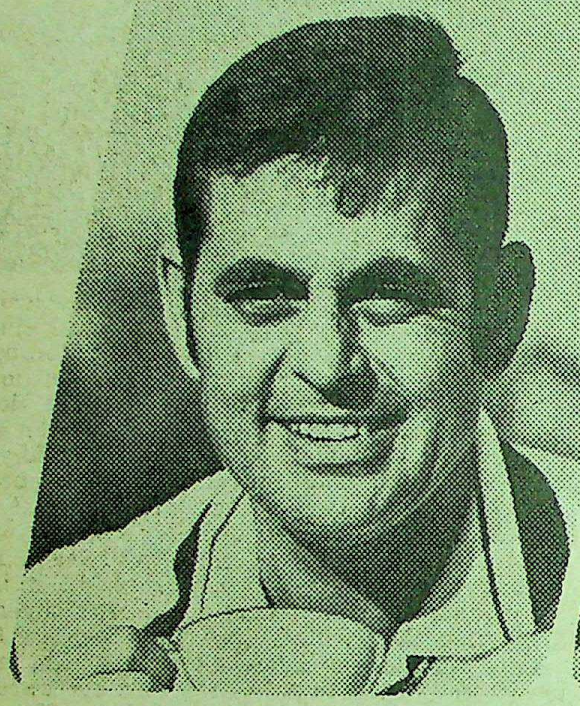

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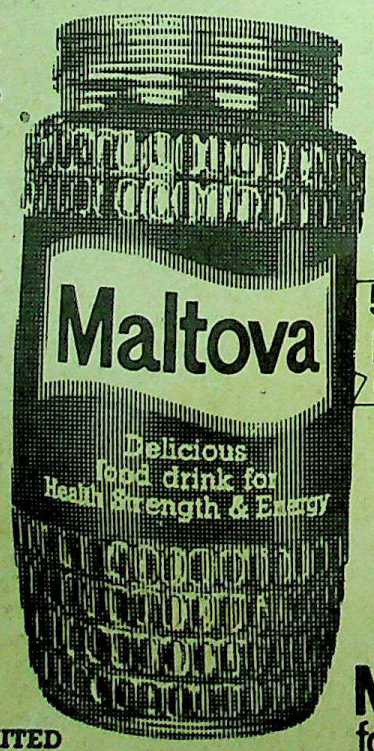

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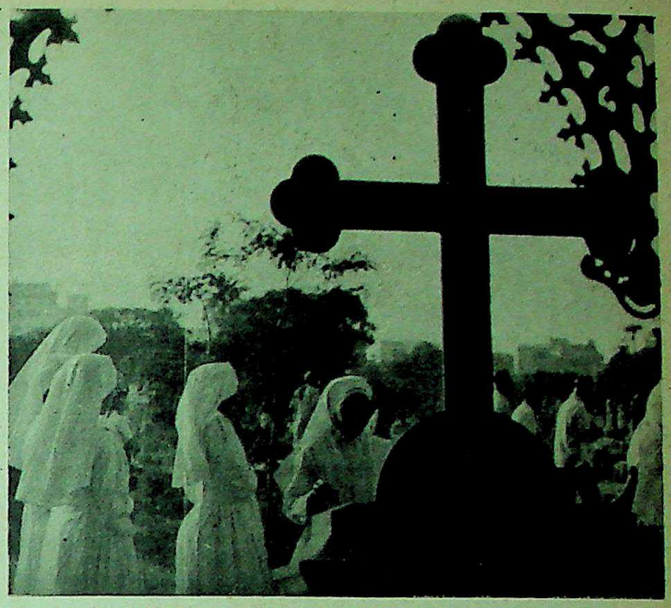
religion to have been the invention of politicians, to keep the lower part of the world in awe, for fear of invisible powers...For I look upon the many or the body of our people here in England, to be as freethinkers, that is to say staunch unbelievers, as any of the highest rank". In Marx's own day, social workers reported that the proletariat scoffed Hell. Among those most in need of the opium, religion had little impact: regular churchgoing was a sign, rather, of upward social progress, and Hellfire sermons were particularly popular. Hell worked best with children, which tended to confirm Comte's "law" rather than Marx's.

NEEDLESS to say, the Marxist assumption that religion would disappear with capitalism has proved false. I find it hard to accept that Marx himself actually believed in such an outcome, though one has to remind oneself that in his day a great many intellectuals agreed that theism in any form could not long survive the hammer blows of science. Marx was descended from rabbis on both sides and was saturated in Biblical determinism; in his case, naturally, it was disembodied from Revelation and so took the form of a rationalised superstition. If Comte rewrote the Sermon on the Mount, Marx produced a weirdly radicalised Deuteronomy. I am inclined to agree with Renan when he said that one should never believe a German who claims he is an atheist. And, as Bacon argues, superstition is much worse than atheism as a public theory; "Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to outward moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men." Bacon noted that a superstition degenerates faster than a new religion: it "bringeth in a new primum mobile, that ravisheth all the spheres of government...and in all superstition, wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practise, in a reversed order." That is more or less what has happened to the Marxist faith.

The opium theory of Marx and others was, of course, an early example of reductionism applied to religion: a set of beliefs was explained in terms of something quite different, and so explained away. All forms of reductionism rest on the assumption that there is an essential difference between the proclaimed content of a set of religious beliefs, and its real but hidden content; and that the reality can be discovered by psychoanalysis, psychology, anthropology, sociology and so forth. Now one of the difficulties about these various forms of reductionism is that they are not complementary, but mutually exclusive. Freud thought that religion, like war, was the product of infantile neurosis. This, and other psychological explanations of religion are false, according to the sociologists, because they are based upon the notion that individuals form society, whereas in fact society forms individuals. Thus Durkheim laid down the axiom that a psychological explanation of a social fact is always wrong because a social fact is the creation of many minds. But the best Durkheim himself had to offer was that religion was a form of worship of society: beliefs reflect (and cement) social bonds: "The moral efficacy of the rite, which is real, leads to belief in its physical efficacy, which is imaginary." The fallacy in Durkheim's argument is that it applies equally well to moral and political beliefs, which he claims are real. And the sociological explanation, in turn, is contradicted by the anthropological form of reductionism, which sees primitive religion as a type of knowledge based upon ignorance of natural causes: I doubt if many now find this line of argument, which derives from Frazer, very plausible; it was effectively demolished by Wittgenstein. As Noel Annan put it, the Golden Bough, designed as 'an ironical epitaph on Christianity', is nowadays 'one of the most beautiful ruins in the history of thought'.

These various and contradictory forms of reductionism have in common the notion that the important question to ask about religion is not "Is that belief true?" but "Why does anyone have that belief?" Or, more politely, "What makes you believe that?" But true religious belief is irreducible: it does not say anything except itself, and it is not explicable in terms of any academic discipline. This fairly obvious truth has been obscured by the emergence of Christian reductionists, who seek



Tapan Das

to make religious belief intellectually respectable by demythologising it. This form of theological enquiry is essentially fugative, since its viewpoint is anthropocentric —it discusses God purely in terms of the way man sees him—and human fashions date quickly. The Honest to God line has already been elbowed aside by the Myth of Christ Incarnate, and that in turn is a rapidly fading memory. But Christian reductionism is more than academic fashion: it harbours the real danger of turning religion into something autonomous, or rather man-controlled into a purely human form of cultural self-expression. Once religion is cut off from its external source it becomes capable of monstrous crimes, as are secular superstitions like Marxism. "Religionless Christianity", to use Bonhoeffer's term, produces an agregious form of sin, in which religion becomes an internal dialogue in our minds, self-centred, self-regarding and self-justifying. Thus demythologising rapidly breeds (say) "Liberation Theology" and in turn murder in the name of Christ. This was the error of the Zealots, and the Crusaders.

An alternative manner in which Christians seek to modernise theology is to reverse the process of scientific explanation and restore theology to its old position as Queen of the Sciences. This is a more profitable venture than it might seem at first glance. In one sense, theology (or metaphysics) is always necessary to supply gaps in our knowledge and our ability to explain things—gaps which are seen to be bigger, not smaller, than they appeared in Victorian times. Theology only seems to be unnecessary when, as in the 19th and early 20th century, the intellectual elite is under the illusion that it possesses a sufficient nontheological explanation of the universe. God returns when theory fails, just as, at an emotional level, religion comes to the rescue when we are miserable or frightened: God can serve as an intellectual as well as a physical opium. In some ways, for example, Einstein accepted theology as a science. What he called "the mystery of the world's comprehensibility" inspired in him "profound faith". Science, he wrote, was "blind" without religion. He defined scientific knowledge as a series of "primary concepts" or "fundamental relations" which are directly and intuitively connected with experience; all other scientific notions are connected to this basis by theorems. Our knowledge of God cannot be abstracted and expressed in theorems: it is direct and intuitive.

SO Far so good. Where the argument, so it seems to me, becomes risky is when the "scientific" approach to God is linked to particular developments in knowledge. Thus, Professor Torrance, in *God and Rationality* (Oxford 1971), argues that theology has been 'harassed' by the 'imperialism of mechanistic concepts, emanating from a dogmatic empiricism, end-products of the Newtonian era of science'. It is a mistake, he says, to see "a rigidly mechanistic concept of physics" as "the model of all true science". On the contrary, "the hard concept of determinism and idealisation of mechanical explanation, after

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the emergence of quantum mechanics and the breakdown of the old principle of causality, is a strange anachronism." He thinks that "a more adequate understanding of science ...will help to deliver theologians from their fear of it", and he suggests that Field Theory can be a fruitful analogy for the way in which the existence and workings of God can be demonstrated.

No doubt it can, but as analogy only; and analogies like pictures of God, get out of date. In the 18th century, progressive bishops saw the universe as a clock, and God as the primal clockwinder. Hume destroyed the notion, simply by changing the metaphor, in a single sentence: "The whole presents nothing but the idea of a blind nature, impregnated by a great vivifying principle, and pouring forth from her lap, without discernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children." Nor do I think theologians should rejoice that physics has been obliged to break free from an immutable logico-causal relation; after all, theology is not primarily an exercise in physics: it is an exercise in history. Cosmology is relevant to religion only in so far as it provides a satisfactory cosmogony. We need to know how it all happened in the first place. For, to use a deductive principle of Lord Peter Wimsey's "Once you know how, you know who."

OF course in each age theology has to be restated in terms which contemporaries respect. But a theology which involves itself with Field Theory or any other scientific theory is bound to prove ephemeral. The notion that religion must somehow keep pace with science seems to me a 19th century fallacy. As Darwin observed: "Science has nothing to do with Christ, except in so far as the habit of scientific research makes a man cautious in admitting evidence." It is tempting, nonetheless, to pounce upon a cosmological explanation as confirming the theistic notion of a "first event".

Listening not long ago to a radio talk on the first few minutes in the history of the universe, I was startled by the familiarity: not so very different from the first chapter of Genesis. It is argued that the discovery of microwave background radiation provides virtually incontrovertible proof that there was a big bang in which the universe formed; it is also argued that it may have appeared out of a vacuum, and expanded from a zero-radius point. But we cannot yet prove that the universe is a unique happening, as theology would seem to demand. It may be, as Dr Edward Tryon puts it (Nature, 1973, 393) that "Our universe is simply one of thousands that happen from time to time." Cosmology, as an exact science, is in its infancy; and, as Professor J. D. North points out in his history of modern cosmology, we have not yet succeeded in defining the notion of "universe" scientifically, since any description ties it to current scientific belief and makes it an impermanent entity.

Objective knowledge is some kind of compound of observation and logic. But our observation of the universe is provisional only, and we are beginning to realise that logic, too, is unstable. In Kant's day, all seemed firm: "There are but few sciences that can come into a permanent state, which admits of no further alteration. To these belong logic and metaphysics.... We do not require any new discoveries in logic since it contains merely the form of thought." As recently as 1940, a leading logician wrote: "Dictators may be powerful today, but they cannot alter the laws of logic, nor indeed can God do so."

But this was to tempt providence. There are now many deviant logics: many-valued logics, intuitionist logic, minimum logic, quantum logic, tense logic, deonitic logic and so on. On changing logics (for example, the "law of the excluded middle") Professor Quine writes: "What difference is there in principle between such a shift and the shift whereby Kepler succeeded Ptolemy, or Einstein Newton, or Darwin Aristotle?" It may well be that some of the "necessary truths" of classical logic may turn out to be wrong for empirical reasons: and perhaps we should regard classical logic as a mere theory (though of a general kind) on a par with other scientific theories. New notational or modal logics seem to breed like reactors. In his examination of the Lewis-Modal systems, Professor Zeman writes: "One gets the uneasy feeling as one discerns and studies more of the systems belonging to this family, that it is literally a family, and has the power of reproducing and multiplying, proliferating new systems without limit".

Such discoveries need not make us uneasy; the cautionary tale of the Medieval schoolmen, and their all-embracing systems, has long ago revealed that logic is a delusory instrument. But empirical knowledge, as we are now learning, is also capable of a baseless triumphalism. The road to belief, once found, can be lit up by logic and science, but the discovery must be our own. It is an individual act, and even when we are aware it has taken place, we may not be able to describe it, I am impressed by the number of gifted writers, from Augustine to Newman, who completely fail to conjure up for us the actual moment of acceptance; there is always a missing page in such confessional autobiographies. The loss of faith is equally vaguely described: What might be called the Dover Beach Syndrome occurs only sometime after the strickening event. My explanation, a variant of the theory of grace, is that the connection (or disconnection) between God and man is always an interior one; it can be recognised but not described. Belief in God is intuitive; and such intuition is the consequence of grace — grace made real, almost manifest, in the mind of man. The road to grace is through prayer. If, therefore, anyone asks me: "Does it make sense to pray to a God in which I do not believe?", I answer: "Yes, it does." Francis Thompson makes the point more eloquently:

Not where the wheeling systems darken, And our benumbed conceiving soars/ The drift of pinions, would we hearken,/ Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors./ The angels keep their ancient places;/ Turn but a stone, and start a wing!/ 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,/ That miss the many splendoured thing. ■

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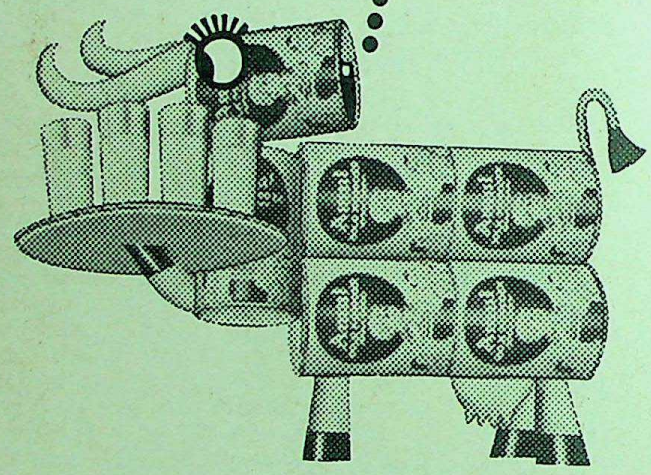

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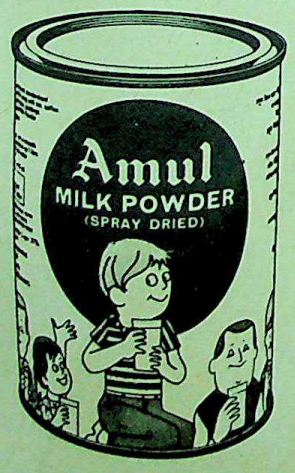

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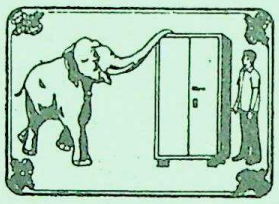

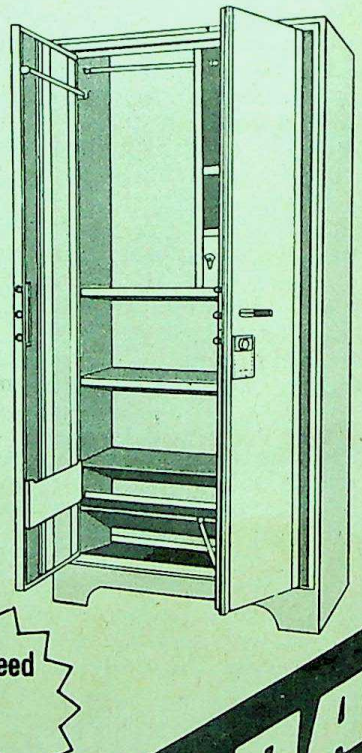

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The revolving door

WHEN the Congress Government collapsed in March, 1977, Mrs Gandhi at once became a non-person for the Fourth Estate, her existence to be ignored except for the passing snide remark. But several days after Chaudhury Charan Singh had assumed office. Akashvani, Doordarshan and our newspapers were still regaling us with approving dollops of Mr Morarji Desai's lofty strictures against the machinations of a Government of defectors in a display of loyalty to the fallen that was truly touching.

Mr Purushottam Kaushik, the new Informaion and Broadcasting Minister, may be tempted to point to this difference as revealing the change from his predecessor. "You will have a real free Press now" was, after all, among the new Prime Minister's earliest promises. It seems legitimate, therefore, to claim that released from the illiberal Janata regime's control, our free and fearless media is not afraid of voicing its misgivings about the ethics of the Chaudhury's achievement.

But this would be an oversimplification. A more accurate explanation for the deference with which newspapers continue to publicise Mr Desai's pronouncements is to be found in the close nexus between Press owners and the Janata leaders which was reflected also in the partisan manner in which the crisis was reported. The transgressions of radio and television were, not unnaturally, the subject of political complaints. But while the two official media were presumably operating under Mr L. K. Advani's instructions, newspapers gave vent to their own proprietorial attitude towards the disintegrating Janata Party and its never-say-die leader. Having created the Janata Government out of its opposition to Mrs Gandhi, our Press magnates were not prepared to let their handiwork perish without a struggle.

Hence the editorial anguish over the immorality of defections as if the phenomenon were new in India, introduced by Mr Charan Singh, and quite unknown to that personification of purity, Mr Morarji Desai. The bias of the Press was made known in those subtle ways that are part of the sub-editor's trade. What emerged was boundless sympathy for Mr Desai not inhibited too much by rational assessment of news value. That Mr Chavan had been asked to form a government merited only a modest double column headline in the Calcutta edition of *The Statesman*, while the paper's New Delhi issue buried it below the fold, giving far more prominence to a speculative story called "What next if Chavan fails" which must have baffled readers who had to scour the page to discover what he might fail at. It's hardly surprising that the Delhi *Statesman* lags behind all other papers published from the capital. Even *Patriot* displayed more realistic news sense with a lead story on the invitation.

No less biased was the Delhi edition of the *Indian Express* which on July 16 thought the Janata(S)'s claim to form a government merited a single column against the six columns showered on a similar claim by Mr Desai. When the President asked Messrs

Purshottam Lal Kaushik

Desai and Charan Singh to prove their majority, that too was given a one-column heading (July 24) though optimistic speculation about Mr Desai's chances boldly led the next day's paper.

The *Express* also gave wary readers a few interesting lessons in the use of quotation marks and attributive names. The straight heading "Janata to cut link with RSS", without quotation marks or a source, suggested clearly a statement of fact: there was nothing to indicate only an announcement by Mr Chandrashekhar without any mandatory force. But at that stage of desperation with Janata trying frantically to persuade defectors to re-defect, the *Express* undoubtedly felt obliged to help out its hard-pressed protege in 1 Safdarjang Road. If the delinking could be presented as an accomplished fact, some of those who had rallied round Mr Charan Singh's secular standard might even have returned to Mr Desai's fold.

There were other stories with which the *Express* clearly did not wish to be identified. "Reddy's duty to call Charan to form Govt." was one such: a heading that appeared within inverted commas plainly to indicate that it was only the opinion of Mr S. N. Mishra, unshared by anyone on the paper. No such fine distinctions impinged on the *Express* conscience when it reflected Mr Jagjivan Ram's views in headings on two days running—"Govt. will not last long" (July 29) and "Just a caretaker Govt." (July 30) appeared without quotation marks though admittedly with attribution.

It was reminiscent of the wry observation by General Booth, the Salvation Army founder, that he knew he had finally arrived when *The Times*, (now alas! still hibernating) like our own *Times of India*, first printed his military rank without inverted commas.

But while the *Express*, the *Hindustan Times* and the *Statesman* continued to wring their hands in despair, over the unprincipled manoeuvres on the New Delhi stage—without much mention of the Janata Party's own unsuccessful counter-manoeuvres—Abu's cartoons in the *Express* displayed none of the political squeamishness from which the paper's subs, reporters and leader-writers obviously suffered. They continued, impartially and delightfully, to take swipes at all the leading contenders.

Another honourable mention for Janardhan Thakur of the *Business Standard* who was probably (I am open to correction) the only reporter to discuss the buying and selling of M.P.s. Perhaps it is appropriate that this news should break in what is primarily a commercial publication: the *Standard* could usefully follow up its advantage with a more exhaustive survey of the finances of such operations. There cannot have been one on a grander scale and everyone is anxious to know the price of an MP.

Meanwhile, Mr Kaushik is proving his emancipation by demanding explanations of AIR. Mr Raj Narain, Mr Biju Patnaik and Mr Chavan all have complaints; all implicitly claim the right to pick up the telephone and give a dressing down to the radio executive unfortunate enough to answer the call. It may be the turn of the Press next. For nothing ever really changes in India. The revolving door just revolves. ■

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THERE is a well-known actress—call her a comedienne if you like—whose attitude and manners are worth being emulated, especially by her colleagues. Her off-screen joviality, for instance. Her name is *Shammi*. Recently, after her break-up with hubby producer Sultan Ahmed, the whole of filmland was up in arms against the man, all to her defence. Yet she maintained her innate goodness in the face of a lot of unfairness. Then when Sultan was down with a heart attack, Shammi would quietly go up to the hospital and inquire from the authorities about his progress. When she learnt that Sultan's new wife had been asked to keep away from him, with talk of a break-up between them in the air too, she began visiting him in his room and lunching with him daily, till he was well enough to go home. Folks thought it was a reconciliation, but no; Shammi was being plain foolish. When she found he didn't need her any more, she kept away too. She is happy with whatever roles come to her. Her only problem is producers, and fans aren't sure of whether she is in films or out. For those interested: she is very much back.

Matilal Mondal

Zaheera: a new role

Rishi: hair-raising difference

ASHA SACHDEV has a few kinky ideas about beauty and hair-care. But she is very possessive about them, it is said. Each time she tries out something new, she tells a person or two about her latest health-tip, and then gets bugged if anyone else has found out about it. If she is smart enough to devise curealls she should let the world know about them and feel proud about it—not pout in that mean way of hers.

BEATS me how that devil-may-care, tough little minx that *Ranjeeta* is, or rather was at the start of her career, feels about her name still being linked with Akbar Khan for whom, one can be sure, she still carries a torch, in the core of her heart—especially because of thickening rumours about her growing attachment to Mithun Chakravarty. Unless she is merely trying to turn Akbar on (like, make him feel jealous) or pull off a publicity gimmick, and is really getting involved with Mithun, Ranjeeta seems the type who would go in for a fling if she wasn't convinced she was doing the right thing.

A FAMILIAR face we won't be seeing any more in films is that of *Zaheera*, who, honest to herself at least, decided that the time she had spent on Hindi films and made good use of—eleven years—was enough. When she found she could not get beyond average roles, she decided to quit. Now she's back in London, her hometown, and has plans for some constructive work, like starting a magazine for the Pakistani and Indian youth settled there. Should be lucky this time.

IT'S a real pity *Neelam Mehra's* (remember the likeness of Simi who was annoyed if she was compared with her?) career did not go beyond a film or two. And then when you heard she was settling down to marry producer-actor Shiv Kumar, you thought she might, just as well. Her attempt at career-building did not succeed anyway. Now she is back to square one—with a broken marriage and a baby, and has already begun trying to get into films all over again. Knowing filmworld, it's going to be tough for Neelam, unless she compromises with the roles they are going to offer her—with the flood of aspirants we have. She's only kidding herself about there being a dearth of good heroines, and the need for new faces. Her's is not new—but here's wishing her loads of luck.

WHAT'S this new hairstyle *Rishi* is sporting? His hair is done up with a longish, sleek look that makes him resemble Jeetendra, his bosom pal. What a comedown! I mean, both Jeetu and Chintu are Kapoors, all right, but there is a wide difference of class that sets one clan of Kapoors apart from the other. Why, oh, why did Chintu have to try looking like Jeetu, unless he was advised he would look a trifle taller with this new long hairdo (which he does look now, actually)? ■

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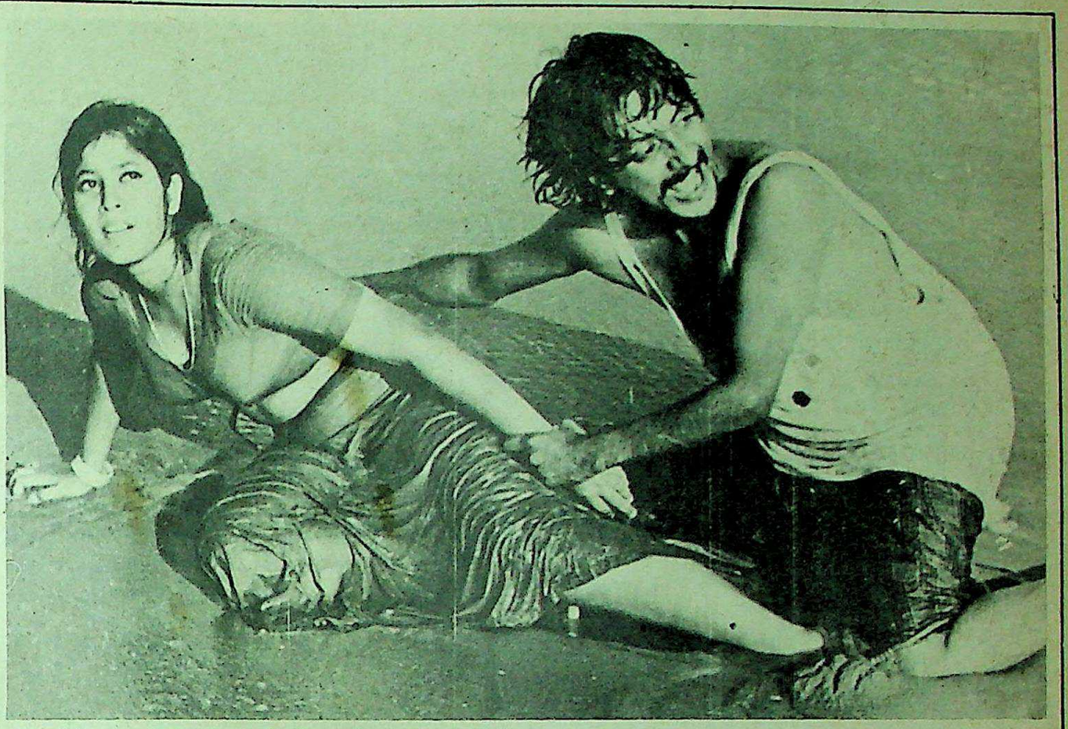
IT wasn't just *Surekha's* bosom which prompted him to sign her for his Malayalam venture *Thakara* says director Bharatan. She is a good actress too, he emphasises. But is that true? All that one saw in *Thakara* was Surekha's uninhibited anatomical gyration and generous display of her cleavage.

Surekha started working for *Thakara* even before she finished her schooling at Madras' Holy Angels Convent. She plays a frustrated young woman who learns the facts of life not by observing bees and birds, but by watching her father's stud-bull being used to cover the village cows! She casts her amorous glance in all directions but unfortunately, the village carpenter, who she dislikes, takes interest in her; but the person who gets her in the end is the village moron, Thakara, a rolling stone, who people think will never look at a woman.

As Thakara, *Pratap Pothen* has come up with a convincing performance: a graduate from the Madras Christian College, Pothen made his debut in Bharatan's *Aaravam* and currently he's acting in six films. "In the first film, I played a loser. My wife ran away with the bus-conductor," Pratap recalls. "And in *Thakara* I go to sleep with the woman but I lose her in the end..." Well, it's good to know Pratap has six films on hand, but if he goes around accepting films in which the accent is on the heroine's thighs and breasts, people may not really notice him.

THE next time *Padmini Kapilla* disappears from Bombay, gossip columnists needn't think that she's on one of her trips to the Middle East. She's appearing in a Malayalam film, *Chithalukal* being directed by Bharatan. She plays the mistress of a businessman who compels her to sleep with men who'd help his business to flourish.

Bharatan is yet another Malayalam director who has imported a Bombay actress. But getting Kapilla to act in the Malayalam film shouldn't have posed any problem at all: she certainly doesn't have many films on hand. Would he be making her strip for the film like he did with Surekha in *Thakara*? I asked Bharatan. This one is going to be a sober film, he assured me. But you never know, he may change his mind; and Padmini, who refused to show her panties in a Mohan Segal film, could have become bolder now.



Surekha and Pratap Pothen in "Tharaka".

THE panel which selected South Indian films to be sent to international film festivals consisted of 15 members drawn from all the four southern States. But as it happened, only six members turned up, and it was dominated by Telugu speaking people; P. Pullaiah, the veteran film maker who was its chairman, actresses Jamuna and Sowcar Janaki and writer Arudra, an enlightened soul. But "Daddy" Pullaiah conducted the proceedings like a school headmaster and was primarily responsible for the selection of jejune, sick Telugu films like *Pranam Kareedu* and *Chali Cheemelu*. There were some interesting Malayalam films: *Ashwathamma* and *Yaro Oral*, slow moving existentialist stuff but "Daddy" Pullaiah didn't even think of sending them upto Delhi where the central committee could see them. "Well, I may be in the mud, but I have been asked to judge these films" he remarked candidly. Next time, the festival directorate should insist that at least 10 panel members should attend the screening.

VANI GANAPATHY is amused that some people should believe the story that she doesn't want husband *Kamalahasan* to act in Hindi films just because she couldn't make any progress in Bombay! Well, for one thing, Kamalahasan just cannot give up his film assignments down South: conservative estimate has it that he has 30 films on hand. And as a matter of fact, Bombay producers haven't shown much interest in him. There was talk that Messrs N. C. Sippy and Hrishikesh Mukherjee would remake the Kannada hit *Kokila* and cast Kamalahasan. But nothing has materialised as yet. Balu Mahendra, the director, too has been thinking of remaking it in Hindi with Kamalahasan and Shoba but it has been in the planning stage for over a year. Incidentally, *Meeta Meeti Baaten*, the dubbed version of Kamalahasan's Tamil hit, *Manmatha Leelai* did reasonably well all over North India: yet Bombay producers are not taking interest in him.

FOR his *Kanchana Seetha* (Malayalam), filmmaker *Arvindan* used Andhra tribals to act in the film. Interestingly the result wasn't disappointing at all. Arvindan has the genius to spot real talent: in his newest Malayalam film, *Kumatty*, an enjoyable fairy-tale he has picked up dancer *Ramunni* and extracted a delightful performance from him.

Kumatty is a popular fantasy figure of many folk songs in Kerala and often grandmothers frighten children by invoking Kumatty's name. And one day there emerges on the scene, across the expansive prairie lands down the hills, along the winding footpath, shrouded by shrubbery, the dark, bearded, dancing Kumatty with the 'totem pole', held horizontally across his shoulder. And in direct contrast to the Kumatty of lore, this real-life Kumatty is a fun-loving, free man who teaches the children how to come alive. *Kumatty* has already been released in pockets of Kerala and has received modest box-office success: Like good wine, it ought to travel well beyond the borders of Kerala.

PIOUSJI

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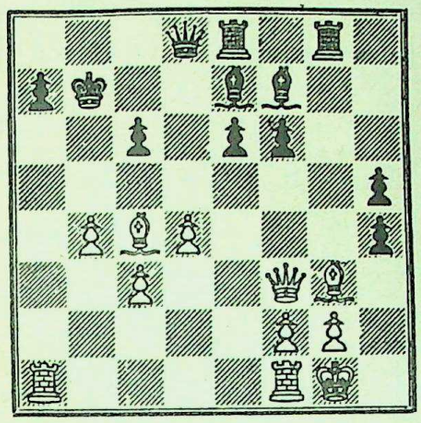
VARIETY

chess

Rogoff (Black)



Larsen (White) to play
Position after Black's 22nd move

Lone Pine time

This week marks the beginning of the annual Louis D. Statham tournament in Lone Pine, California. A nine-round tournament played under the Swiss system does not sound like anything very special even if it is played at a rate of one round per day. However, if you want to play you need a US rating of over 2,400 (that's equivalent to a British rating of 225!). The fact is that Lone Pine is the strongest chess tournament in the world. Last year's entry totalled 68, of whom nearly 30 were grandmasters, including such names as Petrosian, Polugaevsky, Portisch, Timman, Larsen. . .not to mention nearly all the top names in American chess. Many countries sent small 'teams' of players, including England, who were represented by Miles, Stean, Mestel, Speelman and Taulbut.

What attracts so many leading players to Lone Pine? Ask any competitor and he will tell you about the Californian sunshine and the fresh mountain air (Lone Pine is some 5,000 feet above sea level and only a few miles from Mount Whitney, the highest peak in North America). He might incidentally mention the prize fund. Last year first place was worth $12,000 and this year it is going up to $15,000 (the positive side of inflation?). Such rewards may be approaching respectability for tennis players or golfers, but for chessplayers they are astronomical.

Eventual winner last year was Larsen, who after losing to Speelman in the first round nonchalantly collected 7½ points in the remaining eight rounds to take first place. He will be trying to repeat his success this year, but the opposition is expected to be stronger than ever. There is a good possibility that even Korchnoi may be playing.

Here is Larsen's last round game, which won him the massive first prize. Not a hint of nerves from the Danish grandmaster who polished off his opponent inside two hours.
White: B. Larsen. Black: K. Rogoff
Caro-Kann Defence
1. P—K4, P—QB3; 2. P—Q4, P—Q4; 3. N—QB3, P x P; 4. N x P, N—Q2; 5. N—KB3, KN—B3; 6. N x N+, N x N; 7. N—K5, N—Q2. Passive, but the theoretical continuation 7. . . B—B4; 8. P—QB3, P—K3; 9. P—KN4! is very strong for White.
8. B—KB4, N x N; 9. B x N, Q—N3; 10. B—Q3! P—B3. 10. . . Q x NP; 11. O—O would leave Black dangerously behind in development.
11. B—N3, B—K3; 12. Q—K2, B—B2; 13. O—O, P—K3. Here 13. . . Q x QP; 14. QR—Q1, followed by B—B5 is murderous.
14. P—B3, O—O—O; 15. B—QB4, R—K1; 16. P—QN4, P—KR4; 17. P—KR4, R—N1; 18. Q—B3, B—K2; 19. P—R4, P—N4, 20. P—R5, Q—Q1; 21. P—R6. Decisive. Black's queenside defences are destroyed.
21. . . P x KRP; 22. P x P+, K x P [DIAGRAM] **23. R x P+!,** resigns. After 23. . . K x R, 24. Q x QBP, there is no defence to the threats of Q—R6 mate and R—R1+

Castle while you can

Played in Poland, 1974.
White: Kostro. Black: Adamski.
Sicilian Defence.
1. P—K4, P—QB4; 2. N—KB3, P—Q3; 3. P—Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, N—KB3; 5. N—QB3. P—QR3; 6. B—K2, P—K3; 7. B—K3, Q—B2; 8. P—B4, P—QN4; 9. P—QR3, B—N2; 10. B—B3, QN—Q2; 11. Q—K2, R—B1; 12. P—KN4, P—K4; 13. N—B5, P—N3; 14. N—N3, P x P; 15. B x P, N—K4; 16. P—N5, KN—Q2; 17. B—N2, B—N2; 18. N—B1? (O—O!), N—B5; 19. N—Q5, B x N; 20. P x B dis ch, K—B1; 21. P—B3, N x NP; 22. K—B2, N—B4; White resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THE semi-final of the Spingold, America's main team event, had a dramatic finish. With two boards to go in one of the matches, Brachman, the more fancied team, was 16 points down to Martel. This was board 62

Dealer, South. N-S vulnerable

	♠ Q 5 ♥ A J 8 6 2 ♦ A K J 9 ♣ A .	
♠ K 7 ♥ Q 10 9 7 5 ♦ Q 8 6 3 2 ♣ 7	N W E S	♠ 9 8 3 2 ♥ 3 ♦ 7 ♣ Q 10 9 5 4 3 2
	♠ A J 10 6 4 ♥ K 4 ♦ 10 5 4 ♣ K 8 6	

At the first table the Martel team bid with too much exuberance

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Freisner	Passell	Lebensold	Kantar
No	No	1♥	4♣
dble	No	5♣ (1)	No
6♠ (2)	No	7♣ (3)	No
7♥	No	No	No

(1) These sequences are not too well chartered, and no doubt he was afraid that Four Diamonds might not be treated as forcing
(2) He had a difficult bid now, because his partner had invited a slam and there wasn't much room in which to select the best contract. Perhaps 5NT would have been a good natural bid, but it might have been interpreted as a grand slam try in hearts.
(3) Here, too, there was much to be said for 6NT.

Seven Hearts was two down. This, at the state of the match, would not have been a disaster but for a sad misjudgment at the other table

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Goldman	Stansby	Soloway	Martel
No	No	1♥	4♣
dble	No	6♦ (1)	No
No	dble(2)	6NT	No
No	dble	No	No
No			

(1) This seems precipitous and inferior to Five Clubs or 4NT
(2) The sort of mistake whose recollection you carry with you to the grave; if opponents are going to fail in Six Diamonds you don't need 200 in place of 100, especially when you have entered the last quarter 26 points ahead.

Six Notrumps was easy to make. The Martel team lost 18 points on the board, and a further 6 on the last board.

The main lesson to be drawn from the bidding is that, after an opponent's pre-empt, 4NT and 5NT should be natural, not conventional. A notrump contract is so often desirable, because suits tend to break badly.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

ALTHOUGH Britain has never done so, many countries have issued special stamps intended for use only on airmail correspondence. Some of those issued in small quantities for specific flights, such as the overprinted stamps provided by Newfoundland between 1919 and 1933 for several of the early west-to-east transatlantic crossings, are now very rare. Among the more recent rarities are two Dutch stamps issued in 1951 for general airmail use. With face values of 15 and 25 guilders (then about £4), they were neglected by collectors. A lightly mounted mint pair in a Phillips auction recently realised £280.

C.W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. What was the Abdication Crisis ?
2. When and where was the term 'concentration camp' first applied ?
3. What was the Duma ?
4. What is graphomania ?
5. Who wrote the national sea-song of England, "Rule Britannia"?

ANSWERS

1 The crisis that arose in December, 1936, from the desire of King Edward VIII to marry a commoner, Mrs Wallace Simpson.
2. In the Boer War, to the camps in which civilians were interned by Kitchener
3. The name of the Russian Parliament created by Nicholas II after the 1905 revolution.
4. An obsessive urge to write, indicative of some mental disorder.
5. James Thomson (1700-1748).

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Beginning August 12

This week Jupiter, Sun, Mercury and Venus are in Cancer. Saturn and Rahu are in Leo, Uranus is in Libra, Neptune is in Scorpio, Kethu is in Aquarius and Mars is in Gemini. The Moon will be moving through Taurus and Gemini from Aries.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) This is a good week for artistic and intellectual pursuits. It would be however wise to keep an eye on expenditure. A secret association will bring happiness and if you are careful, your health too will make remarkable progress. Letters from both far and near will bring good news. This week is also good for love and romance. Refrain from playing with the law. Act discreetly. **Good dates :** 13, 14 and 18. **Lucky numbers :** 1 and 5. **Favourable direction :** South.

TAURUS .(April 21 — May 22) You will make new friends and also pick up new hobbies to pass your leisure time. The health of your family members will improve. The domestic scene will be a source of joy and happiness. You may change your profession in the near future. Artistic and intellectual pursuits will progress this week. You may undertake a journey. Some unexpected gains are also indicated. **Good dates :** 14, 16 and 18. **Lucky numbers :** 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Forge ahead on all fronts; stellar influences make this a very lucky period for you. You can even take a few risks. This is a time to make changes. Make new acquaintances and contacts with an eye on the future. You must however guard against impulsive actions. Avoid speculation. Your financial front improves radically. **Good dates :** 14, 15 and 16. **Lucky numbers :** 1 and 8. **Favourable direction :** West.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Stellar influences indicate both losses and gains. You may be separated from the person you love and adore and health too may pose a problem. You will long for change and variety in your life. You must meet the challenge bravely. **Good dates :** 16, 17 and 18. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction :** South-west.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) The investments that you made in the past will prove beneficial now. You will earn the praise of your friends and relatives. Lawsuits and debts, if any, should not worry you. The domestic scene remains pleasant. New friends and hobbies will keep you occupied. **Good dates :** 12, 13, 14 and 15. **Lucky numbers :** 3 and 4. **Favourable direction :** North-east.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Do not be careless in dealinig with professional matters. Eschew doutful relationships. Though luck may favour you, do not gamble. Women will be of great help to you this week. Your financial sitution will definitely improve. You may have to do a good bit of travelling this week. Letters will bring good news. **Good dates :** 12, 13, 16 and 18 **Lucky numbers :** 5 and 7. **Favourable direction :** West.

LIBRA .(September 23 — October 22) Your financial position will improve rapidly. You may even be promoted in the near future. A secret association will progress rapidly and prove beneficial for you. Businessmen should adopt original methods to reap maximum profit. All documents and letters should be read carefully and replies promptly sent. Love and romance are indicated. **Good dates :** 13, 14, and 15. **Lucky numbers :** 10 and 7. **Favourable directions :** North and East.

SCORPIO .(October 23 — November 21) The early part of this week brings about financial expansion. Employers and those in authority will prove cooperative and very helpful in the latter part of the week. You may be separated from a beloved one. You may also have to face the wrath of your close relatives. Letter will bring bad news from distant places. However do not lose heart; the next week will be better. **Good dates :** 11, 14, 15 and 17. **Lucky numbers :** 4 and 7. **Favourable direction :** South-west.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) This is a good week for love and romance. Letters may bring matrimonial offers. Luck will favour you at every step. Friendships made during this week will prove helpful in the future. Some people will shift residences. Your domestic problems are approaching a solution. You must maintain your status wisely; hasty steps may ruin everything at this juncture. **Good dates :** 12, 14, 16 and 18. **Lucky numbers :** 5 and 3. **Favourable direction :** North.

CAPRICORN . (December 23 — January 20) Your problems are not likely to be solved; they will drag on for some time more. For businessmen and politicians, this is an unlucky phase. Be very careful in your dealings with superiors and those in authority. You may have to postpone a journey due to unavoidable circumstances. Health will remain unsatisfactory and medical expenses will be incurred. **Good dates :** 14, 16 and 17. **Lucky numbers :** 2 and 3. **Favourable direction :** South

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) A good week for matrimonial negotiations. The domestic scene remains peaceful; you are advised to spend more time at home with your family. New undertakings have bright prospects. For professionals and businessmen, letters will bring good news. **Good dates :** 12, 14, 16 and 17.**Lucky numbers :** 2 and 4. **Favourable direction :** East.

PISCES (February .20 — March 20) You will be attracted by new ventures. This may involve meeting business magnates. Exercise your wit and discretion in all business dealings. The financial front is bound to show rapid improvement. A new friendship will prove helpful. A good week for love and romance. **Good dates :** 12, 13, 14 and 19. **Lucky numbers :** 3 and 9. **Favourable direction :** South-east.

M. B. RAMAN

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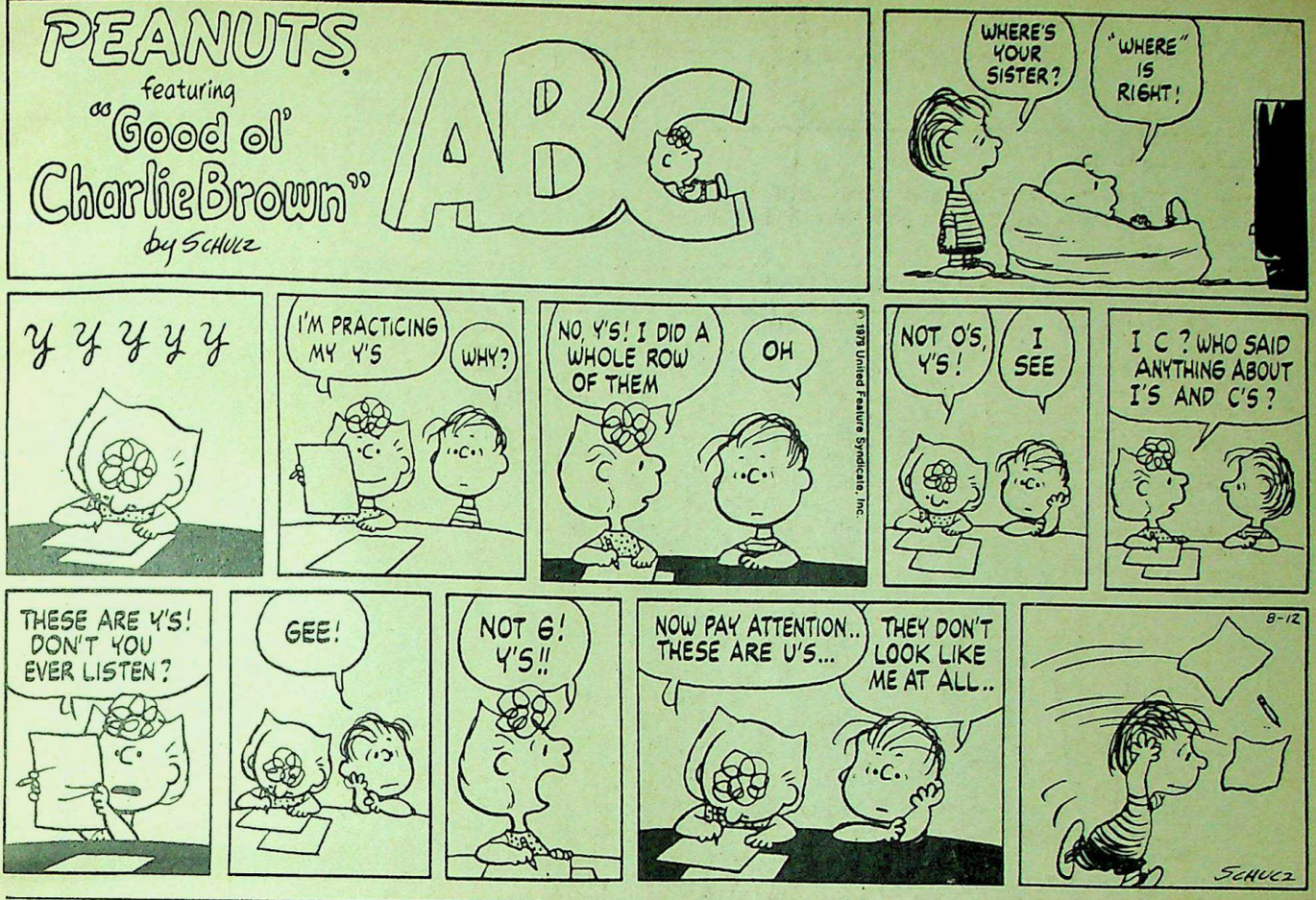

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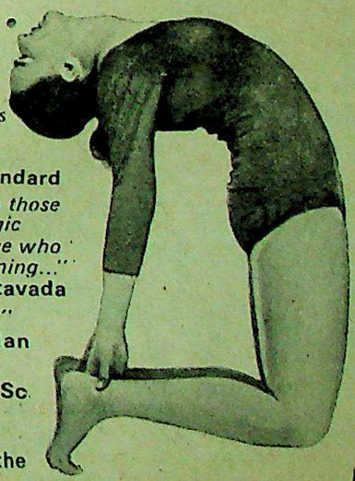

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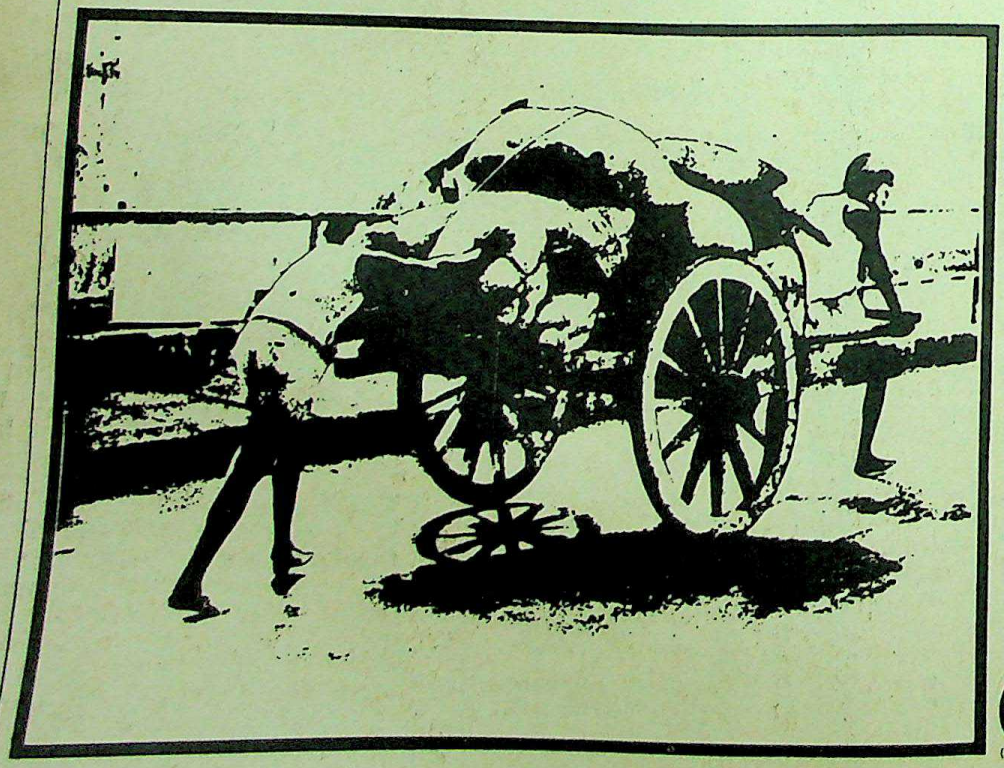

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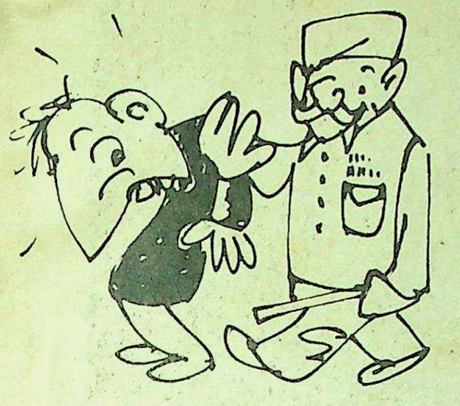


THANJAVUR : Mr C. Raghavan, Special Judicial Second Class Magistrate, handed over an Advocate, Selva Durai Pandian, to the police for alleged disorderly behaviour. Police said that according to the complaint the Advocate began to offer comments and shout in the Magistrate's court. Though the Magistrate warned him he was alleged to have continued to behave in a disorderly manner. The Magistrate asked the police to arrest him. The Advocate was alleged to have been in a drunken condition after examination by a doctor. The police arrested him and filed a case. Some Advocates represented to the Magistrate seeking his release. He told them that poor people were arrested for alleged drunkenness and in the eyes of the law everyone was equal and no lenience could be shown—*The Hindu* (S. Balakrishnan, Trichy)

ROHTAK : The crisis at the Centre seems to have affected the common man. On Saturday, July 21, three farmers from a nearby village, after getting drunk, started discussions on the national political scene in a shopping centre. Two of them were of the view that Mr Charan Singh should become Prime Minister while one thought Mr Jagjivan Ram was a better candidate. The discussion soon turned into a fight and the Charan Singh supporters gave a good beating to the third one. A big crowd gathered and the police were informed. When two policemen arrived, the two farmers attacked the policemen as well. They were severely beaten. Later, more policemen came and arrested the farmers.—*Indian Express* (P. Jain, Srujansarh)

GONDA : The eunuchs of this town have urged the President Mr N. Sanjiva Reddy to invite anyone of the leading members of their community to form Government at the Centre in order to resolve the present impasse. In a letter to the President they said as neutralists they would serve the nation without indulging in rivalry which had led the country to the brink of disaster. Moreover, the letter said since their cabinet would be comprised of eunuchs there would be no problems of corruption by sons and sons-in-laws of the Minister which is currently plaguing the political scene. The letter regretted the political opportunism which was cutting at the root of democracy in the country—*Deccan Chronicle* (B. Madhu, Andhra Pradesh)

KANPUR : A pesticide distributed by the Government to villagers came handy for a young couple to escape the pangs of hunger. 24-year-old Hori Lal, a casual farm labourer of Jalapur village had been ill for the last two months and without any food. On Monday, July 22, they took the fatal dose. The villagers discovered the bodies entwined together in their dilapidated hut today — *Indian Express* (Mrs Sarasa Raman, Bangalore)

NIZAMABAD : A father of three children chopped off the head of the six year daughter ostensibly to propitiate his family deity at Malapati village of Yellareddy Taluk. Chitti was sleeping in a room with her mother and the other children when Narasimha Reddy, her father, quietly picked her up at midnight. The next morning the girl's body along with the bloodstained clothes of the father were found lying nearby—*Deccan Herald* (S. Krishna Murthy, Bangalore)

india abroad

PORT OF SPAIN : Dr Bhawaalal Bhootra, an Indian physician has been sacked from his post at the Trinidad and Tobago General Hospital and given one month's time to leave. Dr Bhootra came to Trinidad just over three years ago from Engand to take up appointment as a pathologist at the hospital but was shortly after assigned the job of a forensic pathologist. Dr Bhootra ran into trouble following a murder case in which he gave evidence resulting in the acquittal of four persons charged with gunshot slaying. In the beginning of July, the Government appointed a commission of enquiry into the conduct and evidence given by Dr Bhootra and an Assistant Superintendent of Police, Mr Malcom Bobb. The commission cleared Mr Bobb but sharply criticised Dr Bhootra and suggested that he be given further training in forensics. The commission also recommended that Dr Bhootra's evidence should not be accepted —*The Hindu*

Illustrations/Ahi Bhusan Malik

without comment

HE (Morarji Desai) has got no future. He will die in another few years. He wanted to die as Prime Minister so that his son could tell everyone that his father died as PM- -Raj Narain

HOW CAN you do without politicians? How can the Government be run without politicians—Morarji Desai's reply to a question that people had lost all faith in the politicians

I HAD lived a life of judicial seclusion wherein the fluctuating fortunes of political Parties could have only an academic interest—H. R. Khanna on his resignation as Union Law Minister

FIFTEEN years ago you could discuss corruption and make that an issue. Today, it is accepted as a way of life—George Fernandes

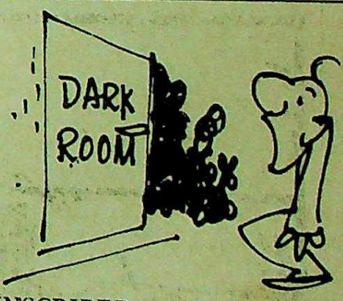
DEVARAJ Urs is an absolute non entity—C. M. Stephen

WE WILL arrest Kanti Desai...He (Morarji Desai) does not have a mind—how can he have a mental state—Raj Narain

I HAVE a dream of a world order where all people live together in peace. Now, I would like to be Prime Minister of that World Government—Charan Singh

WE ARE here to win everything —India's cricket captain Venkatraghavan's first public statement of the English tour

humour in real life



INSCRIBED on the door of a photographer's darkroom: "Please keep darkroom door closed. If it is left open all the dark leaks out"—Sudhakar, Rourkela.

A YOUNG engineer was filling in forms for himself and his wife to claim medical benefits from his company. Against 'Occupation', for his wife he was told to put down 'Housewife'. So when it came to the same item in the form for himself, he put down 'Husband'—Mandira Das Gupta, Calcutta.

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DELHI DIARY

THE REAL THING

IT will hardly be unfair to Mr Samarendra Kundu, the last Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, to rename him "Mr Genuine Kundu". His fondness for the word "genuine" seems to be very genuine. He still argues that the Indian Government must retain the term "genuine nonalignment" instead of simply referring to "nonalignment". He has already written to the new Prime Minister, Charan Singh, expressing his shock over the fact that the Chaudhury dropped the word "genuine" when describing the country's foreign policy as nonaligned. Well, it was Mr Kundu really who started to use "genuine nonalignment", and he still thinks that the change that he effected was a positive shift. Perhaps if Mr Kundu has participated in the recent "genuine realignment" "genuine nonalignment" might still have been an article of faith with the present Government.

ACCEPTABLE TO NONE

DINESH SINGH has been an unknown commodity in the sharply divided Janata Party. The former member of Mrs Gandhi's kitchen cabinet in her heyday has been more than willing to take up the cook's job in the kitchen cabinets of the four Janata stalwarts: Mr Desai, Mr Ram, Mr Singh and Mr Chandrashekhar. But his application has been rejected by all four of them. During the recent Janata turmoil Mr Dinesh Singh was a frequent visitor at the residences of Mr Ram, Mr Desai and Mr Chandrashekhar. The story goes that what he learnt at the house of one he told the other two and what he learnt at the house of the other two he told the former. An endless circle of gossip and interested, motivated talk that kept the three apart from each other was in no small measure kept going by Dinesh Singh, looking for a steady patron who could bless him with a ministership.

STAR STRUCK

APART from the politicians and their hangers-on another tribe that had a field day during the recent

Dharm Vir Jayner

political upheaval at the Centre was that of soothsayers, tantriks, astrologers and what have you in the realm of the mystical.

Mr. Raj Narain and Mr Charan Singh depended solely on two: Mr Chandra Swamy and a certain Kapoor of Lucknow. There was not a move in the intense political power struggle that was not timed by the two in accordance with the wishes of the astrologers. Finally when Mr Singh got the invitation to form the Government the swearing-in time of 1.30 pm was determined by Messrs. Chandra Swamy and Kapoor. No Prime Minister of the country had chosen the afternoon for swearing-in; it was always in the morning or sometime in the evening but Mr Singh insisted on 1.30 pm for it was declared "auspicious" by his soothsayers.

Meanwhile, President Sanjeeva Reddy, whose lunch and siesta routine was upset by Mr Singh's odd timings, in a way foiled the plans of the Prime Minister designate's astrologers. Mr Reddy administered the oath only at about 1.34 pm. Now, of course, the astrologers are finding out the auspicious day on which Mr Singh should summon the Lok Sabha to win the crucial confidence vote which can be, like the Prime Ministership, a touch-and-go affair.

SELF-CENSORSHIP

THE champions of free speech know exactly which side their bread is buttered. Two senior journalist *chamchas* of Babuji have now started visiting the residences of the Chaudhury and his followers. In another case, a journalist had written two articles scathingly critical of the Chaudhury and Raj Narain, but these pieces were not used after the new PM was sworn in. However, the wiser journalists are keeping both sides happy: Who knows who will be in power tomorrow? But the most interesting case was the coverage of Janata President Chandrashekhar's Press conference in Lucknow. With the exception of the *Patriot*, no other paper carried the most revealing answers. Mr Chandrashekhar had said that "the Janata Party has sought Congress(I) support in Bihar to save its Ministry against the onslaught of Janata(S) and other Opposition Parties ... There was nothing wrong in it. The main task facing my Party is to save its Governments in States from the onslaught of Janata(S) and if Indira Congress offers to help in such cases, we will certainly take their help". Mr Chandrashekhar also revealed that recently some Janata leaders had met the Indira Congress leaders, and he said that he saw no reason why his Party should not accept Mrs Gandhi's help. Later, when faced with criticism, Mr Chandrashekhar modified his remarks, but in any case, an indulgent Press had saved him some embarrassment.

But a young journalist, Om Prakash of Samachar Bharati, gave a better account of himself. He took up the cause of a young photographer, who suffered some indignity at the hands of Mr Suresh Ram at Mr Jagjivan Ram's house on July 18, 1979. Having been manhandled in the discharge of his normal duties, one would have expected the photographer to take up the incident at the professional level — News Photographers' Association. But no. He even requested Mr Om Prakash not to put out a news item on the event through his agency if the former had not done so, though one or two newspapers had carried the item on their own. One would have also expected the magazine employing the photographer to take up the cause. This too did not happen. The incident speaks volumes about the nation's fourth estate, of which photographers are very much a part.

THEY'RE AT FAULT, NOT ME

MR MORARJI DESAI feels very strongly that the revolt in the police and in the Central Industrial Security Force was directly due to some of the statements made by the Police Commission. At least that is what he has been telling friends.

D E NIZAMUDDIN

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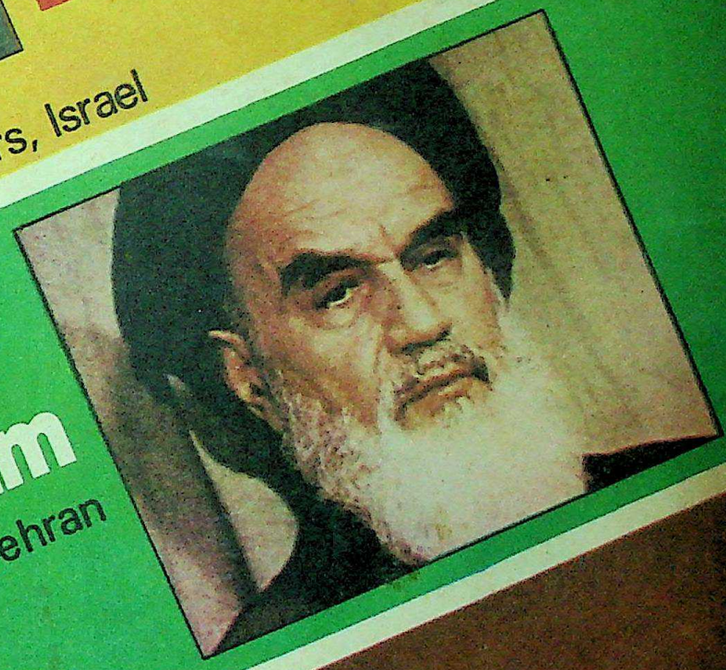
SUNDAY

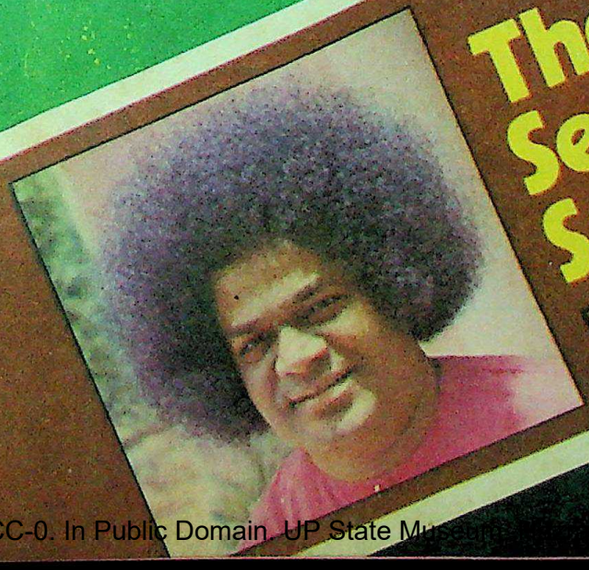
The Amazing Affair of Balasubramaniam

Balasubramaniam with Eisenberg, Chairman of Consolidated Packers, Israel



Iran's Fascist Islam

Report from Tehran



The Secret Sex Life of the Sai Baba

By Pritish Nandy

Starting ELECTION SPECIALS

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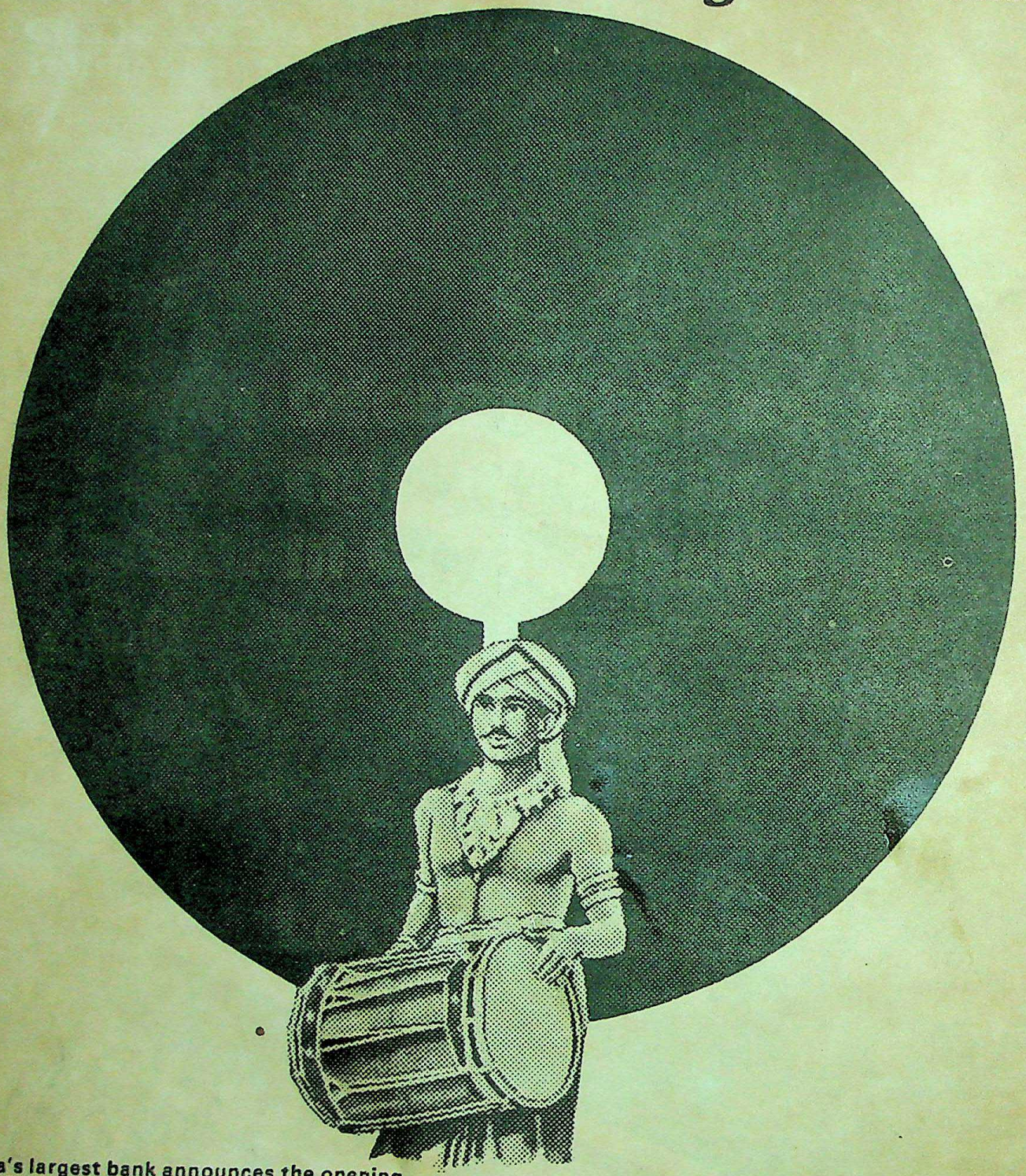

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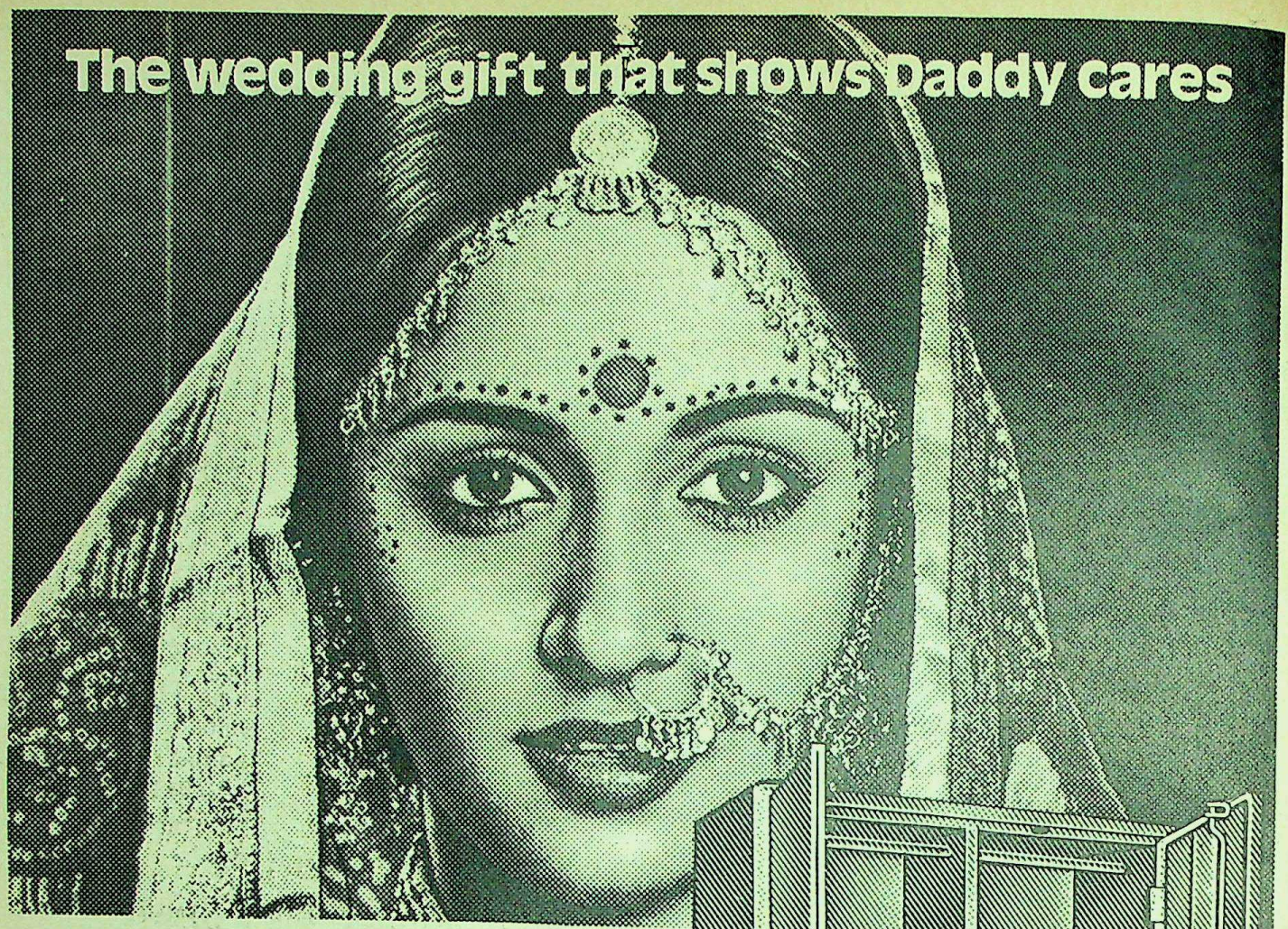

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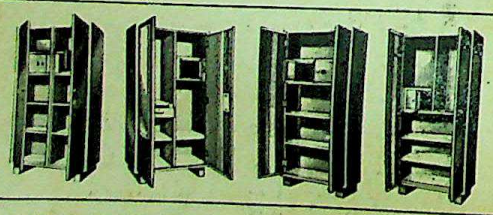

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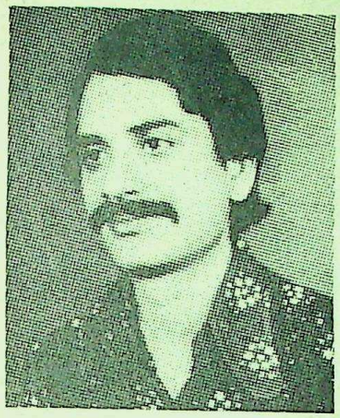

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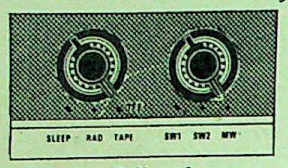

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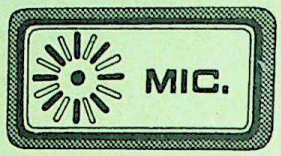

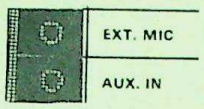

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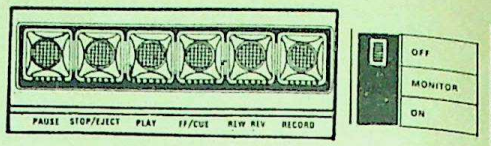

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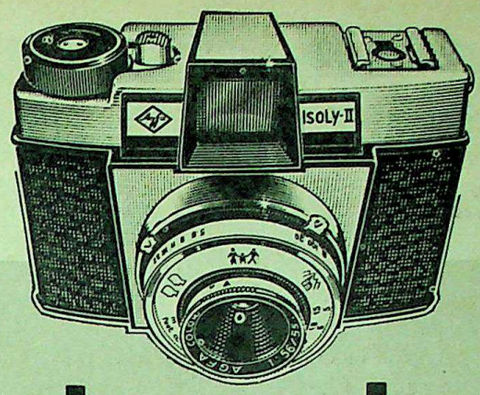

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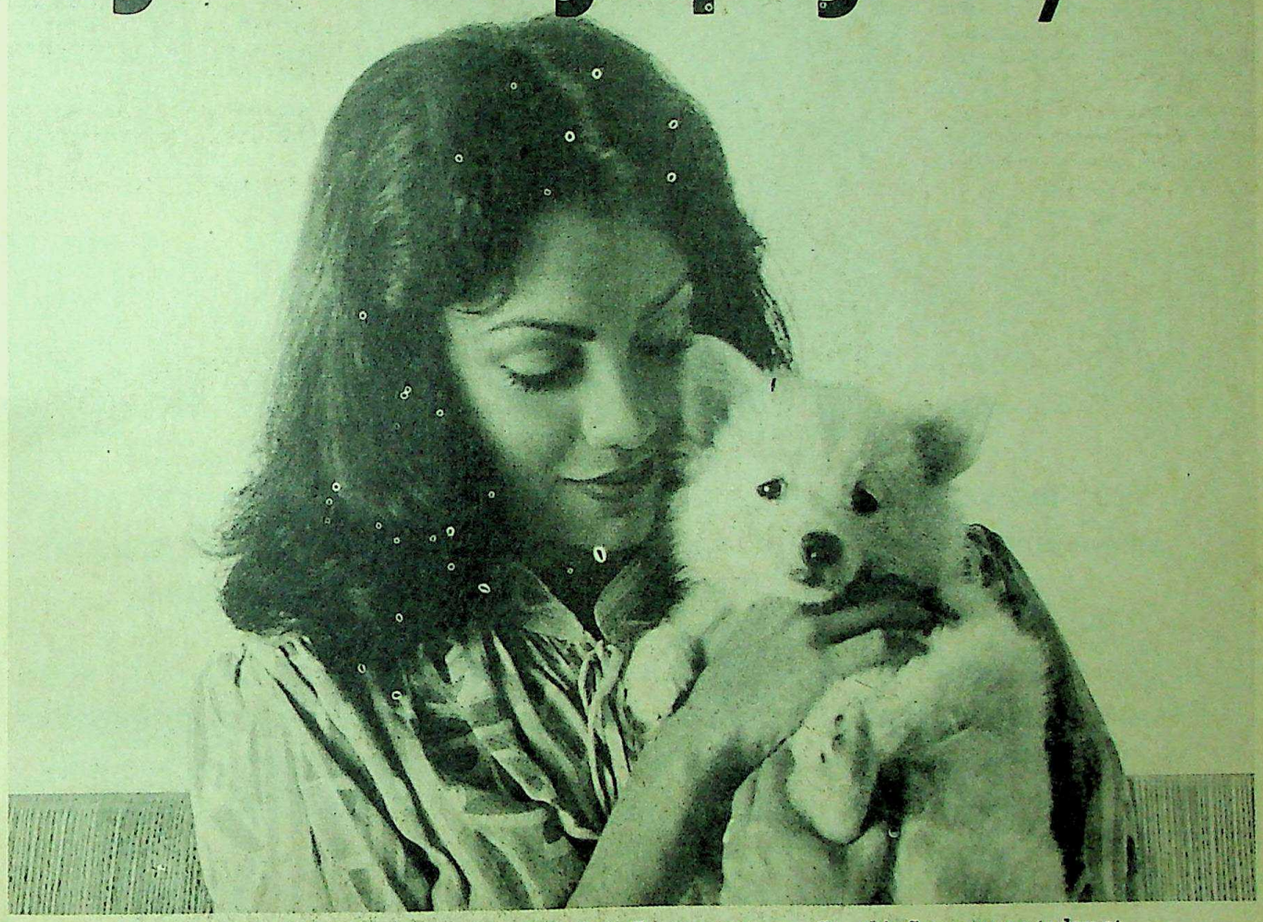

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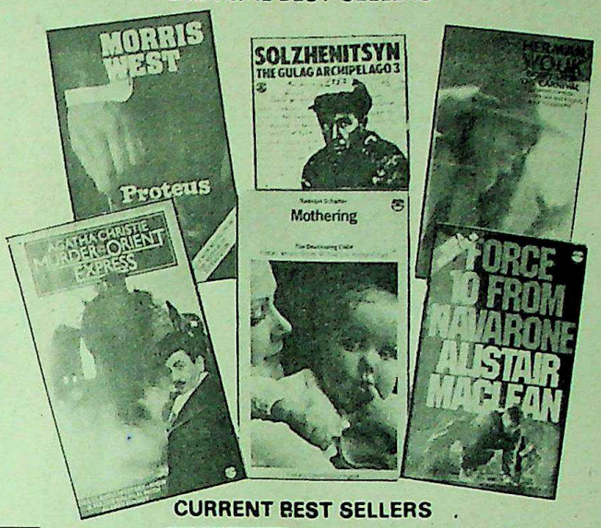

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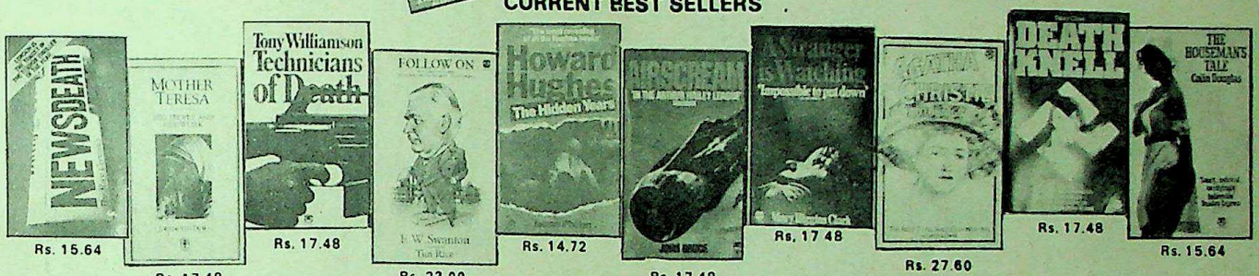

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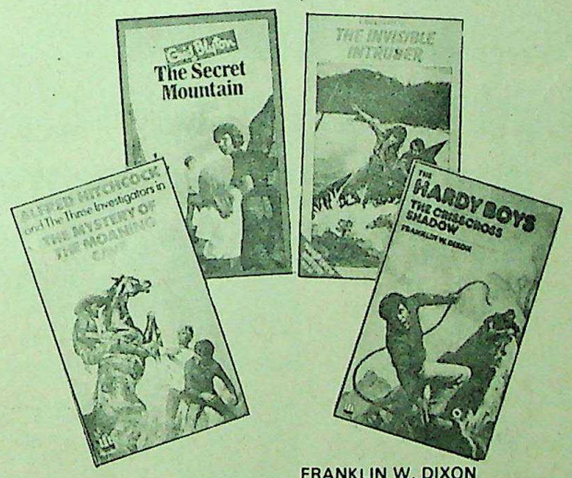

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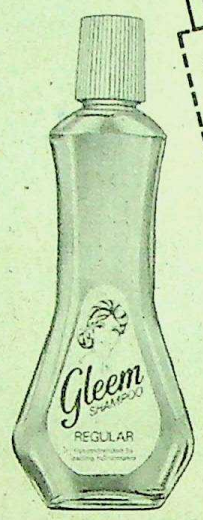

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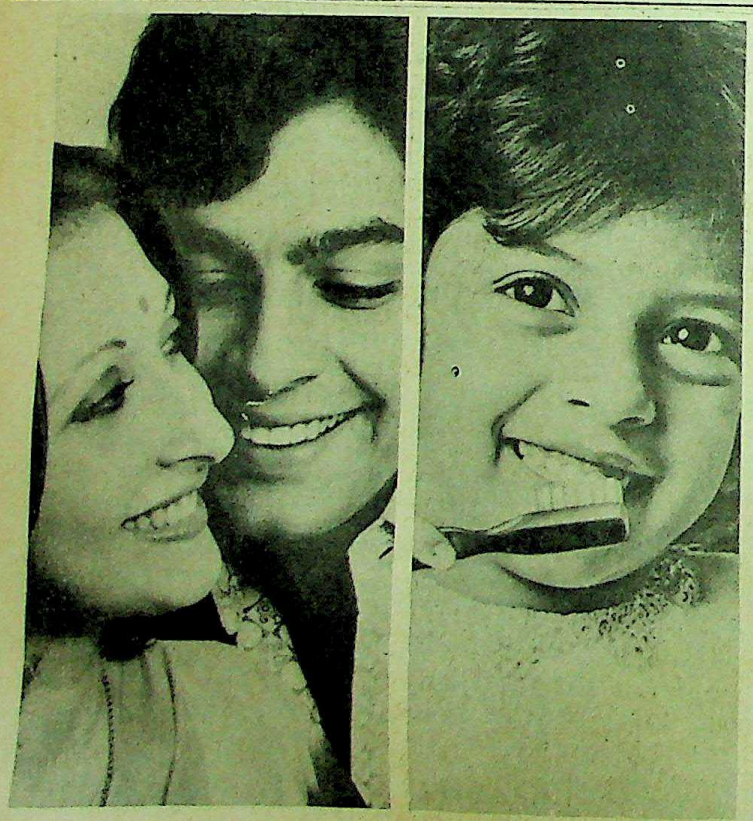

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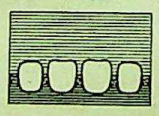
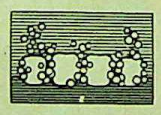
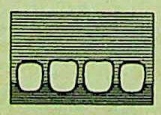
How Colgate's trusted formula works



Odour and decay causing bacteria grow in food particles trapped between your teeth.



Colgate's unique active foam reaches deep to remove dangerous food particles and bacteria.



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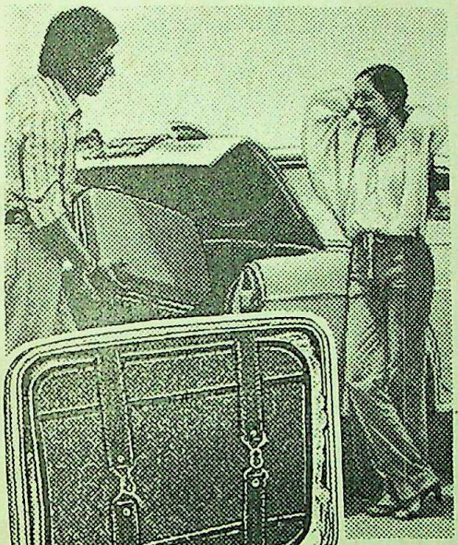

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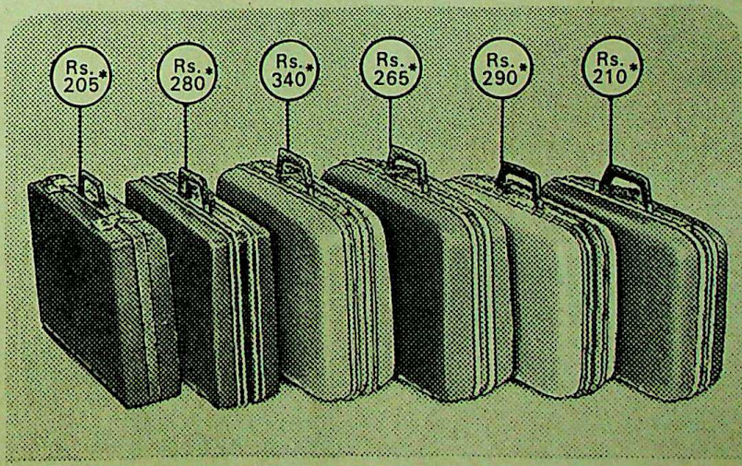

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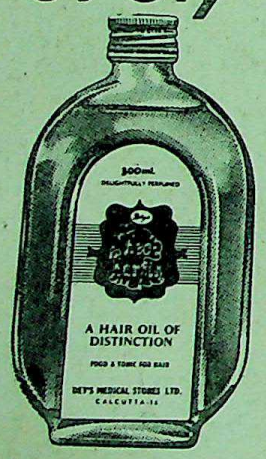

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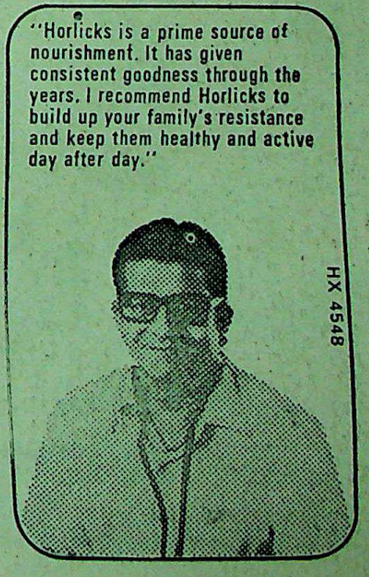

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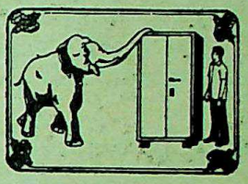

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SUNDAY VOLUME 7
ISSUE 18
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

October 7, 1979

SORRY, AGAIN !

Once again, we have slipped behind our schedules, due to a large number of reasons. As one reader pointed out, SUNDAY first became 'Any Day' and now it is tending to become 'Any Week'. Our apologies, and we can only hope that you treat us with the same kindness you have shown in the past, the kindness and affection that has made your magazine the fastest growing weekly in Indian publishing history.

And we are happy to announce that we are actually on the point of solving the problem of delays. We have started printing an edition from Madras: the copies which are sold in the South will now be printed in Madras and distributed directly from there, instead of making the long and disjointed train journey from Howrah station to the hundreds of points on the map to which SUNDAY goes. We thought that this was the least we could do for our valued readers from the South. Due to the long Puja holidays in Calcutta, we shall skip two issues (dated September 23 and 30) but from this issue we hope to be back on schedule, trying our level best to keep you well-informed about the fascinating things that happen in our country. We particularly promise you extensive and detailed election coverage: we will be sending our reporters to every nook and corner of the country, into the superstar constituencies and ordinary contests; we will probe the minds of leaders and try our best to expose dishonesty and corruption where we find it.

We hope you enjoy reading your magazine during the exciting months that are ahead. We would welcome suggestions from you on what you would like to know in particular. We hope that the SUNDAY family will continue to grow—and at the same pace. —*Editor*

P. N. Balasubramaniam—industrialist, fighter pilot, political operator and onetime friend of Kantilal Desai and Suresh Kumar—is nobody's fall guy. He came under a cloud when the income tax people raided his Delhi house in June. The mystery deepened when he jumped bail and fled to Europe. Then confounding everybody he has come back, reportedly escorted by PLO agents for security. All the details of this amazing case, along with a transcript of his confession to the police.

How are various political Parties preparing themselves for the elections ? Starting this week, a new section "Election Specials" shall cover all events, issues and personalities connected with the electioneering that has already begun all over the country. This week : the Bangalore AICC session; fallout of Oct 2 and what happened when Mrs Gandhi went to Tirupathi.

SUNDAY in the past has called the bluff of the Sai Baba's supernatural powers by having a leading magician equal him in his little off-the-cuff miracles. Now a long review of a book by a thoroughly disillusioned former disciple who got too close to the godman for comfort—spiritual or temporal.

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The ultimate gambler

KEWAL VARMA in his cover story on "The gamblers" (August 26) apparently forgot to mention the fourth gambler who is very much in the running. He is none other than President Sanjeeva Reddy. After all, the post of a Prime Minister is one step ahead of the Presidency. Reddy's actions and modus operandi should not surprise anyone because it is only natural to aspire for the best. It would also be worthwhile to investigate why our President was so soft towards Charan Singh and company.
M. N. Bhide, Pune.

KEWAL VARMA's story reminds us of the evil forces operating in the country today. SUNDAY is certainly an excellent medium for popularising secularism, socialism and democracy. I fully endorse the idea of a grand alliance led by Charan Singh against the anti-democratic and communal political lobby. Pro-Janata (S) leaders could well emerge as our next rulers. We can trust the Indian electorate to vote for the right people in the forthcoming midterm poll. However, Indian voters have sometimes proved elusive to professional commentators and political pundits. But the people's verdict has been firm both in 1971 and 1977. The people of India will watch the results of the next elections with great interest.
Amar Nath Keshri, Danapore

YOU have rightly observed that the alliance of Janata (S) and other smaller Parties is only a shade less despotic than the original Janata. It is to be seen whether they can sweep the coming elections, which to me appears frankly quite imposible. Even if the Janata (S) comes to power it is very unlikely that they would work unitedly for the nation's good. Going through your intelligent pre-poll assessment, I am compelled to think that SUNDAY could well become an adviser to the caretaker Government.
Arun Kumar Khattri, Varanasi.

THE cover story is a grim reminder that the fortunes of our country are in the hands of unscrupulous political elements lusting for power. The men with dices are surely jeopardising democracy, as you have pointed out. These slapstick developments in New Delhi and other regional centres of power reminded me of two movies; *Gambler* in Hindi starring Dev Anand and *The Gambler*, an English film of the Sixties. Like the movies, the Indian political gamblers did provide some entertainment and comic relief but viewed in retrospect, the films and the politicians wasted the precious time of millions of Indians to line their own pockets.
Rehana Huq, Jamshedpur.

APROPOS of M. J. Akbar's interview with Charan Singh, "I was driven to the wall" (August 26), the Chaudhury now blames the Jana Sangh for ousting him from the Janata Party. The acting PM however conveniently forgot that it was the Jana Sangh which prevailed upon Morarji Desai to bring him back into the Cabinet. Had Vajpayee not insisted on Charan Singh's return, the Janata Party would not have been bifurcated. thus (possibly) paving the way for Mrs Gandhi's return.
Maharaj K. Koul, Srinagar.

IN THE interview, Charan Singh refers to Raj Narain as "Raj Narainji" but calls the Loknayak simply Jaya Prakash Narayan. This shows the man's wrong order of priorities. On the whole the politicians of our country have given a very poor account of themselves. The money collected from the poor kisans, harijans and minorities only keeps their airconditioned cars in running condition.
Zahur Ahmed, Jammu.

YOUR assessment of the political situation in the cover story is prejudiced and smacks of ignorance. I hadn't expected such a lopsided review from you. In your blind praise of the Janata (S) you conveniently forget that this is a Party of opportunists and defectors. Why did Mr Charan Singh wait to submit his resignation until Morarji resigned? The role played by Charan Singh in UP politics, his promises and assurances to Muslims before he became Chief Minister and what he did after coming to power all need to be probed.

You have deliberately underplayed the Congress (I)'s popularity. Most of the Congressmen have now joined the Congress (I) and they are not doing it to get election tickets alone. All Indians have now realised for the better that it is only Indira Gandhi who can rule this country.
Javaid Asrar, Karimgunj.

What thief?

WE ARE amused to read an item published in SUNDAY (August 5) titled "Sheikh's servant helps himself" by G. S. Kartha from Trivandrum. We would like to point out that the information you published does not make a news itsm and it obviously induces a lay reader to believe that Ummer stole valuable jewels from the Sheikh's palaces. Your journal's "verdict" is wholly unwarranted and strictly speaking, the report amounts to contempt of court. The magazne can also be prosecuted for defamation. Two courts in Kerala, namely, the Second Class Judicial Magistrate's Court, Trichur and the High Court of Kerala exercise jurisdiction over the alleged crime. The writing, whether you call it a commentary, article or anything else, has violated the standard ethics of journalism, not to mention the scant regard shown to our judiciary and our laws.

But as counsel for Ummer in habeas corpus proceedings before the High Court of Kerala and another writ petition before the same court to quash the prosecution, we had interviewed Ummer inside the jail on two occasions. He revealed a number of facts which we are legally bound not to divulge. The truth will be duly revealed only in the course of a properly constituted judicial enquiry. For reasons of propriety and legal restraint we do not propose to detail the circumstances in which the valuable jewels of the Sheikh found their way to India.

All the same, we are anxious to inform your readers through these columns that in the hot pursuit for recovery of the "treasure jewels" of the Sheikh, the Central Government has overlooked all legal procedures and created an impression in the minds of general public that our laws could be bent to suit expediency of a particular situation as the executive may dictate.

On the basis of the allegation against him in court Ummer is a "fugitive criminal" (offender committing a crime in a foreign state and escaping to his home country) and the Central Government should intervene to give sanction for prosecution before a First Class Judicial Magis-

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trate under Section 188 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The Magistrate can then hold an enquiry under the Extradition Act and send a report to the Central Government recording whether a prima facie case is made out or not against the fugitive criminal and then the Central Government can decide whether the criminal has to be extradited or not. Since there is no extradition treaty existing between India and the UAE as on the date of the alleged crime, extradition is impossible. What is possible is only a trial in the home state invoking extraterritorial jurisdiction under Section 4 of the Indian Penal Code. It is only during the course of such a Magisterial enquiry that the question of releasing such articles can arise.

What baffles one is why the Central Government has bypassed these procedures established by law and permitted the Sheikh to take away the articles. Has the Sheikh, simply because thousands of Indians are employed in his country, held our laws to ransom? For the folly of one man should the Sheikh terrorise thousands of innocent Indians and on that account should the Central Government prostrate before the Sheikh? Our diplomats and executives have reduced the dignity of our nation. Behind the undue haste shown by the executive to return the articles, violating all established procedures, there is something more

O. O. Mathew, Advocate, Cochin

Here's some help

IN HIS reply to my letter (August, 19) J. M. Menezes asks me if I can deny that "because of the Catholic Church's condoning attitude, Mussolini and Hitler could send millions to their deaths." Yes, I can—and I do. Under the leadership of Cardinal Von Faulhaber, many German Catholics resisted Hitler, some of them with their lives. True, Cardinal Pacelli, the future Pius XII, signed a Concordat with Nazi Germany in 1933, but a Concordat is not an act of condonation. On the contrary, it is an attempt by the Church to wring a few concessions from a tyrannical government. Thus the Vatican has never had to make a Concordat with India. Recently published documents reveal the full extent of the Vatican's efforts on behalf of Jews and other victims of Nazism during the war years. The rest is rumour and innuendo. But that should not deter Mr Menezes from making further accusations.

As a Catholic priest I am naturally distressed that even a non-practising Catholic (whatever that is!) should attack the Church of his fathers. As a teacher I am annoyed that he should do it so badly. I would suggest that in future Mr. Menezes stick to verifiable facts and avoid sweeping, unsubstantiated generalisations such as that contained in his allegation that the Church condoned the crimes of Hitler and Mussolini. Also, may I recommend the Inquisition as a source of future material? He will find it a goldmine. It has been somewhat overworked but can still yield a few choice nuggets to a diligent searcher. And he won't have to invent anything.

Mr. Menezes is scandalised that a Catholic religious order should advertise in *Playboy* magazine. I must confess that I am a bit baffled myself. But perhaps they were thinking of Him who said, "I did not come to call the just, but sinners."

As for bad popes, I am afraid that Mr. Menezes will have to abandon Leo III. He had much more to his credit than the crowning of Charlemagne. As alternatives I suggest John XII and Benedict IX, a couple of real bounders from the 10th and 11th centuries. Indeed the whole century from 950 to 1050 will provide dozens of juicy scandals to throw at us. Of course it was a long time ago, but never mind, mud is mud.

Finally, I must add that while reading Mr. Menezes's strictures against the Catholic Church, I was reminded of what Gandhiji said about Katherine Mayo's description of Hinduism: "A drain inspector's report."

J. W. Whelan, S. J. Darjeeling

Hindu rashtra

IN "Is Babuji selling out?" (August 5) Kewal Varma remarks : "The RSS people pointed out that they believed in a Hindu rashtra, not a Hindu state. We are sure that Mr Chandrashekhar and Mr Surendra Mohan understood the difference between a Hindu state and a Hindu rashtra: nobody else does." Let me explain. In the USA, the Constitution does not establish Christianity as an official religion, so the USA is not a Christian state. Yet in one of its pronouncements, the US Supreme Court has said: "We are a Christian nation". The Constitution of Turkey declares it to be a secular state. Yet, Turkey considers itself a Muslim nation and participates in conferences of Muslim countries. There are thus many countries whose constitutions do not align themselves with Islam or Christianity, and yet these countries call themselves Muslim or Christian nations. The reason is obvious.

V. P. Luthera, Delhi.

RSS's unruly friends

MASROOR AHMED's letter (Opinion, August 26) was really surprising. Mr Ahmed's attempt to whitewash the activities of the Jamaat-e-Islami is really condemnable. Has he forgotten that in his own State the so-called 'ideological organisation' hosted a banquet, and gave gifts to the RSS chief shortly before outbreak of the Jamshedpur riots? It may also be pointed out that the Jamaat-e-Islami sent an extremely rude and insulting letter to the editor of a prominent Urdu daily of Bihar while he was engaged in relief work in Jamshedpur. The Jamaat also sought to cover up the killings, even going so far as to say that the massacre of women and children in the minibus which was set ablaze by an RSS mob was only an accident. It is a shame that educated Muslims continue to support a fascist organisation

Syed Reza A. Sami, Patna.

Mannerly Minister

I REFER to the article "Uncivil Ministers and civil servants" (August 12). The whole paragraph on Pawan Dewan, the Minister for Jails, Madhya Pradesh, has been written with malice and political motivation. I would like to clarify the following points. Few students wanted to meet the Jail Minister at about 2 pm, when the Minister was taking rest. So I asked them to come in the evening. They got angry and went away. Later on, they complained to Mr Dewan and he was furious with me because I had not allowed them to meet him. But he did not ask them to beat me up. After all, Mr Dewan is a human being. When he came to know about the high prices he may have asked the people to raise their voice against rising prices. What is wrong in that? The third incident took place in Raipur. Mr Dewan was on a mass-contact tour. The administrator had been ordered to be present during Mr Dewan's tour. But he preferred to be present elsewhere, neglecting the Minister, causing irritation and inconvenience to the people who were meeting the Minister with their grievances. Several complaints were pending against the administrator, and the citizens of Raipur know about them. Thus the Minister was left with no option but to order the suspension of the official on the recommendation of a local MLA, Mr Ramesh Verlayani.

Bhagwandhar, Personal Assistant, Minister for Jails, Madhya Pradesh.

I HAVE met several Ministers and a couple of Prime Ministers. Most of them have been arrogant, proud, rude and stubborn. It is not so with Mr Pawan Dewan, the Jail Minister of Madhya Pradesh. In fact, he is a Minister with a golden heart. I have had several sittings with him. Anyone can meet him any time, unlike other Ministers. Mr Dewan listens patiently to everybody's complaints and takes immediate action. He himself phones up the concerned Minister or official and in addition, gives a letter.

Thomas Titus, Editor, MOD, Bhopal

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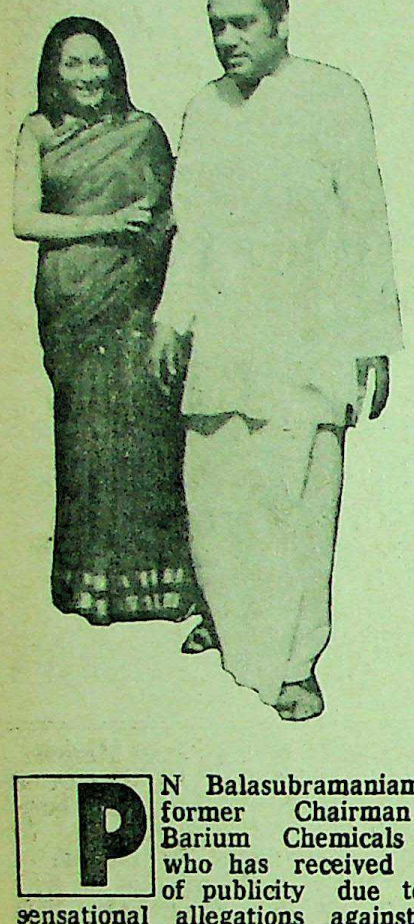


The Amazing Affair of Balasubramaniam

O.P. MALHOTRA and
UDAYAN SHARMA
filed reports upon which
the following series of
stories are based

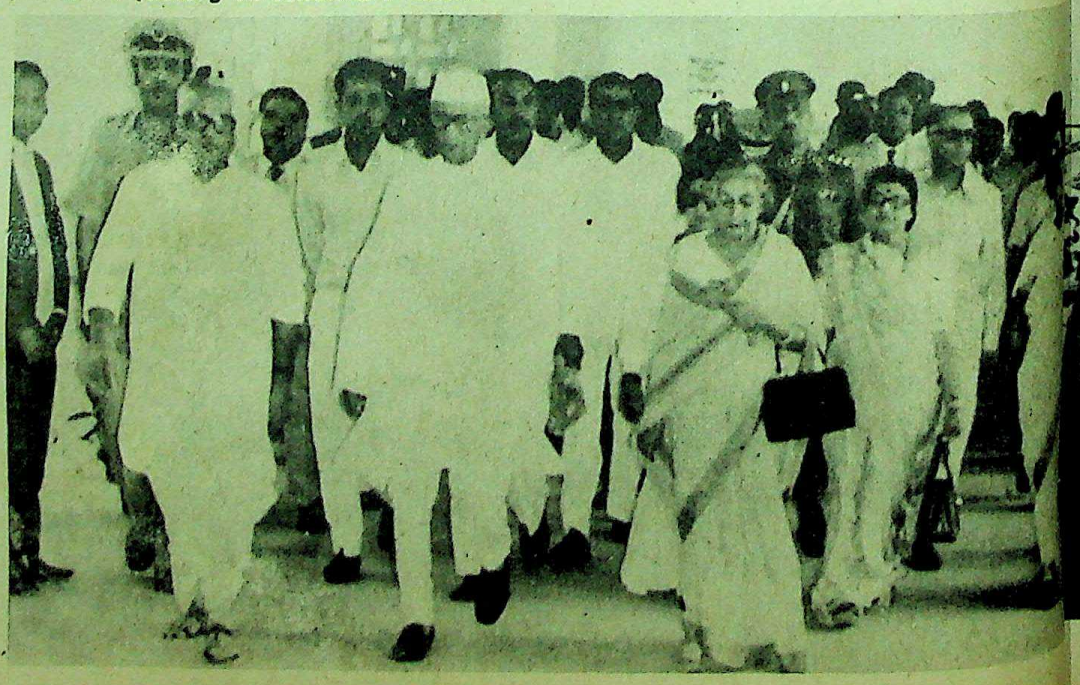
PN Balasubramaniam, the former Chairman of Barium Chemicals Ltd, who has received a lot of publicity due to his sensational allegations against the sons of two VVIPs—former Prime Minister Morarji Desai and former Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram—is a man with wide national and international contacts, both commercial as well as political. While he has himself shed some light on his close connections with Kantilal Desai, not many people know that Balasubramaniam was once very close to Mr. Krishna Menon, a former Defence Minister of India. Besides Mr. Menon, Balasubramaniam was a close friend of such important people as Nityanand Kanungo, the late Mr. Raghuramaiah, two other former Union Cabinet Ministers. There was always at least one Union Cabinet Minister on whom Mr. Balasubramaniam could rely for support.

Many are now trying to shy away from Mr. Balasubramaniam. But he has friends in almost all political Parties, be it CPI, CPI(M) DMK, AIADMK, Congress, Congress(I), Janata or Janata(S). Among the present day politicians, he had had close relations at one time or the other with Dr. Channa Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Vengal Rao, former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, and Mr. Brahmanand Reddy, former Home Minister in Mrs Indira Gandhi's Government and the present Industries Minister. Mr. P. Ramamoorthy of the CPI(M), Mr. Rajaram of the AIADMK, Mr. Rajashekhar Reddy of the CPI are old political acquaintances of Balasubramaniam.

Balasubramaniam also struck up a friendship with Mrs Amteshwar Anand, mother-in-law of Sanjay Gandhi. According to one source, Sanjay Gandhi's mother-in-law used a frustrated friend of Balasubramaniam, V. Kalyanam, to expose the other Prime Minister's son, Kantilal Desai, when the Janata Government started troubling Sanjay Gandhi.

While the motivation behind Kalyanam's anti-Janata Party activities is a matter of speculation, it is a fact that he was tipping off anti-Desai leaders about the activities of Kantilal Desai, particularly where he stood to gain monetarily. Kalyanama who is staying in the USA now has, in a communication to *Blitz* (September 15) claimed credit for predicting that the trust the people of India had placed in the Janata Party under the leadership of Morarji Desai was misplaced. Kalyanam says, "I had predicted this in a circular on Janu-

The ex-Prime Minister, Morarji Desai (second from left), Kanti Desai (third from right), Sharada Mukherjee, Governor of Andhra Pradesh with P. N. Balasubramaniam who can be seen behind and between Morarji Desai and Sharada Mukherjee. This photograph was taken in Balasubramaniam's factory in Andhra Pradesh



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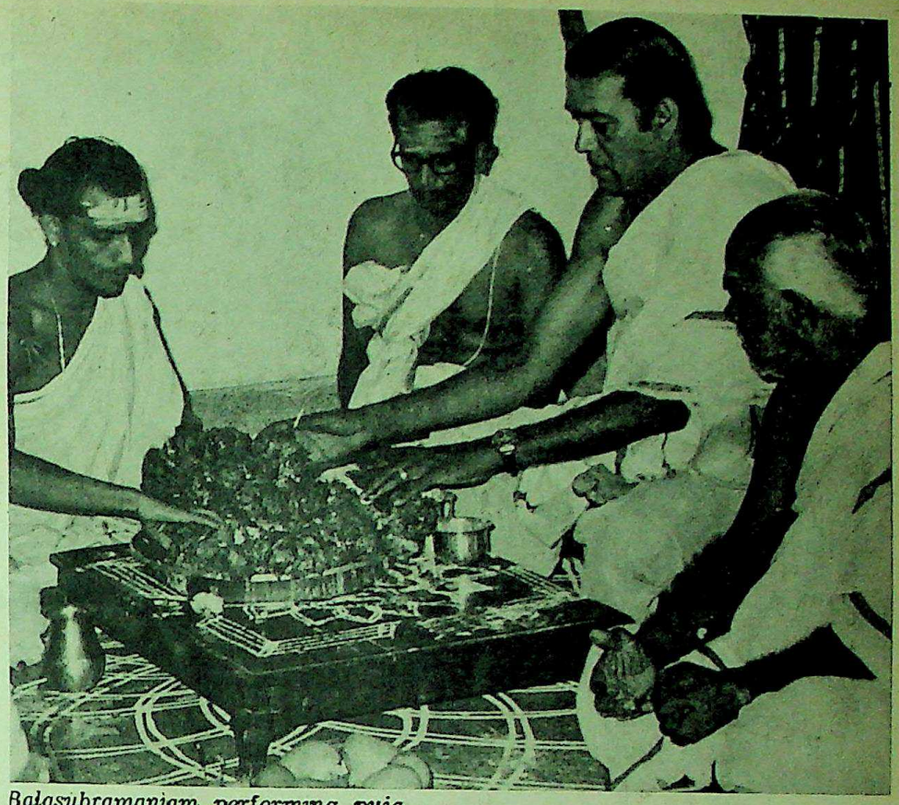
ary 30, 1978 meant for all members of Parliament. Advance copies were sent to Mrs Gandhi, Charan Singh, Jayaprakash Narayan, and a dozen other important personages."

Whether Kalyanam exposed Kantilal Desai's activities to Morarji's opponents on his own, on Mrs Anand's suggestion or Balasubramaniam's direction remains to be determined but the fact is that he was very close to Bala and almost depended on him for his livelihood at one time. What is very strange, however, is that while Bala, who had jumped bail to go to Europe after the raids on his residential and business premises on June 4, 1979, decided to return to India after Chaudhury Charan Singh came to power and reveal the whole truth to an investigating agency regarding all the deals in which Kantilal Desai and Suresh Kumar (Jagjivan Ram's son) and other received foreign money, Kalyanam who is supposed to have tipped off Charan Singh about Kantilal Desai's affairs has decided to stay on in the USA. From there he is firing off communications condemning all politicians for the present ills of India. Had he only done that he would not have aroused suspicion. But after playing the character assasination game he began issuing good-conduct certificates to the CIA and foreign powers. The following sentence from Kalyanam's letter published in *Blitz* is significant. "For all the ills India is undergoing today, the politicians right from Prime Minister down are responsible not the CIA, not the foreign powers..."

A few things are, however, known about Mr. Balasubramaniam's international dealings as well. One, he was among the first dozen or at best two dozen businessmen in India who established strong business relations with socialist countries. Balasubramaniam was the sole agent of a Moscow based firm selling medicines and surgical instruments to foreign countries. He was also exporting goods to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Bala was also dealing with a Czech. firm and was instrumental in establishing a factory producing motorcycles with Czech collaboration. Mr. Balasubramaniam can of course argue that as a businessman he was not dealing with Russians and Czechs alone. He also had successful business collaborations with British, German, French and Japanese firms. (One could add to this list some Arab countries as well.) The picture would, however, be incomplete without mentioning the Israeli connection of Balasubramaniam through his one-time friend Kantilal Desai.



Balasubramaniam performing puja

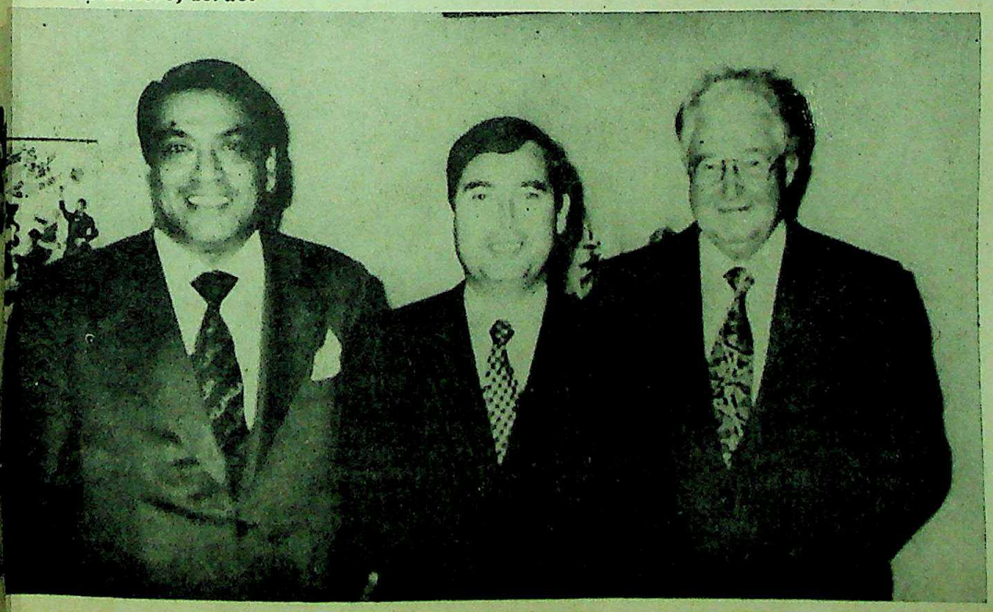
In his letter to the Prime Minister, Bala has alleged that Kantilal Desai had connections with an Israeli business firm, Consolidated Packers. In one of his statements Mr. Balasubramaniam has also alleged that he had received Rs. 30 lakhs from that source in foreign currencies in Geneva. "The amount", according to Mr. Balasubramaniam, "was paid to me by a partner of Kantilal Desai, Mr. Israel, one of the proprietors of Consolidated Packers, one of the richest men in Europe who was the official agent of the Israeli Government (and had) most probably a cover organisation of CIA."

Another aspect of Balasubramaniam's international links is exposed by yet another fact. After jumping bail in June when he went to Europe and after coolly rethinking his connections with Kantibhai he reported to his counsel Mr. Garg that he would come back to India "whenever the court wants me," he found himself being threatened by some Israeli agents. He thereupon decided to return to India. According to one report he came via Nepal escorted by PLO volunteers.

The fact that Mr. Balasubramaniam was very friendly with the late Krishna Menon, known for his anti-Americanism and leftist views, and that he is being defended in law courts by his able counsel R. K. Garg, also a known Communist, are indicative of Mr. Balasubramaniam's leftist associations.

There is no doubt that Balasubramaniam is in possession of such information and evidence which would prove fatal not only for some politicians, but bureaucrats and businessmen as well.

Balasubramaniam (extreme left) with Eisenberg, chairman of Consolidated Packers, Israel



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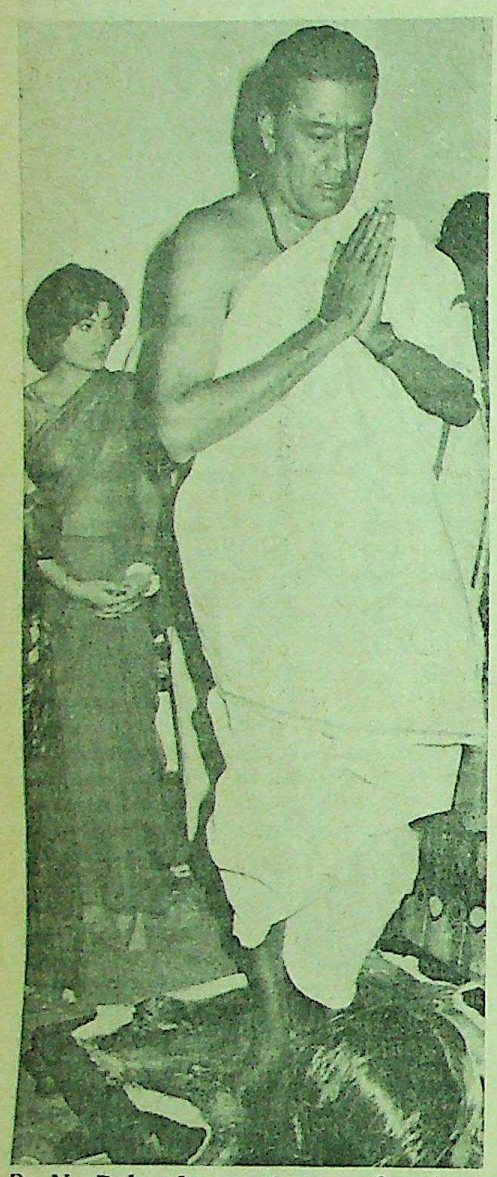
Man behind the myth

A profile of the colourful personality that is P. N. Balasubramaniam



P. N. Balasubramaniam performing puja. The woman behind him (in short hair) is Maneka Gandhi's younger sister

P. N. BALASUBRAMANIAM who prefers to call himself a technical-financial consultant is a very colourful personality. He was a student leader in pre-Independence days, a combat pilot in the Indian Air Force during the Second World War, a technician and administrator, an importer, an exporter, a business executive, a promoter of successful public limited companies, director and owner of several private limited companies, a man who has led a very fast life and travelled all over the world. He is also a man of religion — a yogi and a commissar (politician, if you wish to call him). It is true Bala (as he is known) has come into prominence recently because of his connection with Mr Kantilal Desai, ex-Prime Minister Morarji Desai's son. But Bala is not a sycophant of Kanti Desai. Though he is interested in business as well as in politics, he is not one who hangs around politicians to make most of the opportunities which come to him. Nor is he the kind of politician who depends on business houses for his personal and political needs. Anyone who has met Bala and observed him for some time from close quarters should not treat him lightly when he promises to tell the whole truth before "an appropriate machinery of investigation and enquiry." It is certain Bala will tell the truth of his shady deals at an appropriate time. Some striking features of Bala's colourful life and career are detailed below.

Born on April 15, 1924, in a Brahmin family of Tiruvannamalai, in the North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu, Bala was interested in politics when he was a student. He took part in the activities of the All India Students Federation and was its vice-president for South India, when Ansar Harvani, a former MP, was its All India president. Bala also was president of the Students' Union of Salem, from where he did his graduation. The intrepid young Bala wanted to do something striking and adventurous in his life. The war was on and it had offered opportunities to many a spirited young man to make a good career. Bala was attracted by flying and decided to become a pilot. He joined the Indian Air Force in 1942 and was soon commissioned as a combat pilot. A Flight Lieutenant now, Bala was on administrative duties and special assignments for the Indian Air Force both in India and abroad till March 1947. From a combat pilot and officer in the IAF he became a senior officer in the department of civil aviation, Government of India, in April 1947. This was a stepping stone for Bala but it did not sustain his interest for long. He resigned in April 1950.

After leaving the cosy and comfortable Government job Bala tried to renounce worldly comforts and become a **sanyasi**. But soon on the advice of a guru he took to a more adventurous life — of business combined with politics. He founded a firm called Balan and Rao, which owned mines of mica, iron ore, barytes, kyanite and gold. This firm had its offices throughout India and in leading cities abroad. With money already flowing in from the import and export businesses as well as mining, Bala began to forge political links. Since many of his compatriots of the student movement days were already in national and State politics, Bala did not have much difficulty in establishing contacts with political leaders. Though that did not help him to procure a ticket of any political Party, in the first General Election, Bala contested the Krishnagiri Lok Sabha seat as an Independent but lost. This setback in politics brought him back to business, in which his efforts were amply rewarded. During 1954 and 1957, Bala became a proprietor of Trans-World Trades and the sole agent in India of a Soviet firm, Med-export, Moscow, for dealing in bulk drugs, patent medicines and surgical instruments. Simultaneously he had several other general agencies, including the sole agency in India for Motokov, a Czech firm, in partnership with Ideal Motors, Bombay, for dealing in Jawa motorcycles. Bala, now a mine-owner, an exporter and importer and a sole selling agent of several foreign products decided to launch himself in industry as well. He obtained an industrial licence in the name of Ideal Motors for the manufacture of motorcycles and helped in setting up a plant in Mysore for the manufacture of Jawa motorcycles. From 1957 to 1961 his business activities expanded further and Bala managed industrial licences for two more plants — Barium Chemicals and Electric Portable Tools. Bala who had travelled all over Europe concluded the preliminaries for setting up the above plants including making arrangements for foreign collaboration, finance, etc.

Bala is a godfearing man and whenever he makes money as a result of successful business deals, he becomes more religious and turns to worshipping his gurus. His house in New Delhi to which access is not easy for a journalist, has a room for pujas. Bala lives in that room. One of Bala's gurus, the 155-year-old, Baba Atmanand Saraswati, has ordained that Bala should retire into a life of sexual abstinence — which is why no woman is allowed to enter his room. Seeking the advice and blessings of sages and sanyasis is a fad with Bala. His houses in Madras and other places in Andhra Pradesh too, have sacred places for worship. He is fond of holding religious ceremonies and businessmen as well as politicians flock to his house on all such occasions.

Bala's respect for religion and religious people has, however, not stopped him from leading a colourful life in the past. Bala can boast of beautiful friends, including ladies from many of the world's glamorous capitals — London, Paris, Prague, Bonn and New York. Living alone now (having divorced his wife some 15 years ago who had borne him a son, Ravi and a daughter Ranjeetha) Bala does not hide the fact that he has had many female friends who frequented his house. His photo-albums are full of colour and black-and-white photographs of many parties thrown by Bala in India and abroad. Some also show his children. What makes Bala an interesting character is his methodical manner of doing business, which he plans to the last detail. He has a way of approaching higher-ups and using them

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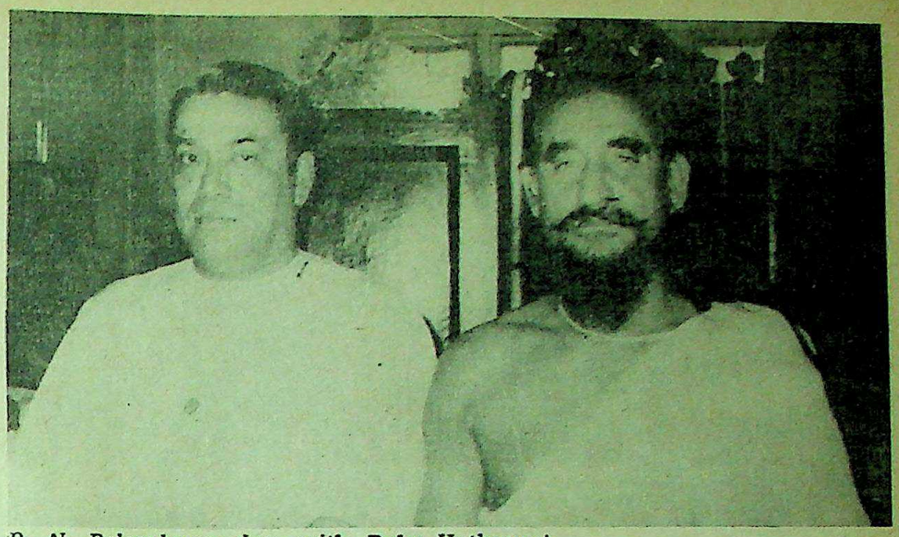
Although he resigned from his Government job in 1950, he realised that no businessman could succeed in this country unless he had some top bureaucrats on his side. To get their support one needs to enter their circle. Bala did this by making friends with some former ICS men back in the Fifties and when he got the opportunity he demonstrated to the business community and bureaucrats that the country's best brains were with him. The Sixties were his heyday when he floated a public limited company, Barium Chemicals Limited, and became its chairman and managing director. He held that position till November 1973. Bala persuaded a number of former ICS officers — like V. P. Menon, the former Home Secretary — to serve on the board of directors of that company. So jealous was T. T. Krishnamachari, another Tamil Brahmin, with the announcement of the names of the board of directors that on the day the company's shares were offered for public issue, TTK wrote an article in a leading daily describing the board as a "Pinjrapole of former ICS officers". Bala was later involved in a legal battle with TTK which he won. His new company, according to Bala's estimates, saved £450,000 a year for the country by way of import substitution. The company, however, brought Bala once again into politics. He joined the Swatantra Party and contested the Warangal Lok Sabha seat, a stronghold of the Communist Party, and lost it only by a narrow margin. Though he lost the election he had by that time developed friendships with politicians and their families, including that of Mr Morarji Desai. Bala has described how he slowly but surely worked his way into Mr Desai's circle through Kantibhai, during his battle against TTK.

After over two decades of ascendancy in 1973, Bala sold Barium Chemicals Ltd. to the Sahu-Jains, an act that started a period of depression in his life. He lost a lot of his money in speculative ventures and for the next two to three years had to undergo hardship.

Bala is now leading a quiet life in his New Delhi house at 186, Golf Links. He has not been keeping good health and has left his defence in the court cases to his experienced and able counsel Mr R. K. Garg, a senior Supreme Court lawyer and former legislator of the UP Vidhan Sabha. Mr Garg normally refuses to appear as a counsel to defend tax dodgers or violators of the Foreign Exchange regulations but has taken up Bala's case because of its immense political importance. Incidentally Mr Garg had appeared for Barium Chemicals Ltd in the legal battle against T. T. Krishnamachari. Waiting to depose before an investigating agency in connection with the defence deals and other cases, Bala is avoiding journalists. He says, he will not speak to the Press because lawyers don't want him to say anything. However, he has not kept quiet. Recently, when Defence Minister, C. Subramaniam, discounted the possibility of payoffs in the Jaguar deals, Bala sent him a letter pointing out, "your defence of your predecessor and of the Jaguar Company can cause considerable harm to the nation as was done by your decision to devalue the rupee in 1966." Bala's letter received publicity in some newspapers and later the Defence Minister changed his stand and said action would be taken if evidence of payoffs in the Jaguar deal was discovered.



P. N. Balasubramaniam with Baba Hathayogi

'I was being used as an innocent pawn'

Transcript of P. N. Balasubramaniam's taped confession

I HAD a meeting with the Prime Minister of India at 2 p.m. on the 6th of June, at his office in South Block at Delhi. The meeting was arranged by his son Shri Kantilal Desai. I was told that the Prime Minister generally does not take any action unless matters are given to him in writing, and I was advised to take whatever I wanted to say in writing; so that action could be taken. So, before I went for the meeting, I took the contempt petition. I took with me the copy of the letter addressed to the Secretary, Home Affairs asking for permission to prosecute the officers against whom I had filed an FIR for theft and other criminal offences. I had also typed a note about the implications of what I was going to say, particularly the raid that took place at my residence at 186, Golf Links, New Delhi-3 on the afternoon of 4th June. In addition, I had also given in writing another statement that was looked after by my lawyers. I was prepared to pay the price for my mistakes, etc. The reason I went across to see him was because of a deep-laid conspiracy to unseat Mr Morarji Desai by his enemies, and the enemies of the country. I was being used as an innocent pawn in this high, powerful intrigue game. A little bit of my background is necessary before I record what took place between me and Mr Desai at this meeting.

I was the chairman and managing director of the Barium Chemicals Ltd. during the days of my battle with Shri T. T. Krishnamachari who was subsequently forced to resign because of the memorandum, submitted to the President. A major portion of the battle had been fought by me, with the help of my friends. Mr Kantilal Desai, the son of Mr Morarji Desai, and myself became close friends. Of course we became friends on the precept that the enemy's enemy is your friend! Later on, the very same selling agency of my company, the Barium Chemicals Ltd., for aspiring to which Shri T. T. Krishnamachari lost his job, was given to Mr Kantilal Desai's company, Bombay Industry and Chemical Company which is a family firm of Shri Morarji Desai, his sons, daughter-in-law and grandsons. Mr Morarji Desai had also invested in the firm, his money, family trust and also the money of his grand-children, for whom he was an additional trustee.

We had a very satisfactory relationship. They were given a commission of six per cent as their agency commission. I got a 'kick-back' of four per cent from them under the table. The arrangement lasted very well; it was a sellers' market. So there was no difficulty in selling the goods, and of course any premium

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that was available went to the benefit of selling agents. Again under the table, it was only because of the premium which was being paid to them under the table, that they were able to pay me back the 'kick-back', also under the table. In the year 1973 symptoms of arteriosclerosis appeared and my health became bad. I was forced to sell the management of the Barium Chemicals Ltd. to the Sahu-Jains. Whatever compensation I got, I lost in speculative ventures and I became a penniless pauper literally starving for my day-to-day sustenance, for a period of two-three years.

Throughout my life, I have been an anti-Congressman. I was a member of the Swatantra Party. I had contested the elections for the Parliament in the year 1952 from the Krishnagiri Parliamentary constituency and later again for the Parliament in the year 1967, from the Warangal Parliamentary constituency. On both occasions I lost by a very narrow margin. Throughout my life I had very good political connections and contacts. Mine was a quasi-political-economic-business exercise. I never had any family worth mentioning or any emotional involvement. So I was able to devote all my time and concentration to business, politics and other social activities.

During the Emergency I was in an unfortunate predicament of doing no business at all. My sympathy was with the Opposition. As a matter of fact, when Morarji Desai went to the Maidan to address the crowd, Mr Kantilal Desai flew that very evening to Geneva. I had earlier in the morning learnt from some of my friends, that all the leaders were going to be arrested that evening. I conveyed that to Mr Kantilal Desai, who consulted his father and left by nine o'clock that evening, by Lufthansa to Geneva. In his place, I took his father to the Ram Lila grounds and was with him. I was woken up at four in the morning by Balram and was told that Morarji Desai (babuji) was arrested and was being taken away. By the time I rushed to the place, he was gone. So I had been present right through the drama of the Emergency and the arrest of the top leaders of the Opposition. I went to the Parliament Street police station and learnt that Chandrashekhar and other leaders were also arrested at that time. Anyway, I came back. I informed Shri Kantilal Desai's wife that 'Babuji' had been arrested and that she should telephone her husband in Geneva. I did not want him to come back. Mr Kantilal Desai had given his address in London as that of Mr Ram Narain Kapoor of the Ritz Group of Hotels as well as the telephone number. I rang up Mr Kapoor from my telephone at night and told him to get in touch with Kanti, at Geneva, and inform him not to come back as things were serious. In other words, I was close with the family for over two decades, through thick and thin, politically, business and otherwise, and I was accepted as a part of the family.

Three months after the arrest of Mr Desai, Mr Kantilal came back after we got assurances from Mrs Gandhi that there would be no harm done to him. He used to visit my house regularly. Sometimes he used to stay with me at 186, Golf Links. In those days when he was treated by all business and social friends like a 'pariah', I used to boldly flaunt him as my friend, take him to the Club, take him out for lunches and dinners. Sometimes I used to take both Kantilal and Tonpe out on Sundays to the clubs—whether it be the Defence Services Club or the Delhi Gymkhana Club, and then tease Kanti; "Look at your friends, where are they?"

In March 1977, when the Janata was swept into power, wiping out the Congress, I played a leading part along with Mr Kanti Desai and other political friends in ensuring that Shri Morarji Desai was elected the Prime Minister by the Party, in preference to Mr Jagjivan Ram. As a matter of fact, for Jagjivan Ram, the Dabriwal brothers were paying two lakhs of rupees per Janata MP voting for Mr Jagjivan Ram. I came to know of it. At that time I met Mr Kalyanam, who was, about two months earlier, till the arrest of Mr Jayaprakash Narayan, his secretary. Kalyanam was earlier also secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Mountbatten and Jawaharlal Nehru. He went for a couple of years as secretary to Dr Subbarayon when he was in Indonesia. Morarji had brought him in, to be his private secretary at Delhi. But Mr Kantilal Desai did not like South Indians to be in his household. So he had joined me, and he was staying in my house, even though he was working unofficially as private secretary to Mr Morarji Desai. This was before Morarji Desai was elected Prime Minister.

Kalyanam and I got together the MPs, along with the money they had received from the Dabriwal brothers. We woke up Mr Jayaprakash Narayan and Mr Kripalani in the middle of the night, and proved to the satisfaction of both, that money was taking part in subverting the great revolution by making Mr Jagjivan Ram, the nominee of the big capitalists as the Prime Minister of India. It was because of this that both Mr Jayaprakash Narayan and Mr Kripalani came to the conclusion at about two in the morning, that the system of voting that was resorted to for electing the leader of the Janata Party should be scrapped, and that they should go by a system of consensus. Had there been voting Mr Jagjivan Ram would have won hands down. Because it was a consensus, a little fraud was perpetrated on the Janata Parliamentarians, by the 'Father of the Revolution', Mr Jayaprakash Narayan, and by the Sindhi, Acharya Kripalani. They decided that the consensus was in favour of Mr Morarji Desai. And that is how he became the Prime Minister of India.

We were the first, at four in the morning, when Morarji was ready, to garland him, to do the 'arathi' and everything. The first thing that Morarjibhai did before going to the Rajghat was to see Charan Singh in the hospital and obtain a letter from him stating that he will not join the Cabinet or the Janata Party if Jagjivan Ram were to be elected Prime Minister. This was another factor which made both Jayaprakash Narayan and Acharya Kripalani nominate Mr Morarji as the Prime Minister of India, and hide themselves under the word 'consensus'. As a matter of fact, I was with Morarjibhai throughout once it was announced that Morarji was the Prime Minister of India.

At about 11 o'clock in the morning, the President's officers came in, to 5, Dupleix Road to arrange for the swearing-in ceremony, the protocol details, etc. It was I who suggested to Morarji that he should not wait for the protocol to take place at four o'clock, as there was almost a civil war taking place within the Janata ranks by the supporters of Mr Jagjivan Ram, who were swearing and shouting. So, he was rushed before anybody else to the Rashtrapati Bhavan and sworn in as the Prime Minister of India much before all the other formalities could be made, so that the fact that he was the Prime Minister of India could be established beyond any doubt and there could be no disputes later on about it. All these and many other small and big actions of mine in that crisis, carried out perfectly with utmost discretion, made me close to the members of the Morarji family. It strengthened our relationship and our bond, and ideologically I was with them.

At one stage, I even had political ambitions of becoming a Minister of State if not a Deputy Minister at least. It was Mr Kantilal Desai who dissuaded me from becoming a Minister and persuaded me to concentrate on business and make some money. I said, I am a single man, what do I want with the money. This is a golden opportunity to do some service to the country, to be near his father and see that the Janata revolution succeeds. He said: "Listen to me. I need some trusted friends around me. For various reasons the Party is bankrupt, it needs money. It has to be maintained and consolidated. Where will I get a more dependable and reliable friend, with the finesse and experience that you possess. So don't be hasty. I will tell you when you should enter politics actively and when you should get into the Government, etc." And that is why I restarted my business which I had closed three years earlier.

The revolution of the people making the Janata Government in power which created terror in the hearts of those bureaucrats who were toadies and sychophants of the Gandhi regime and Ministers under Mrs Gandhi. They were the very first to try and curry favour. One such person who used to harass me and prosecute me the maximum was Mr S. B. Jain, director of Enforcement. Even though

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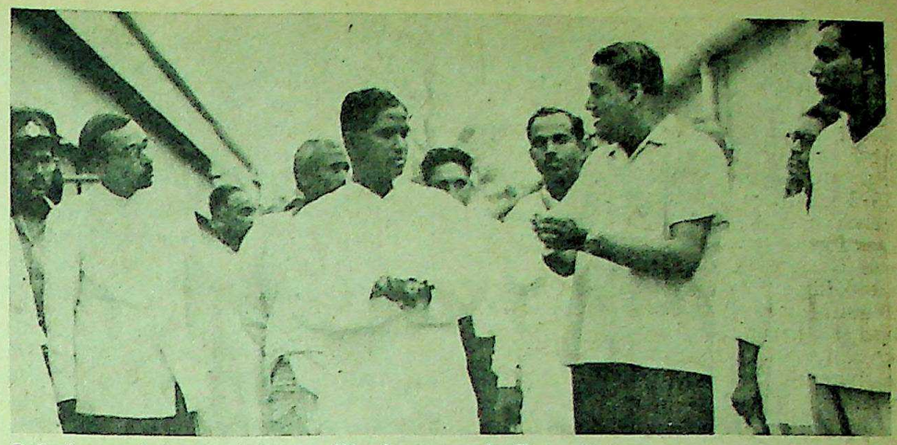
I didn't know him he walked into my house one day and said that: "Mr Subramaniam, I know that you are close to the seat of power. Why don't you help me and save me." I said: "I have nothing against you, if you are innocent I will certainly help you." Naturally, I took him to the Prime Minister's residence, 5 Dupleix Road, and introduced him to Mr Kantilal Desai who exploited the situation, to settle the cases of his friends like Arvind Killachand, Dr Rossy and the bottling people—Chauhan—amongst hundreds of other close friends who were under cloud with the enforcement directorate. In May that year Morarji was going to London to attend the Commonwealth Conference. Mr Kantilal Desai said that I should also be in London at that time.

All the time Mr Kantilal Desai and Mr C. B. Gupta used to worry about the funds for the Party. Then they said: 'Bala why don't you apply your mind and see how best we can make some money'. In one of my casual discussions, when Mr S. B. Jain used to regularly visit my house, I said: "Come on, give us the names and particulars of the top smugglers, black-marketeers, bootleggers, and foreign exchange racketeers, so that we can try and get some money out of them for the Party." He said, "If you want the money for the Party it is very simple." I said: "How is it simple?" He said: "After the lifting of the Emergency at least 80 per cent of the people against whom warrants had been issued cannot stand the scrutiny of the law. We have no grounds at all for their detention. We could get away with it because of the Emergency. Now we have no other choice but to cancel the warrants issued against them—almost 95 per cent of them are outside India, without realising that the warrants issued against them are likely to be cancelled before law. All you have to do is to find out the names of those persons against whom the warrants have been withdrawn. The warrants' withdrawal will not be published as their issue was also not published and it is a Government secret. I will get you the list from Mr Ramachandran, joint secretary, Enforcement, and if you are clever you can bargain with them and collect some money without violating the rules and laws of the country."

I obtained the list of the persons and there were 140 names against whom warrants had been issued and cancelled. I also found out from Mr S. B. Jain, where these people were living abroad and also their addresses from their relations in India. Having got this, I concentrated on the people living in England. The first few I concentrated on were the Gupta brothers of Jaipur — all the four brothers were wanted under warrants, under COFEPOSA. They had escaped to Nepal and from Nepal they went to England. They had made a fortune in England during the Emergency and did not know that the warrants against them had been



Bala (second from right) with former Andhra CM

cancelled. I tried my first experiment with them. I called them over to my friend's flat where I was staying, told them that it was a golden opportunity to get the warrants against them under COFEPOSA cancelled, if they could meet my friend, Mr Kantilal Desai, and through him the Prime Minister of India. They said they would like to meet them. So I took all the four brothers to Mr Kaul's house—our High Commissioner in London—where Morarji Desai and Kantilal Desai were staying. There I introduced them to Mr Morarji Desai and later on we made a deal in my room at the hotel with the four brothers. The brothers agreed to pay rupees one crore if they were allowed to enter India and if the warrants against them would be cancelled. Of course, warrants against them had already been cancelled and there was no warrant pending against them. So we told them to first pay rupees 25 lakhs to Kantilal Desai and one of them should take the risk of coming with us to India. If nothing happens to you, you know that the warrants have been cancelled. All you have to do is to call on the Enforcement directorate and say that: 'Sir I have come to surrender. Is there anything you are going to do', and the Enforcement director would record a statement saying that there was nothing against them and they can go back after their explanations to certain queries. We tried this with the youngest Gupta first and then the second brother came after which the third brother came and then the fourth. Of course, all of them paid the money first, which was deposited in the account of Mr Kantilal Desai in Geneva.

Then the Gupta brothers saw to it that the other people who were afraid of the COFEPOSA warrant and who were living in Hong Kong, Indochina, Switzerland, Europe and America were informed about the bonanza that had fallen into their lap, by having Shri Kantilal Desai and Shri Subramaniam to arrange for the cancellation of their warrants. Then one by one, everybody started queuing up to come home. In this manner, 180 COFEPOSA persons who were living abroad, against whom in the normal course the warrants were cancelled by the Government of India paid Mr Desai and the Janata Party over rupees 18 crores to my knowledge. But after some time Mr Desai started dealing with them directly so that I do not know the actual amount that has been collected by him. And I did not come to know about this transaction after the first three months when I had established it as a fool-proof exercise of collecting funds for Mr Desai and the Janata Party. I got a lumpsum payment of thirty lakhs in India and when I remonstrated that it was no use to me in India and that I wanted it abroad, an equal amount was paid to me in Geneva. The amount was paid to me by a partner of Mr Kantilal Desai, Mr Israel, one of the proprietors of Consolidated Packers—one of the richest men in Europe, and the official agent of the Israeli Government for all their factories' production, but most probably a cover organisation of the CIA.

Mr Kantilal Desai, after the Prime Minister was sworn in, made sure that his personal friends alone became the men of importance around the Prime Minister. Mr Shankar was with the Cochin Shipping, of his friend R. N. Kapoor before the Janata victory, he was also working for B. M. Birla; Mr Hasmukh Shah is again Kantilal's man as also Mr Tonpe. All the PAs appointed were those PAs who were Kantilal's men when Mr Morarji Desai was Deputy Prime Minister. No new person was allowed to enter the Secretariat, either in the South Block or the residence until Mr Kantilal approved them. In other words, the Prime Minister was a prisoner of his personal staff, who were all Kantilal Desai's men. And the main principle of collecting money for the Party and other extraneous purposes was to use this whole organisation en masse S & T for privacy, security/secrecy and other factors. This firm, Consolidated Packers had three partners, the top-most brilliant man is Mr Israel Enoff, the second is Mr Joseph Herman, then Mr Natham Rothe, who was the Head of the Security of Israel and the Head of Intelligence of Israel and the Head of the Security of the Israeli Airlines—Elal—the mastermind and the perfect executioner of the Entebbe exercise carried out by the Israelis. ■

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The Secret Sex Life of the Sai Baba

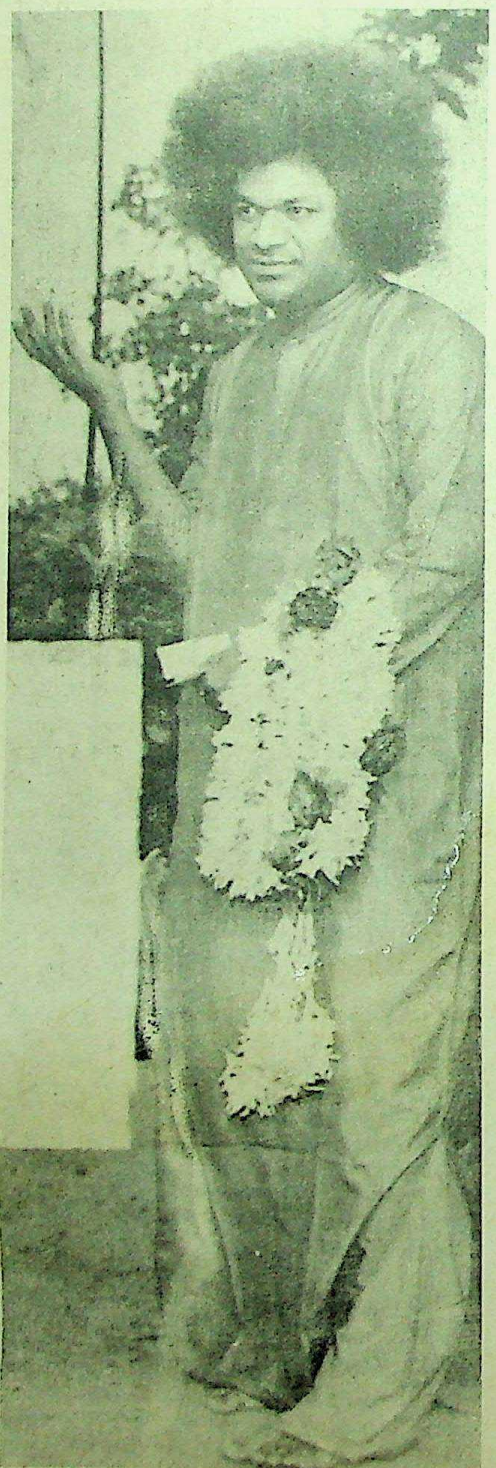
By PRITISH NANDY

WHAT can you say about a wandering American who sells his home and hearth and comes to India in search of new spiritual pastures—and stumbles headlong into a diabolic racket of miracle men and millionaires, which he exposes, writes a book, collects his hardback royalties, and then catches the first flight homewards, with tears in his eyes, mumbling the nineteenth chapter of the Book of Revelations under his breath?

Would you say that he is honestly and truly a champion of truth, who has done society yeoman service by exposing the miracle man of Puttaparthi, at reportedly considerable personal risk? Would you say that this peripatetic American came to the land of yogis and snake charmers, gurus and godmen to discover the hidden meaning of life—and was hopelessly disappointed by the magic potion offered him in the inner sanctums of Whitefield, where the diminutive avatar resplendent in his bright red robe, Bronco Nagurski hair-do, and cherry pink lips reigned supreme with his baby talk and legerdemain? Or would you say that he is the stereotype of the typical mixed-up young man from the west who was up to his neck in a harsh, materialistic world of cut-throat competition before Calvinistic guilt and existential despair took over in predictable symbiosis—and he chose to opt out, right into the hirsute arms of a crazy, Dravidian hermaphrodite who took him on a magic ride through a short-lived phantasy world of myth, miracle and multicoloured lust?

I, for one, would rather believe that Tal Brooke, the mendicant tyro, is, like the Sai Baba himself, an expert bluff master who has made his millions by charlatanry of the same genre, writing a book that is as crass, crude and in abysmally bad taste as the books that the Baba sponsors himself to line his pockets and establish his credentials as India's most charismatic approximation to God incarnate. Quite honestly, there is very little to choose between the two. Baba is obviously a fraud even as he sits on his millions at Puttaparthi. Tal Brooke is a scheming little neophyte who chances upon the skeletons in the Baba's cupboard and tries to make a quick buck. And as the macabre spiritual chess game is played out between the lascivious luminary and his apostate apostle, he who shells out Rs 75 to buy this book is given a ringside glimpse into the palace intrigues at Whitefield.

Sai Baba, Lord of the Air is indeed a difficult book to swallow and then keep quiet about once you have waded through its 408 execrable pages. It is the kind of book that leaves you seething in rage for days. A book that makes you indignant because a stupid, sub-literate American rams down your esophagus his vague, disjointed precepts of Vedantic philosophy—and then does a quick double-take to end up as a Jesus-freak. A freak Mr Brooke is, and quite unabashedly. He first freaks out on a distant land, India—without a clue as to what it is all about. He then sells his soul to the Mephistopheles of Indian spiritual thought, follows it up by selling off all his worldly possessions in distant Virginia, and then takes a cheap flight into India—to let his mendicant soul journey through the lush, spiritual landscape of our beautiful Hindu world, little realising that there are thugs, pickpockets and godmen lurking in every corner and waiting for the poor little firingee, lonely and waylost.



Though Mr Brooke is delightfully had, in more senses than one, by the sensual Sai Baba at whose feet he throws himself in humble obeisance, he quickly recovers—and like the true-blue American that he is, finds love, solace and spiritual sympathy at Reverend Ivan Carroll's, "where they all sang Christmas carols and made themselves at home in a genuine American household with chairs, tables, dressers, a couch or two, bric-a-brac, a piano, and regular toilets", thank heavens! So, finally, Mr Brooke finds his spiritual fulfilment in lustily croaking "*Rock of ages cleft for me*" and catches another cheap flight back to Uncle Sam —while the lonely, lustful godman waits like a praying mantis for his next firingee victim.

This story, typical as it is, replete with LSD trips, spiritual guilt, *angst* and *naufrage*, quotes from Yung, Blake, Emerson and Martin Buber, Carlos Castaneda and the perennial Timothy Leary, ambassador at large of the campus drug syndrome, references to Zen Buddhism, the Tibetan Book of the Dead, mystic cosmologies, Eleusinian initiates, Paul Tillich, and Nad Yoga, Deuteronomy and Donald Duck, and of course Tantra, the western man's ultimate mind-blower, would have been just another tale of a village bumpkin bumbling his way through the dangerous spiritual woods of India, where everyone of us is waylaid some day or the other. But Tal Brooke wrote a book thereafter—and a successful book if Vikas is to be believed—trying to expose not just the Sai Baba but to proselytise—and that is what makes all the difference between naivete and fortune-hunting. Among many other things in his tome, Mr Brooke tries to explain his view of Hinduism to us, to rationalise his sexual experiments with the Baba, justifying why precisely he allowed Baba's nimble fingers to zip down his fly in a moment of devotional bliss, and why he subjected himself to the somewhat unusual experience of making it out with a real life hermaphrodite, the Baba himself!

Tantric power, my foot! The poor firingee could not even successfully respond to Baba's sexual overtures

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—and turned out to be almost as frigid as a block of ice in a tarantula's grip! At crowded darshans, Baba would apparently seek out his favourite acolyte, sneak up behind him along a crowded aisle of Indians, and then stand directly behind him with his legs and robe (and whatever else hermaphrodites have) pressed against Tal Brooke's bottom, "pretending it was just an accident as he scanned the mass of devotees outside"—this familiar gesture, the connotations of which would be transparent to even the most dumb-witted schoolboy, only "served to fuel a sense of spiritual purpose" in Mr Brooke. With similar Redneck logic, he saw an entire spiritual universe in Baba's mysterious eyes, when the godman grabbed him in a velvet-draped private suite during an intimate audience, hugged him extra-tight, panted heavily and "kept twisting his pelvis, especially in the region of the loins, nudging and twisting, twisting and nudging", cooing into his ears things like "What's wrong? You do not like to hug?" Tal Brooke, in his utter simplicity, perceived this as an initiatory rite, a kind of spiritual love test by the Baba to check if he had learnt to subjugate his libido.

Mind you, such incredible naivete comes from the same man who struts like a stuck-up peacock in his preface to the book, spreading out all his feathers of wisdom. He makes you feel like an insignificant worm as he flaunts his knowledge of Hinduism right before your eyes and tells you that he knows the inwards of the faith better than Jim Corbett knew Kumaon or Rana Pratap, Kumbalgarh. Brooke, you realise, is one of those rare specimens who had comprehended the kernel of Advaita even before he could exclaim "Gee, this is a wonderful place to be in!" His background was oh so different from the usual westerner. From his very early childhood he had experienced the stirrings of Kundalini Shakti and in his twenties he had undergone the Nirvikalpa Samadhi in its full magnitude!

"In India", claims Brooke himself, "I differed greatly from that so common westerner who just wants to take a peek and then get out. I was defensive on India's behalf before my own countrymen (though honestly critical as well) and should I ever detect arrogance on the face of my countrymen in regard to India, I would assail them bitterly". After all, he had travelled the globe "as the son of a highly gifted man of letters, who was also a diplomat". "I had tasted numerous cultures and climes and found areas in my soul that were able to absorb them all. My family was agnostic, so I had to seek out from scratch the spiritual answers for existence" A worthy reason to come out to India, true. One is further impressed when one is told that Mr Brooke even brought along with him a letter from one Sri Bhavyananda, who is supposed to be the head of the Ramakrishna Math in London, who wrote that in his opinion our hero was eminently ready for sanyas because he knew such intimate details about the lives of Ramakrishna's disciples—Turiyananda, Premananda, Brahmananda, Vivekananda and the rest! Apparently, sastris, pundits and swamis all over India found Mr Brooke a "young master", who had "true understanding" of everything Hindu.

With credentials such as these, and armed with all his spiritual wisdom, almost bursting at the seams with superhuman Vedantic power, our hero hopped into a jet plane and flew across the Atlantic to the land of Shankaracharya and the Buddha, to satisfy his passion to know the truth, to see for himself the fountainhead of knowledge. Significantly, he landed in Delhi on October 13, 1969—and somehow his luck ran out on him the minute he walked into the YMCA hostel on the outskirts of Connaught Place. He found the rates exorbitant and began despising the poor little clerk who sat behind the reception counter. And because our poor Mr Brooke, like any human being, was tired of jet lag and full of sleep he let the adrenaline in his blood get the better of his trained Vedantic mind. All that he could do, poor man, was to go to a cheaper hotel and watch a wise lizard make faces at him while he tried to desperately get his much needed forty winks.

While he cooled his heels in this sleazy joint, our hero continued his musings—and I quote here an example of his petulance and putrid prose. "The (hotel) room was so humid that it was like floating on a cork in a thermos bottle of hot bouillon. A life saver would have melted on a table in about three minutes. Not only that, but what must have been a good bed now sank right down to the floor like a hammock and if you tried to lie on your side it was like a sustained yogic posture on a bed of nails because the springs came through the mattress like burs, and made such a loud noise that they sounded like the day shift at an iron foundry. I watched the large blades of the ceiling fan spin around, and soon noticed the road maps of cracks networked across the whole ceiling and down the walls. I also noticed fleeting movements at the periphery of my vision. When I moved my eyes to catch the fluttering, it stopped. Suddenly from nowhere, I saw the source of the movement. Fluttering again, then freezing, I saw a large lizard. It ran along the ceiling with as much ease as most creatures move along the ground. I pictured it losing its grip at night right above my head, falling on my face, or worse, in my open mouth, where it might flutter for a while and leave an amputated tail to dance on my epiglottis." Such philosophising by our hero reveals three cardinal truths: one that he is prone to hallucinations in humid conditions; two, he writes staggeringly bad prose; three, he sleeps with his mouth open —and possibly even snores!

How sad, how terribly heartbreaking that our demi-god who had gone through the entire process of realising Kundalini Shakti while he was still hopping in and out of a Mothercare play-pen should send up such loud and long wails of disgust the very day he arrives in the country of his dreams!

From Delhi Brooke went to Rishikesh and was left unimpressed by the magnificence of the Himalayan range even as the other foreign tourists were going into full-fledged hysterics at the very sight of the snow-capped peaks. Even the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who had swept the Beatles and Mia Farrow off their feet, could not make our friend budge even a single milimetre. And disappointed with the north of India, Brooke did precisely what every mixed-up American does—he headed straight for Goa, where he discovered that the local hippies were dirt beneath his delicate, well-bred feet. So he left Calangute beach and headed towards bustling Bombay, "in a last bid to search for a spiritual dynamo" that would recharge his soul batteries.

In the cosmopolitan hubbub of Bombay Tal Brooke realised that he was destined to see out Sai Baba, the miracle man of Puttaparthi, full time avatar and God incarnate, and so he promptly dropped his plans of shaking hands with Krishnamurthy (who must have been busier shaking the fragile hands of Parveen Babi), and abandoning hopes of landing himself at the Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry or even the good old, even if well worn, Ramkrishna Math at Calcutta, he decided to head for the south of India and the portals of Sai Baba's residence. But oh for this wise decision you would have never forgiven the young pundit, who schooled in a schizophrenic world of oriental metaphysics and occidental LSD trips was about to begin the most dangerous part of his journey through the spiritual landscape of this country. And despite the picaresque rumble-tumble, in and out of colourful locales, the sex interest, the villainy and the comic relief, the intrigues and the heartbreaks, Tal Brooke emerges as the vain effete peacock, a counterfeit tugboat trying to sail through the ocean of samsara True, the Baba gets off no better—but that is another story.

IN Bombay, at the plushest of hotels, the Taj a wily Indian ran away with our hero's money—mind you, Tal Brooke knew all the while that he was going to get rooked but was only trying to see if his yogic intuition was working all right — and so when the eternal vagabond arrived at Whitefield he fell at the feet of Shri Sathya Sai Baba with not a farthing in his pocket. But the Baba was all-knowing and all-loving. He gave him a beatific smile and chimed. "Hellooo Rowdeeee! What's wrong, some sickness in the stomach?" Our hero was much impressed by such an incredible demonstration of psychic power and smiled shyly before reply

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ing with some embarrassment, "Yeah, Baba!" since he had been having stomach trouble, despite his diet of Nirvikalpa Samadhis, switching from one brand of bacillary dysentery to another, with probably the occasional amoeba to boot.

While he was trying desperately to recover from the traumatic experience of the all-knowing Baba predicting the precise state of his rather sensitive stomach, the psychic onslaught continued. The Baba waved a hand in the air and produced, as he is often prone to, vibhuti from apparently nowhere—and then radiated his much discussed magnetic force, thus reducing our hero to pliable plasticene in his divine hands. Once Mr Brooke was convinced that only Sai Baba, with his mellifluous voice and his raspy Eartha Kitt intonation, could redeem his soul and show him the straight and narrow path of righteousness, he went all out to be the Baba's beau. It mattered little how the other rival Yankees at the ashram, led by Gill, felt about Tal Brooke's intrusion into the inner sanctums of Sai Baba's ashram and heart. Our hero had already made up his mind to accept the Baba as his guru—after the stomach prediction and the vibhuti! And the crafty Sai, once he had convinced his newest and presumably the handsomest American bhakta with voodoo and magic, mellifluous voice and legarde-main that he was the greatest, "the only real, spiritual dynamo of India", set out stealthily to satisfy his long suppressed carnal instincts, if we are to believe Tal Brooke. For even as the magic man told his disciples by day that life was like an ocean of waves and to cross it we have to seek a lifeboat in God, by night he would grab the occasional shishya in the dark corridors of his ashram and pull down his fly.

For days now the tenderest part of Mr Brooke had been fortressed "like the wall of China around the Temple of Solomon" and almost no one was allowed into the cockles of his battered heart. But the Baba was different. He broke down all barriers with his simple playfulness and his Krishna-like charm. Brooke was swept off his feet by Baba's love and innocence.

"With quick bristling movements Baba's gown swept by me as he mounted the stage on tiny, child-sized feet. He sat on the floor on the platform, supporting himself with an extended arm, with feet curled up beneath him...Baba was an immortal flower. Stronger than anything on the continent, he didn't need to come-on-strong, yet could probably melt the centre of the moon with one single titanic thought...Baba spoke. 'God is love. God is everything', cutting to the core of everything in utter simplicity. 'God is like the sun and man is like a flower. The sun shines on the flower and the flower grows towards the sun, becoming beautiful and giving off sweet nectar. The nectar is prema—love—God's love. Love is one, love is God."

Having thus caught our hero in his magic web of allegory and saccharine talk, the Baba decided to accost him alone, during the course of a private audience. And despite all the previous love tests and bottom-pinching games that the guru and shishya had played with each other, Tal Brooke now realised for the first time what the Baba's actual intentions were. But let me leave it to Mr Brooke to describe the incident in his own words here.

"We embraced automatically. His wiry cloud of hair surrounding my face, I wondered what kind of deep soul-cleansing was going on. Then huge force surged from Baba to me, almost visibly sparking...

Baba reached out to embrace me again, pulling me in strongly. The musing voice pondered Baba's comment, 'There is no male or female'. The embrace of Radha-Krishna, the avatar of the Dwarka Yuga and his lover, was the highest resolution of two polarities. And since the avatar was trans-sexual, his embrace of Arjuna was roughly equivalent, with everything but the basics taken away...

Yet I couldn't quite tell who was in the male mode more, and who was in the female or passive. I always identified myself as distinctly and invariably male. And there was a feminine dimension to Baba, whom many devotees also worshipped as the divine mother. Yet he had an exceedingly strong male aspect as well. And avatars invariably came as males, after all.

Baba's nudging pelvis stopped. Then suddenly a hand unzipped my fly, with the facile smoothness of turning a doorknob, and went into my pants, as though it knew the location of each stitch of cloth and each zipper stub. Then, like an adder returning home at dusk, the hand burrowed into the mouth of my underpants...

Baba's hips continued to shift again as he squeezed a rather limp organ, that had about as much interest in rising up as it desired a bath in liquid helium. It was frozen out, and not even a legion of nude Arab women could thaw it out at this point in less than several days of total solitude.

Baba's rapid breathing did not exactly register lethargy or unexcitement. The voice of reason proposed, 'He's cooling your heat centre, taking on your sins, and purifying your lower chakra'. However Redneck logic also sat on the judiciary board, mumbling subsurface before I could censor the embarrassing thoughts from leaking out.

'Man, I sure hope all that squeezing is purification because if it ain't, Jack—and that's a strange way to be purifying it—you've picked the wrong guy. It'd be a lot easier if you'd just radiate the thing from outside my pants. Somehow it just looks bad the way you're doing it."

Anyone in his senses, instead of debating over the situation and its divine concomitants, would have kicked the Baba hard on the shin and run for his life. But our hero is made of much stronger stuff.

Having thus passed the initiation with flying colours, so what if the rooster refused to rise to the occasion, Mr Brooke began to slowly gather a lot of power in Sai Baba's ashram and before long became the Baba's very favourite disciple, much to the chagrin of the veteran shishyas. Brooke was one of those very few who were allowed a private audience any time he wanted it. He travelled with the Baba from Whitefield to all the major cities of India, watched millions come to worship the avatar, continued to be awe-struck by his miracles, and sat at his lotus feet, almost rubbing his cheek on the Baba's thigh, singing bhajans lustily.

He was able to also get an intimate glimpse into the down-to-earth business sense that this over-sexed godman displayed. He discovered that the Baba's material power was almost as great as his spiritual strength. He ran the entire operations at his ashram like a well-organised industry. The massive celebrations during Guruparav, Shivratri and other such festivals took poor Tal Brooke's breath away. He was overwhelmed by Baba's love and shackled to his charity. He withstood the petty wrangles and ashram intrigues plotted by Phil and Prem and Mark and Wendel and resisted the wrath of Raja Reddy, an old hand at the game, who was jealous of his intimacy with the Sai Baba. But once the dust of magic had settled, the hysteria faded and the sperms ran dry, Tal Brooke, poor devil, was not too sure of his devotion. The same man who had almost kissed Sai Baba's feet and hailed him lord and master was slowly turning into a selfish namakharam. "For a while I received extraordinary attention from Baba, but something inside me was slowly crumbling. Occasionally there were distractions...A deeper feeling of uneasiness swept through my soul. I knew that I was caught in an inner war of faith. And what I longed for more than ever was some kind of spiritual drama to turn my mind's eye from the eye of the hurricane."

It needed a series of secret planchette sessions, occult forays, nightmares and gory dreams, and the help of a fellow white-skinned yogi Surya Das, and the ever-faithful missionaries, the delightfully old-fashioned Carrolls of Bangalore, to finally drive into his muddled head that the Baba was only a passing phase and Jesus was the true guardian of his soul. Overnight the Vedanta of his childhood was forgotten. The Nirvikalpa Samadhi faded. And in the twinkling of an eye Hindu metaphysics gave way to his ever-ready Christian zeal. And the Baba, sadly, like a fading Shylock, became synonymous with Satan, as Jesus took over.

"Early that morning I resolved in my heart that I would break through to Baba...Mounting within me was that inner fire that stops at no barrier, this time to settle something once

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and for all, though I was not sure how yet... Within my heart I felt nausea, revulsion, a deep indignation of the spirit. As though the spirit that inhabited the bright-robed body was so putrid, so foul, so horrifying that if the crowd of disciples could for a second see it denuded, they would wail in horror, they would scream and run in terror... Suddenly he really reminded me of a diminutive aunt Jemima, a wrangling bitch who had lost authority over me and now had to bluff. 'Rowdie, complete spoil. Go, get out here...' I had seen this sort of thing crush people. Perhaps he thought that it would crush me but I began to smile inwardly."

The final discovery that Baba was a closet queen—a hermaphrodite—snapped the last links. Patrick, an Anglo-Indian shishya with long hair and good looks, came for the Baba's darshan with a group of Americans on a dharma kick. One look at the sensual Patrick, and the Baba apparently called him in for a private interview session. After his usual materialising tricks and telling Patrick his inner secrets, the Baba apparently attacked his fly and took out whatever poor Patrick had to offer, little realising that he was no American on a brief visit but the boy who lived down the lane.

Patrick, only seventeen, horny and perhaps a little naive, was curious to see the whole thing through—and it was this liberal curiousity of his that finally exposed this most hidden secret of Whitefield. "Baba lifted his robe and inserted the thing. That's right. Maybe he's got a woman's organ and a man's organ down there. Yeah, a hermaphrodite. But he honestly inserted it. Patrick said it felt just like a woman's... Just at the moment before Patrick was through, Baba pulled him out and collected his semen in a little white handkerchief... Baba then told him that the whole world lay in the palm of his hand, and that everything Patrick wanted, he could have. That Baba was planning a special position for him, like Raja Reddy. That Patrick could move in and live there, and be with Baba to spread his mission throughout the world. Suddenly Patrick didn't give a hoot. He may have even laughed and told Baba that he was from just down the road, and that he wasn't even an American."

Patrick was apparently not alone. Other than our hero and Patrick there were many others similarly "purified" by the Baba, according to this book. There was Wendel and Phil; there was Alpine Schwartz, a tall dude with a blue ski cap, who described how Baba pulled his drawers down during a private interview, on the pretext of cleansing it of its "heat". There was Gordon, the jewel cutter from Los Angeles, who ran out of a private audience, screaming and panic-stricken when the Baba pulled down his fly and "started to go to town".

After all this, it is not surprising that our hero kept seeing 666 each time he looked at the Baba and started thinking of Satans and anti-Christs each time he watched the miracle man at work. He starts by quoting the twentyfourth chapter of Matthew and thereafter the barrage of biblical quotations continues unabated. With the hardcore devotion (and naivete) with which this simple-minded American had thrown himself at the Baba's feet, he does a quick double-take and finds himself at the feet of his new messiah, the lord Jesus Christ. What surprises one is the incredible speed with which he shifts the gears of his faith, from Sai bhajans to Rock of Ages in less than 48 hours of knowing that he was no longer the Baba's favourite stud!

Alas, again our hero has been had! From the Taj Mahal hotel to Whitehead ashram, Mr Brooke is waylaid again and again—at the very fountainhead of Vedantic wisdom. It is not surprising therefore that he catches the first flight homewards—but not before he sold a manuscript to Vikas, which they later published, profited from, and paid sizable royalties for. Sai Baba will perhaps survive this book, and carry on his trade. About Tal Brooke I am not so sure.

Sai Baba, Lord of the Air by Tal Brooke; Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, New Delhi; Rs 75

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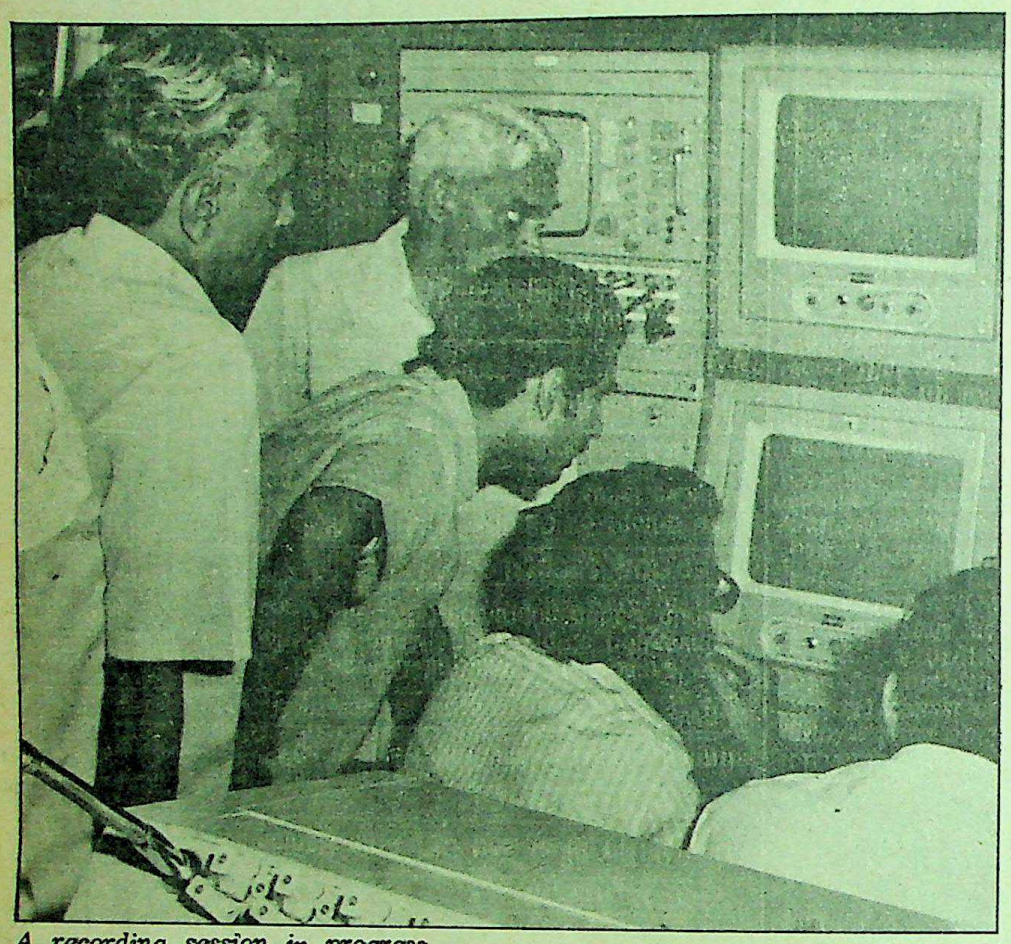
The censorship game

Calcutta TV is its new playground



A recording session in progress

ON August 31, Doordarshan Kendra, Calcutta, telecast their regular half-hour programme in Bengali, *Drishtikon* (Viewpoint), at 8.10 p.m. The participants : Mr Sankar Ghosh (Jt Editor, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*) and Mr Barun Sengupta (Political Correspondent, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*). Moderator: Mr Sudhangsu Dasgupta (law professor, Calcutta University). Subject: Mid-term polls. Unfortunately this half hour programme never completed its half hour. Towards the end of the discussion, halfway through Mr Ghosh's submissions, snip went the TV scissors — and with it, a major chunk of Mr Barun Sengupta's views, which followed, as well. The question had related to the possible results in the new Lok Sabha and to the possibility of inflation being made an issue in the forthcoming elections. Mr Ghosh had felt that the minorities' vote may go in favour of Mrs Gandhi and against Charan Singh. Mr Sengupta's views had been that Mrs Gandhi was likely to win, with Charan Singh coming in second only — and that, despite Left support. He felt that Mrs Gandhi would gain absolute majority unless Jagjivan Ram snatched away Harijan votes from her. He added that CPI(M) would do well in West Bengal. All this was deleted. Instead, confused viewers were fed with stills from lovely nature for some six minutes, before TV went on to a music programme. No regrets "owing to unavoidable circumstances", no apologies, no explanations, no nothing.

TV maintained that "what had been recorded, had been shown" and they had "nothing more to say" The next day, however, Miss Mira Mozoomdar, Director, Doordarshan Kendra, Calcutta, stated that she had an objection to Barunbabu's views and felt that if they were telecast they could create unhappy political reactions, from certain political Parties. Adding that she had obtained the permission of Barunbabu prior to the cuts she said that the cuts were of four minutes only. Unfortunately, they did not have the time to cut at the time of recording or before telecasting, so it had to be done while it was being telecast—but after considerable deliberation.

The participants, it has been verified, had met before the recording, at the TV centre, and had discussed the outline of the entire programme in the presence of Mr Debangsu Bandopadhyay, the producer of the programme. It has also been verified from the three participants that they were only asked to avoid abusive references to any person or institution, a normal TV norm : otherwise, there were no objections. *The qustions to be asked and their serial order were also set out previously* — and the programme had proceeded exactly according to the pre-set format, and was recorded between 4.30 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. the same day as the telecast.

Mr Sengupta states in his letter in *Ananda Bazar Patrika* (September 6) that, as far as he knows, Miss Mozoomdar was a witness to the entire recording (where retakes are ordered whenever necessary), and she also spoke to the participants for a couple of minutes after the recording — but no apprehensions were raised. At 7.45 p.m., however, Mr Sengupta received a call at his office from Mr Bandopadhyay, telling him that his references regarding Mrs Gandhi "violated TV norms", and could we cut that portion, please ? Mr Sengupta replied that he would prefer that the whole thing be telecast, but could not pressurize them if there were any problems with TV norms. He therefore permitted the offending *line* to be deleted. "Did they take my permission to cut my entire answer to the last question (which, according to him, constituted nearly 50 per cent of his entire discussion in the programme)?" asks Mr Sengupta.

Both Mr Sengupta and Mr Ghosh hold that all depended on the question asked—and this had been *previviously* set out. "The answers were only to be expected, and they couldn't have been anything but that," said Mr Ghosh. "It was obviously an afterthought," said Mr Dasgupta, the questioner, and clarified that questions were asked according to previous discussion. "Sankarbabu and I spoke on similar lines on TV in 1977, too", says Mr Sengupta, "and we had predicted that CPI(M) would win the Vidhan Sabha elections. No one objected to *that*, and that programme was not cut in the middle !" Mr Sengupta feels that if certain people are invited and asked for their opinions, they have to be honest about it — and censoring these opinions in the manner done can create problems. Mr Ghosh commented : "No special directives were given to us, and in my earlier programmes, too, I have been told that there are no restrictions except the usual TV norms." Asked whether his permis-

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sion had been sought, he denied it, saying that they rang him up only to apologize the next day though "Barun had rung me and told me about it" (both of them had not actually seen the programme). "Seeking permission before cutting it, is perhaps a question of propriety, not legality," he added. "They have the right to cut, they have their limitations; but as a journalist, I feel they should not invite people like us in such cases."

The moderator, Mr Dasgupta, too, was informed only three days later (Sept. 3) and admits that he has never seen a programme coming "to such an abrupt end" before. "Their stress to play down controversy is not unusual, and generally, the programme is not interfered with. I remember having spoken about unemployment on TV in '75, and the points were not in support of the Government, but nothing was cut".

Mr Dasgupta who has been abroad many times on sponsored study tours, on town planning and legal institutions, feels that it is his "personal belief based on what I have seen in European countries that the best way for the media to remain above politics is to give fullest expression to all political views—there, the Government is lambasted. I suppose things are not the same here. It will take our media a long time to adopt European standards." Prasar Bharati Bill and all that. What is clear is that Miss Mozoomdar censored the views of the participants—on whose instructions is not clear. Certainly, no directive could have come from Delhi, as the programme was recorded in the afternoon of the day it was broadcast, so perhaps someone at the State level had got upset.

ANIL GROVER, Calcutta

Convention stripped bare

Some liked it, some didn't

EIGHT students of Delhi University's prestigious St. Stephen's College were arrested outside the Miranda House gate on September 5, 1979. The charges were unlawful assembly and public obscenity. Some claim it was a touch of midnight madness, some say it was the soaring temperature during the day and some say that it was done in utter playfulness. So be it, but the eight students arrested under Section 147 and 294 of the Indian Penal Code, if convicted, cannot ever apply for any post in the Central Services. Since St. Stephen's College is reputed to produce 40 students annually who qualify for the Central Services, even eight seems a considerable number.

As there was not a single newspaper reporter present at the time of the incident, all eyewitness accounts have come from spectators. The *Indian Express* report about 'catching the St. Stephen's boys with their pants down' seems a little farfetched, as even S. M. Bhaskara, Station House Officer, Roshianara Police Station admitted: "There was only one boy when we arrived, who was unclothed, but that too, we only saw the silhouette." According to one of the St Stephen's freshers who participated in the midnight spectacle, 12 final year students dragged these freshers to the back gate of Miranda House, "which was a traditional rite, or so we were told". The students then began to sing the customary St Stephen's "blacksmith song" and dance. There was also a fair exchange of *ghazals* over the barbed wire. The Miranda House girls were an enthusiastic audience and in a sudden fit of bravado, one of the boys apparently began to strip. In strong contrast, the hostelites in the Post Graduate Women's Hostel were horrified and began to scream and plead with their warden, Mrs S. Sanwal, to put an end to the striptease.

Mrs Sanwal telephoned Dr A. S. Kukla, the Dean of Student Welfare, and informed him of the goings-on outside her hostel. Since this happened to be on Chhatra Road, which is a public road and does not come under the Delhi University, Kukla consulted Acting Vice-Chancellor Dr R. C. Mehrotra if they could call the police to intervene. If it had been within the campus area, Kukla added, he would have expelled them immediately. When the police arrived, the boys ran off in different directions. Only eight of the 60 who were present were arrested. Dr Kukla adamantly maintained: "It is beyond doubt that these students were indulging in something immoral, unethical and obscene. As University officials it is our duty to maintain peace in the campus. This is just a demonstrative action to ward off future incidents of the same nature." He added quickly: "I wish we could take stronger action, so no student would ever dare behave like this. One of the students arrested even had the audacity to threaten the Station Officer, as his father is a Commissioner. All these children of high officials think they can get away with anything."

When reminded that the Miranda House girls did not seem to express any disapproval, but were on the contrary displaying obvious appreciation, Kukla said they had told the Principal of Miranda House to carry out an internal enquiry "as the hostelites had misbehaved as much as the St Stephen's boys". The girls had gone so far as to taunt the police by shouting: "Police murdabad, Police hai, hai!" when they began to arrest the boys. After the boys were taken to the Roshianara Police Station, they were bailed out by the Vice-Principal, J. H. Hala, on a surety of Rs 2,000 and personal bonds per student. Curiously, Mr Bhaskara discovered this his brass nameplate was missing and had obviously been stolen by the boys since they were the only ones in the police station that night. When he spread the word, that he would charge the students with theft unless the plate was returned, it was safely deposited back at the police station the very next day.

The police admitted that since they do not have any evidence their case relies heavily on witnesses, but they hoped to put up the case in court in a few days. According to one of the freshers who was a participant none of the students were totally unclothed, in fact all the

The backgate of Miranda House where the incident took place

Mandira Purie

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newspaper reports were "wildly exaggerated" he claimed. The freshers were appealing to their Principal, W. S. Rajpal, that since they were being ragged they could not be held responsible for the incident. Dr Kukla asserted : "Even ragging has certain ethics. I have been receiving these dirty stories for so many years but have never been able to catch them. Maybe, I am old-fashioned. In UK or America, if students walk around semi-clothed, it is not considered unusual by their wardens. It is a part of their culture, but here it is shocking."

Mr Rajpal, who is himself very British in his mannerisms said diplomatically : "This is a family affair. I do not want to criticise or support my boys in public. You are free, however, to gather whatever information you want from the boys themselves." According to one of the freshers, 12 of the final year students have already been suspended until further notice. And another student claimed, the Principal had also demanded a complete list of all the boys who were present, warning that more severe punishment would be meted out otherwise.

Meanwhile, the rest of the university students were occupied with the more serious matter of DUSU (Delhi University Students Union) elections in which 50,000 students would cast their votes. On the whole, the papers declared the voting extremely peaceful. No unseemly incident seems to have occurred in the university for the past six years. In 1973, however, the then joint secretary of DUSU, Prithpal Singh was arrested and convicted for raping a student. There was the Kuldip Narang case too in which a few people carrying an airgun would terrify girls returning to their hostel after dark. The police traced the car as belonging to the well-known industrialist Kuldip Narang, but could not identify the people driving the vehicle. There was loud discussion in Parliament on the matter, as Mr Narang is reported to be extremely close to Mr Sanjay Gandhi. The incident was hushed up after Mrs Narang came and apologised to the Dean on behalf of her husband.

The students' attitude on the whole seemed to be of total approval — a Stephenian mumbled: "It was a social affair. No bitchiness involved, you know. The girls loved it." A Miranda hostelite candidly stated : "Why are they raising such a hue and cry over the St Stephen's boys? It was all done in a playful manner and it was part of the ragging that they have had in their college for years. What if they did strip ?" she quipped. "I am not saying they did, but even so, it didn't quite take away our virginity. It couldn't possibly hurt us in any way. To arrest them for such a minor incident seems absurd," she added.

MANDIRA PURIE, New Delhi

Mohun Bagan supreme

The champions have reached their goal

MOHUN Bagan haven't had it so good in years. Starting out as a probable also-ran, the club swept all opposition aside to win the Calcutta Senior Division League and then the prestigious IFA (Indian Football Association) Shield to mark its second successive "double" in Calcutta. And this with a team, the only virtue of which was a set of players who had taken the field together for about three years. When the league started in May, the entire focus was on East Bengal. The club had recruited six outstation players in one year—something unheard of since the early Fifties. The reputation of each player was such that it was a problem to choose the first eleven. Most conspicuous was the forward line where nine players were vying with each other for the four berths available. Ultimately, the sheer force of numbers proved to be the bane of the club. Forces within the club were divided on what the final composition of the team should be. This was complicated further by the enforced absence of Harjinder Singh due to an injury. And, finally, confusion was confounded by the failure of some of the key players to click to form.

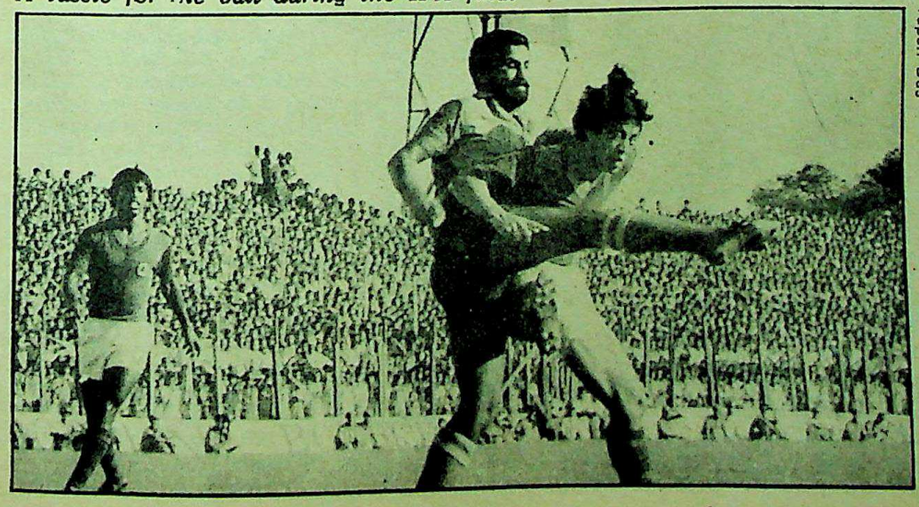
There was also an element of bad luck. The league issue could have been decided in East Bengal's favour on the day they met Mohun Bagan. But a tale of missed chances forced a draw. After Mohun Bagan had won their match against Mohammedan Sporting, East Bengal again floundered on the rock of marksmanship, failing to score against the latter side. Despite winning all their other matches, East Bengal had to be content with the second position in the league. Their supporters swallowed this disappointment in the hope that the IFA Shield would bring them joy. This hope soared to greater heights when East Bengal beat a tough South Korean outfit in the tie breaker of their semi-final match. Conversely Mohun Bagan, who were fortunate in winning the league, had an easy passage to the IFA Shield final. They encountered Kalighat in their first match and then made short work of Mohammedan Sporting with a display of speed and thrust that left the black-and-white shirts of the Mohammedan Sporting standing. The 3-1 result was not a true index of Mohun Bagan's superiority.

But better things were to follow for their fans. The final, on September 16, 1979, was expected to be a tough fight for supremacy. Instead, spectators saw the unfamiliar spectacle of East Bengal fumbling and sweating from the start and Mohun Bagan attacking in tremendous waves. If Mohun Bagan had succeeded in converting the 'sitters' they received, the result would have been closer to six rather than the lone-goal victory that they ultimately achieved. Such complete dominance has seldom been seen on the Calcutta maidan.

...And so, one more season has come to an end in Calcutta, a season which has seen the emergence of very few new 'stars' but has certainly consolidated the belief that football, today, is big business—with the three leading clubs reportedly investing nearly Rs 30 lakhs for player-recruitment alone. It is already clear that the "input" of players will be stepped up next year, with Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting stepping up their drive for recruiting new talent. While all this will undoubtedly result in good football, one wonders how good it will be for Calcutta soccer, considering that several talented young players of Bengal will thus be deprived of an opportunity to play for the 'Big Three'

ARIJIT SEN, Calcutta

A tussle for the ball during the IFA final



Tapan Das

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Limelight

The fallout of Oct 2

By M. J. Akbar

POLITICIANS never cease to amaze, particularly with their stupidities. It seems that all the three main contenders for power are doing their best to commit suicide. In Mrs Gandhi's camp, Sanjay Gandhi's fast-increasing (or should the word be omnipresent ?) influence in the selection of regional leaders and prospective candidates is becoming the most serious drawback to Mrs Gandhi's return to power. In the Janata camp, the pronouncements of Balasaheb Deoras and his RSS colleagues are helping to confirm the worst suspicions of the saner elements in our country (barring those, of course, who refuse to see). And in the Lok Dal, Mr Raj Narain's loud and exaggerated displays of his many personalities are strengthening the resentment that many people feel against his Party. Are the politicians in competition to help each other ?

Mr Raj Narain did enough to help others with his meaningless drama on October 2 in front of Gandhiji's samadhi. And the irresponsibility of his remarks, on Government media, on the date of elections, is reaching standards which even Mr Raj Narain in his glorious career has not reached. Of course, Mr Raj Narain does not always talk nonsense; it is just that when he does, he has no parallel. Later during the day on October 2, Prime Minister Charan Singh made it clear that he had no intention of tolerating foolishness, not even when it emanated from the mouth of his most loyal servant. But the bigger question is : is Mr Charan Singh. or anyone else for that matted, capable of bridling Mr Raj Narain ?

At the convention which formally saw the creation of the Lok Dal on September 26 (a day on which Mr Raj Narain made a very sober and responsible speech), Mr Charan Singh very specifically asked Raj Narain to do two things in the interests of the Party : first, try and control his tongue; second, give up his idea of washing Gandhiji's samadhi with ganga jal. The advice clearly had no impact on Mr Raj Narain and the PM had to couch his request in much stronger terms at the public function to launch the peasant oriented newspapers (Real India and Asli Bharat, in English and Hindi) on October 2, publications which will be under the control of peasants, not big industrialists. The inherent tensions between the PM and Raj Narain were visible on the stage, particularly when the PM curtly told Raj Narain "Don't argue".

There were predictable reactions to Mr Raj Narain's performance. Mr Surendra Mohan, the Janata's chief spokesman, wondered whether this was the India of everyone's dreams. This may not be the India of anyone's dreams, but it will still be a far better India than one dominated by the RSS. Indeed, the tensions within the Janata, though less vulgar, are far more serious.

It is rather ridiculous, to begin with, to find the Janata Party defending the sanctity of Gandhiji's samadhi, when the man who assassinated the Mahatma, Nathuram Godse, is being publicly extolled by a Janata MLA, Dinanath Panday with cries of "Godse Zindabad !" The silence of the Janata leadership on this issue is revealing. Is this the stage that we have reached that a hooligan who shouts in praise of the Mahatma's assassin can get protection, assistance, and be quietly absolved by the "responsible" leadership of a national Party — a Party which, concurrently, has the audacity to call itself Gandhian? Could there be a worse insult to the Mahatma?

There were other problems for both the Janata and the Lok Dal — mainly the rumours that top leaders of their Parties were searching for ways to "honourably" join the Congress(I). With the Janata the problem was worse, because the rumours surrounded none other than the man they had nominated as their Prime Minister should the Party win the elections, Mr Jagjivan Ram himself. Finally, on October 1, Babuji told his Party categorically that he would not join Mrs Gandhi. On the other side, it was H. N. Bahuguna who was said to be negotiating a deal. During the last week of September, Bahuguna had the pleasing eperience of being wooed by everyone : Raj Narain, Devaraj Urs, and Sheikh Abdullah (on behalf of Mrs Gandhi).

Raj Narain could become a really explosive issue in the coming weeks, proving a serious embarrassment to the Government and the various partners in the alliance with his preposterous outspokenness. The Chaudhury may have to snub him even further, perhaps going to the extent

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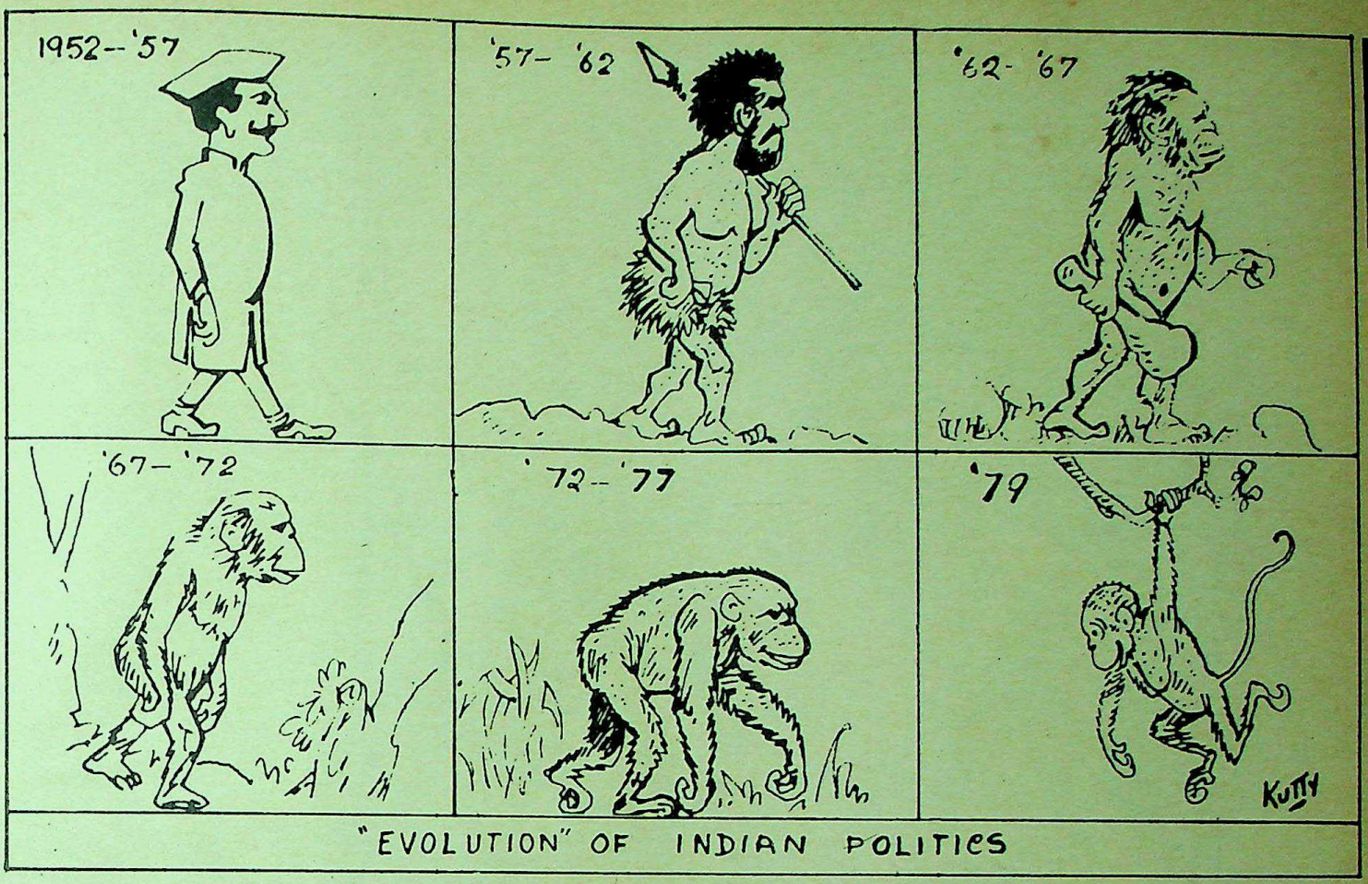

"EVOLUTION" OF INDIAN POLITICS

of taking away his job of "working president" of the Lok Dal. The repercussions cannot but be damaging to the Lok Dal, as Raj Narain does have a strong network of disciples, a cadre loyal purely to him. Charan Singh needs Raj Narain's active help to win, particularly in UP. The Lok Dal may have a solid percentage of votes, but what it sorely lacks is any organisation to help deliver the votes.

But if Mr Raj Narain is going to fritter away his energy and time making attacks at imaginary windmills, if he is going to go about searching for headlines of the kind he received in late September and early October, he can't be of much help to his cause. One has only to contrast the Lok Dal position in Bihar to its position in Uttar Pradesh. While the Bihar Party is energised, while even the Bihar Congress seems vibrant and enthusiastic, the condition of the allies in UP is far less confident—although they have the same extent of support, by and large. The difference is that Karpoori Thakur is a master at the game of electioneering, while the operators who can swing things around in UP on behalf of the Lok Dal and its allies are still fighting internal battles. Both the Janata and Mrs Gandhi have done more campaigning in the homeland of Chaudhury Charan Singh, Raj Narain and H. N. Bahuguna.

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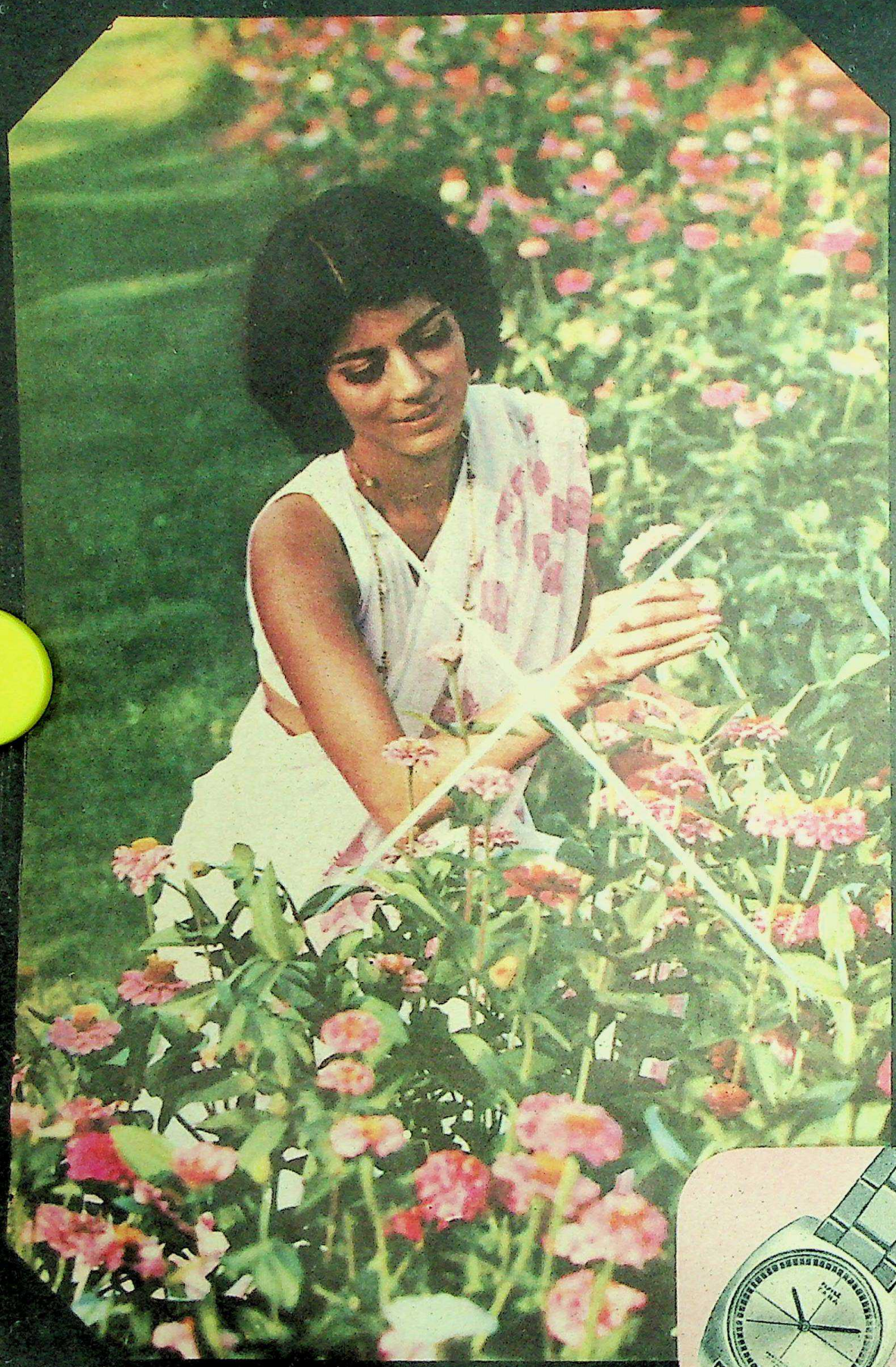

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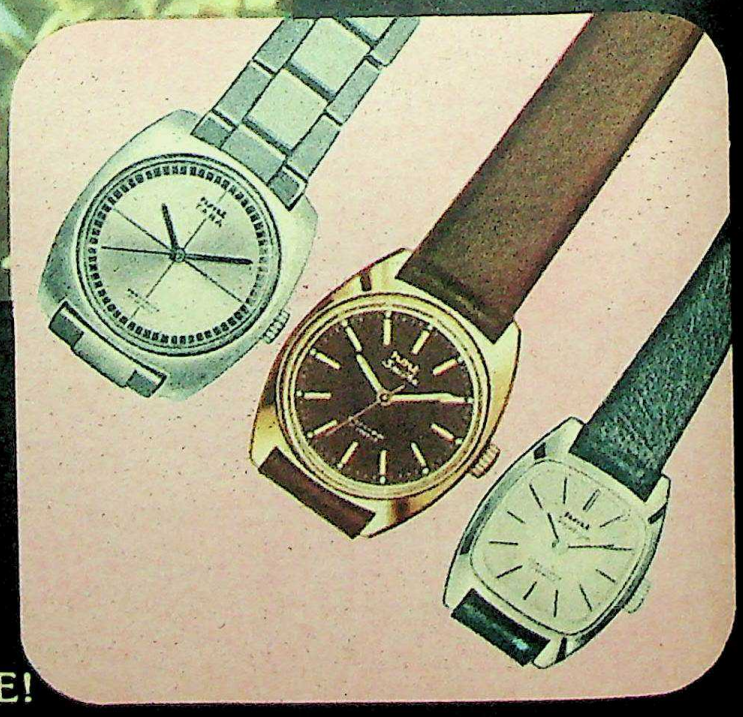

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Mr Urs takes charge

HOW will the Congress face up to the challenge posed by the Congress(I) in the coming elections? This was perhaps uppermost in the minds of all who had been following the recent decline in the fortunes of the first political Party of the country—as it met in Bangalore on September 12-13—be they ordinary citizens, journalists, AICC members, delegates or even "invitees" (as the identity badges on many proud chests endearingly proclaimed). The huge banner behind the rostrum read: "Pre-split session of the AICC". Other banners around the Glass House proclaimed in stilted prose definitely not written by an adman: "Get united to retain democracy" and "Save the nation from anarchy". And when after a tuneless rendering of Bande Mataram a terribly slack-jawed speech by Sardar Swaran Singh greeted the assembled Congressmen who filled but two-thirds of the regulation mattress-and-bolster covered floor, spirits began to sag. Could this assemblage fight a resurgent Congress(I) riding the crest of a new Indira wave?

But a glimmer of hope appeared soon. Mr. Devaraj Urs, the Karnataka Chief Minister host of the session, took the floor and straightaway launched a broadside against Mrs Gandhi. Here was somebody who could at least muster enough decibels and deliver them with sufficient vigour to give notice of combat, equal or otherwise. He wasn't going to fight shy of what had been uppermost in his mind for the last few months. If it rankled then it was better that it were out. After a few paragraphs of the mandatory preamble on the state of the nation, etc., he came straight to the point: How Mrs Gandhi had treated him. "It is an irony of fate that the sincere efforts that I made towards the Congress unity should have culminated in my own expulsion from the Congress(I), and a person who risked everything for the sake of Mrs Indira Gandhi so soon got this reward. It is much more ironical that some people who totally shunned Mrs Gandhi after her defeat and for whom her very name had become an anathema are now on a rat race to her camp." He then described the Janata plainly as an "anti-emergency and anti-Indira, Sanjay polarisation." And following it up with a shrewd bit of electioneering, he said that the old Congress pluralism that tried to include both the rich and the poor had been given up and now "we shall stand by the poor and the downtrodden...the minorities, the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes and backward classes in particular."

The speech was punctuated by frequent rounds of applause. The mood of the gathering was apparent. As the newspaper headlines in the last couple of days had anticipated, they were going to give themselves a new leader. The cue was the announcement by the returning officer, Mr. Muhammad Shafi Qureshi, a little later that "Shri Devaraj Urs" had been "unanimously elected" the new president of the Party, and there was a standing ovation. He invited, he opted, he conquered.

Towards the end of the session the next day Mr. Urs was to give greater evidence of the fight that was in him. In his concluding remarks he said that Mrs Gandhi did not believe in her own 20-point programme and the only two Chief Ministers who had tried to implement the vital programme of land reform (those of Andhra and Karnataka) were both now in the Congress. The Chief Ministers that she would get if she came to power would be "stooges". In a general search for positive election planks (at the session too many speakers for too long harped on Mrs Gandhi's misdeeds, and Mr. Urs was also guilty of this), he came out with three issues: implementing land reforms, tackling unemployment and fighting inflation.

APART from the personal leadership that he may provide, the most obvious advantage to the Party of Mr. Urs becoming the Congress president (the merger of the Karnataka Congress is a formality) is the presence the Party has established now in the south. Mrs Gandhi can no longer expect a cake walk there and with the Congress emerging as a credible alternative the Congress(I) will be facing straight fights. As the dominant Party this will be to its disadvantage, just as being the underdog, it will find three-corner contests in the north difficult. The Congress has moderately good hopes in Kerala where Mr. A. K. Antony is quite willing to face a midterm poll as demanded by the CPI(M). The crucial factor there will be whether the CPI will fall in line. From a radical ideological standpoint, the Congress can look on few States with as much satisfaction as Kerala. Its cadre and general level of leadership is committed and has been slowly inducted from the grassroots.

A considerable amount of interest was taken at the session on Maharashtra. There were many demands to invite Mr. Sharad Pawar. Mr. Tirpude lifted the spirits greatly by arriving on the second day. Hope was centred around Annasaheb Shinde, with his known powers of persuasion, being able to forge a front with the other two. In the east, among the major states, the prospects appeared the most desolate in West Bengal where it will have to be satisfied with whatever triflings the CPI(M) may decide to give. In the lobby Purabi Mukherjee blustered and pottered around inconsequentially, while a strangely despirited Saugata Ray kept in the background. Everybody had a regard for Das Munshi but didn't think that he would make a significant difference. There were bright hopes though in Assam.

For the Hindi-speaking north the other major decision that was formalised was the alliance with the Janata (S). By itself the 10-15 per cent popular support that the Party commanded in most of the area would simply mean its demise, but with this significant little push Chaudhury Charan Singh would be in as home and dry as he could ever hope to be. Most Congressmen now agreed that Mr. Charan Singh has brought about a remarkable articulation of the aspirations of the backward classes. With the parallel articulation of the harijans rural society was now fairly clearly divided into four groups harijans, backwards, muslims and the upper castes. The emergence of the backwards was seen by the more progressive among the Congressmen as a much needed blow against the feudal social structure of the north which has not known any significant social reformation in modern history. To this extent they saw Charan Singh as a historical necessity in spite of the reaction implicit in the open caste appeal that was the basis of his politics.

In early May Mr. Urs had told this reporter, "I must have timing. I do

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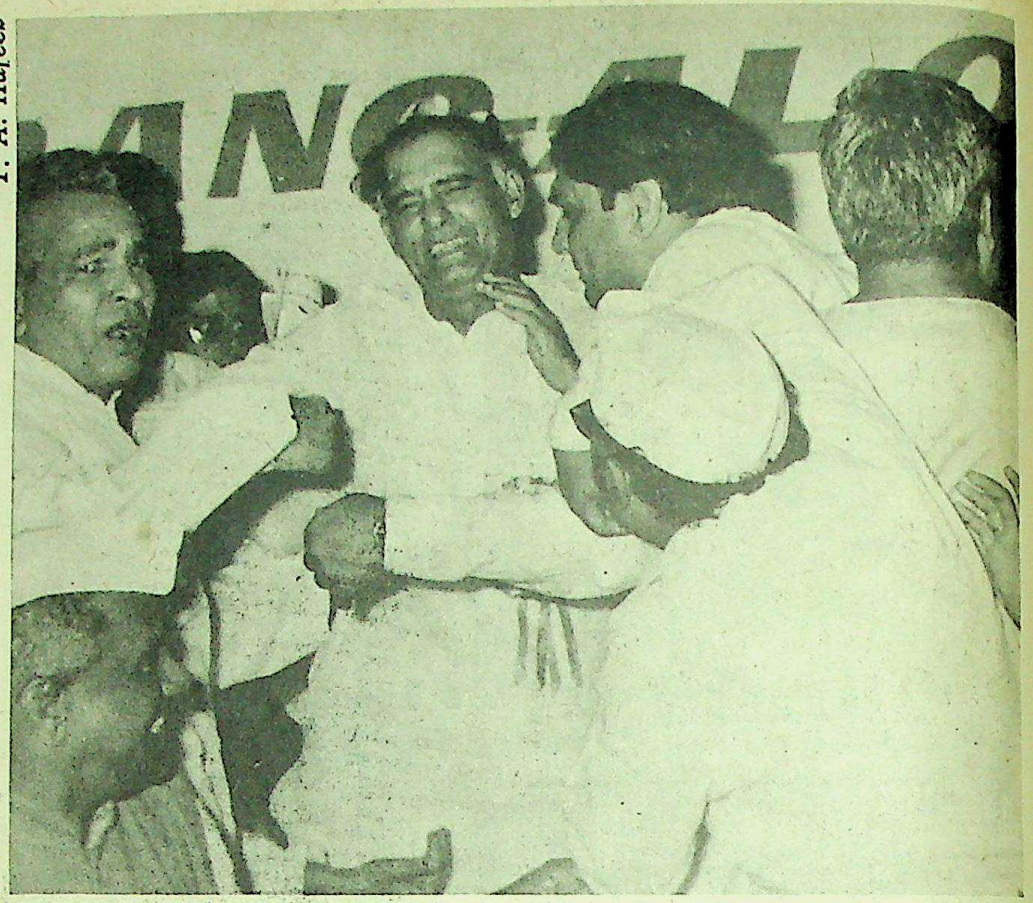
not want to be just another leader in Delhi." The other point that he had made then was he would only join hands with likeminded people. In what was the most positive line of electioneering uttered at the session, he told delegates, "Go to the villages and tell them, one of you, a villager, a son of a villager is the Prime Minister for the first time." So Mr Urs was eventually coming together with his peer.

As far as the main strategy to fight the election was concerned, the Congress seemed to have decided to rely on an elaborate system of alliances and adjustments. Here Mr. A. K. Antony made a valuable suggestion born out of his experience in Kerala. First decide, he said, on the alliance partner for an area and agree with it on the division of seats. Then agree on which constituency goes to whom within the agreed total. After that each Party would decide on the candidates who would stand from the constituencies allotted to it. A few exceptions could be made in this procedure if there was a special candidate who would definitely stand from a particular constituency.

The AICC also resolved to fight the coming elections in alliance with the Janata(S) not only under the common leadership of Chaudhury Charan Singh but also with a common programme, under a common banner and symbol. That ancient pride dies hard was amply evident in the repeated references in speeches to the past glory of the Indian National Congress and the reluctance of members to give up the cherished old Party symbol. A compromise was made. The political resolution was amended to include the words "wherever feasible" before the sentence pledging the adoption of a common symbol. There were repeated and strenuous assertions that this was only an alliance and not a merger. Mr Chavan was at pains to point out that the independent character of the Congress would be maintained. This was made all the more necessary by Mrs Gandhi's statement on September 13 at the parallel AICC of the Congress(I) at New Delhi that just as the Congress(O) had committed suicide by joining with the Janata, so also was the Congress(S) doing by joining with the Janata(S) But the leadership was clear in its own mind and had the rank and file of the Party behind it about the closeness of the link that was being forged.

THE most noticeable ideological shift that has taken place in the Congress is its move to the Left. This was set out in forthright terms by Mr Devaraj Urs but was really confirmed in the results of the elections to the working committee in which seven vacancies were filled up. Of the seven elected five have a decided leftist image. Mr. Chandrajit Yadav, Rajni Patel, Bhola Paswan Shastri, Sarat Chandra Sinha and Vyalar Ravi. If the alliance with the left forces does come about then the Congress will certainly not be the odd



T. A. Hafeez

Chandrajit Yadav being mobbed on the dais after his victory in the CWC election

Party out. With Mrs Gandhi having declared that she was not against industrialists and the urban middle class tending to tilt towards her in the hope of stability, the Congress increasingly sees itself left with the role of playing the champion of the downtrodden. An attempt to secure the Muslim vote was apparent with the significant amendment, moved by Mrs Tarakeshwari Sinha, to restore the minority character of Aligarh University, being accepted. Among the many callers at Chandrajit Yadav's hotel room, who were there to congratulate him for winning in the GWC poll with the maximum number of votes, was Mr. S. A Hashmi, the respected Rajya Sabha member from UP. He was in turn hugged and thumped on the back for his victory in the contest for the four seats in the central elction committee. As Mr Hashmi sat down he was not politician enough to hide the fact that he was quite moved. With transparent sincerity and using ideological terminology that politicians seldom use in private conversation, he said, "The Congress is again becoming socialistic and secular." At least *he* wasn't playing to the gallery *then.*

This AICC session was different from others in many ways. There were no welcome arches on the way to Lalbagh. In the heart of coffee country the delegates went through the better part of the morning session the first day without coffee or anything. The journalists in the Press corner were more lucky. The transport arranged for the Youth Congress rally the day before the session did not arrive. Poor Mr. Gundu Rao of the State Congress(I), laid up with jaundice, got accused of sabotage. The hotel owners refused to take bookings for the delegates without cash payment in advance. Indian Airlines first refused to open a booking counter at the Glass House, saying that they didn't do it for political meetings. The counter came up eventually when a local travel agent MLC quoted them precedence.

But the greatest difference was that, after a long time, Congressmen again got a taste of inner-Party democracy through the elections to the working committee and central election committee. Congressmen had plainly got out of practice. Otherwise, how could Abdul Ghafoor lose by just two votes? His supporters were simply over confident. The most gladdening case, however, was that of Mr. Tulsidas Dassappa, the general secretary who was seeking election to the working committee. He is one of the old faithfuls who had stood by the Congress right through. Even during the 77 Assembly elections the Janata tried hard to get him to join them but he did not leave the Party. He was no one's candidate, not even Mr. Urs'. While munching snacks during lunch, he told two of us who were with him, "If the State leaders and the group leaders give the members lists and they stick to them totally in their voting then I will lose". He won, and that too tying at the top with Chandrajit Yadav, both polling 200 votes each !

SUBIR ROY

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Spot report

Andhra Pradesh

Raining support for Indira

"I HEARD that cinema collections went down during the Shah Commission hearings in Delhi," said Mrs Indira Gandhi, during her recent tour of Andhra Pradesh. But throughout her three-day tour of Andhra, she emphasised that she wasn't on an election tour, saying, "The election campaign will start when the election date is announced." During her tour she repeatedly sought to comfort the drought-stricken people by liberally doling out her opinions: she accused the Janata leaders of bringing shame to the nation, ruining the economy and accused Charan Singh of indulging in political skulduggery.

For a number of reasons it was expected that Mrs Gandhi would begin her election campaign in Andhra. First, it is the only state ruled by the Congress (I). It returned 41 Congress MPs in the March 1977 elections. The only Janata MP elected from that State was Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy. Even though a bitter feud persists between Dr Channa Reddy, the Chief Minister, and the Congress (I) dissidents, both factions swear by Mrs Gandhi. Again, it was fitting that with Dr Reddy's passion for religion and Mrs Gandhi's eagerness to use religious sentiments for her own ends, she should have started her campaign at the Tirupathi temple.

After landing in Madras on September 7, Mrs Gandhi drove to Tirupathi, 160 kms away. The next morning she attended the "suprabhatam" and witnessed the "abhishekam" (the bathing of the idol of Lord Venkateswara with turmeric, milk and water), followed by an hourlong session of meditation. A few hours later, addressing a big crowd at Pakala, Mrs Gandhi invoked Lord Venkateswara's benediction on the people, prayed for rain and delivered a political speech. All the while the crowd kept chanting: "Indira amma zindabad". Soon, Tirupathi and its surrounding areas witnessed mild rains for a few minutes and the next day everyone in Andhra was talking about Mrs Gandhi's "miracle".

In the course of her speech, she said that the Janata Party had no business to seek the people's mandate once again, and, as the interpreter was trying to imitate her emotional style, she began defending her 20-point programme. She ridiculed the Government for having wasted time setting up a plethora of commissions. "All the depositions in my favour were neglected and only those against me were recorded," she said. "There are several charges of corruption against Morarji Desai and Charan Singh. Why aren't commissions being appointed against them?" She was not at all interested in knowing who would contest against her. "But I hear they're putting up a mini Raj Narain against me," she quipped, obviously referring to B. P. Maurya, who was encouraged by Raj Narain to fight against her. "I am not an astrologer, I cannot tell you what really will happen in these elections: I am afraid they may not be free," she said in another Parliamentary constituency. On the outskirts of Kodur, a little drama was enacted. Mrs Gandhi got out of her car and forayed into a decrepit hut, and talked to a few women. As more women began surrounding her, a police constable tried to "protect" her, but Mrs Gandhi literally chased away the policeman, shouting loudly that she shouldn't be separated from her people.

As she kept moving through drought-stricken pockets in Chittoor, Cuddappah and Anantapur, she repeatedly told listeners how the Janata Government was dragging its feet in providing relief to the drought-hit areas of Uttar Pradesh, whereas the Andhra CM had sanctioned Rs 20 crores for the relief. Some people wanted to know why Rayalaseema remained one of the poorest districts in the country in spite of Mrs Gandhi's Party ruling the State for three decades. She had no answer. Instead, she began to emphasise, once again,

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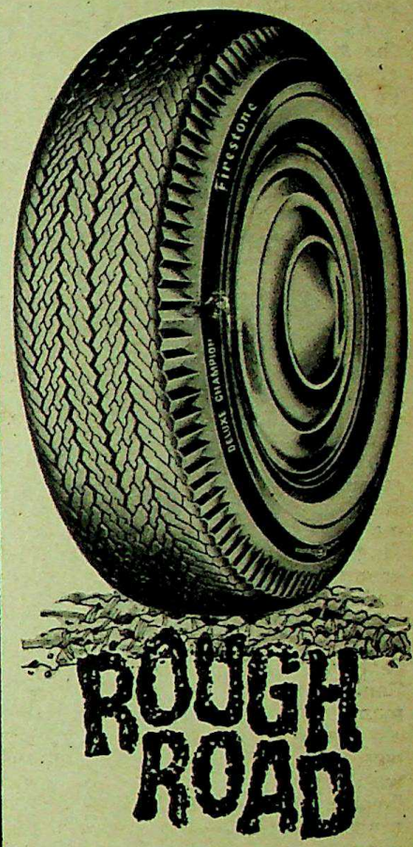

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that she had a clear vision regarding the nation's progress, and nobody could stop her: The Janata (S) attempt to stop her from contesting the election would be a futile bid, as people were solidly behind her. "Some say that I am going to contest from the South, there's no basis for such talk. If you just come to the North, you'll note how big crowds my Party is drawing...." Her three-day tour took her through seven Parliamentary constituencies, and local leaders vied with each other to invite her to contest from their own constituency.

Ridiculing the publication of the Gupta Commission report (the Maruti probe), Mrs Gandhi quipped that she never read such reports, and she was convinced that people had lost faith in commissions and probe reports. If she wanted, she could've helped Sanjay Gandhi in several ways, but she let him tackle things on his own, and at last people were realising that all that was said and written against him was part of a vindictive propaganda against her own family.

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Uttar Pradesh

Two elections at the price of one

PEOPLE close to the UP Chief Minister believe that the UP Assembly is going to be dissolved by the third week of October and fresh elections would be held along with the Lok Sabha elections. This impression has gained ground due to the policy the UP Government has recently adopted empowering legislators to disburse more than Rs 20 crores under the drought relief project. Officers are also being transferred on a rather large scale, and it is believed that their transfers are politically motivated. Officers considered to be useful to the Government are being given charge of the district administration. Such decisions are being made on the basis of caste and and political leanings. A large number of transfer orders were issued, only three days before the August no-confidence motion was scheduled to be decided. To cite one example, the Collector of Farrukha-bad was transferred within minutes.

The Government in UP is a minority one. And in all probability, Mr Charan Singh would not like a Government that is dependent on others, for its survival Besides, Mr. Charan Singh, who did not hesitate in recommending the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, would stand to gain in case a midterm poll is held to the UP Assembly. Mr. Charan Singh does not have a well-knit organisation in the State and his support is based on caste lines.

For the Lok Sabha elections, UP is a very important State. Most important politicians are going to contest from this State. What is to be seen, however, is how many of them shift to new constituencies for the elections. After all they have done precious little for the constituencies which elected them. Raj Narain wants to contest from Aligarh. Again, Atal Behari Vajpayee is supposed to replace Nanaji Deshmukh from Gonda. Chandrashekhar is looking for an urban constituency, since Ballia is primarily a rural constituency. Even Mr Bahuguna appears to be in a fix. His constituency, Lucknow, is notorious for rejecting candidates. In case he chooses to contest from one of the hill constituencies, his opponents are sure to put up a relative as an opponent against him. In all probability Mr Bahuguna will contest from Phulpur, while Mrs Kamala Bahuguna may shift to another constituency. Even Mrs Indira Gandhi is said to be looking for a safer constituency. She is a bit hesitant about

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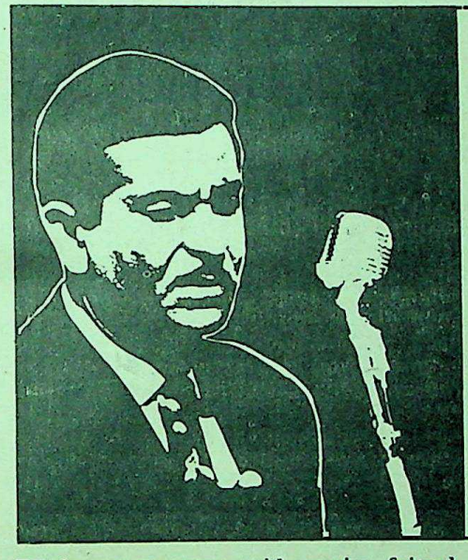
contesting from Rae Bareili as Sanjay Gandhi is thinking of recontesting from Amethi. She feels that Amethi, being a neighbouring constituency, may adversely affect her popularity in Rae Barelli.

This time it may be difficult to judge the mood of the voters. Politicians are basing all their speculations on caste alliances and money power. But even these criteria prove illusory, and the voting may take place along different lines. One thing is certain —votes can no longer be won over by promises. The main question that will haunt the voters is: Who is going to become the next PM?

According to present indications, these elections are going to be fought more violently than in the past. Firearms are going to replace lathis and the possibilities of political murder cannot be ruled out. This is all the more likely, considering the number of transfers that have taken place, and the administration may turn a blind eye to all such incidents. While some political observers are apprehensive about the outbreak of large scale violence, prominent Janata Party leaders in UP feel that the members of the erstwhile Jana Sangh may get more tickets than the others. Even Mr Raj Mangal Pandey, the leader of the JLP, is expecting this. But all said and done, the voters have not been left with much of a choice. They have to choose between the bad and the worse.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

Asides



Netas and abhi netas

IT is not strange, said a wise friend of ours, that the film industry should be in the running for a seat in the Parliament. After all, what is the real difference between a politician and an actor ? Just the prefix "abhi". Explaining, he said, the word for a leading politician is "neta" and the word for an actor is "abhineta."

The film industry has formed the National Party and according to Mr G. P. Sippy it "aspires to be the platform for all like-minded people from all walks of life — intellectuals, thinkers, professionals, businessmen, workers, farmers, housewives and the youth." Sippy, or rather the draft manifesto of the Party, claims that "for too long the real problems facing the country have been avoided by the professional politicians. It has been in their interest to create bogey issues, and thereby avoid taking drastic action or making sweeping basic reforms". The manifesto itself which runs into 13 pages of promises to everybody includes tax holidays for the blackmoneywallas and doing away with licences. It beats even the former Swatantra Party in propagating a laissez-faire economy.

The film industry is ambitious. It wants to provide an alternative to the opportunist politician—the professional politician. But is there much difference between the two? Not really. Says Basu Bhattacharya, the *enfant terrible* of the producers' world : "Both have their chamchas and middlemen, both allow images to be created for them, and both are unapproachable, except through their chamchas".

Nimai Ghosh

The institution of chamchas is what keeps the filmstar and the politician going. Recounting his experience during the shooting of *Teesri Kasam* in Madhya Pradesh with the mighty Raj Kapoor, Basu says: "We had to do a scene at sunrise and I told a chamcha of Raj that he should see that Raj is brought to the location ten minutes before sunrise. The chamcha nearly fainted and said, 'You expect him to come before sunrise? The sun rises for Rajji in the studio and it will stay there till he wakes up even if it's midday. The sun *salaams* Rajji and not vice versa. Don't ever think of asking him to appear on location before sunrise.' I was puzzled but determined to get Raj on the scene because I insist on shooting the actual sunrise. I went to Rajji's room where he was entertaining some of the top officials of Madhya Pradesh and I told him my plans and said he would have to go to bed shortly if he was to make it before sunrise. I also told him that my unit and I would have tea with him before that. And you know what he did? He told all his guests, 'You have heard what Basu Bhattacharya just told me. So goodnight', and he left. Next morning, Waheeda, I and others landed on location 20 minutes before sunrise and Rajji was already there waiting for us.

The whole business of the film industry entering the election fray is intriguing. Of course, the names associated with the National Party belong to the big banners, they are not busy filmmakers and can afford to spend time politicking. But what is the real reason? They are, of course, confused, disillusioned, and disgusted with professional politicians as most citizens of India are. But will, and can, they ever fill the gap? Of course, they solve major problems on the screen. Social revolutions of a low caste girl marrying a high caste man without paying dowry work out okay on screen, destitute mothers find absconding husbands in courtrooms either as judges or lawyers, the Gabbar Singhs take from the rich to give the poor. But can they do this in real life without any ideology? Or will they just be of nuisance value, adding to the cacophony of candidates that contest each year, thinking they are the only solution to India's problems. According to one observer, till now they supported candidates, but if they become candidates themselves they could be in a bargaining position. This would be their strength. They could make money if asked to retire from the contest at the last moment. The situation is full of potential for making money. Being neutral they will have a bigger price and if the candidate in whose favour they resign, makes it to Parliament they will be in an even better bargaining position. This may sound uncharitable. But this is life. If it's life for a "neta", it's the same for an abhineta." After all the difference is only in the prefix.

OLGA TELLIS

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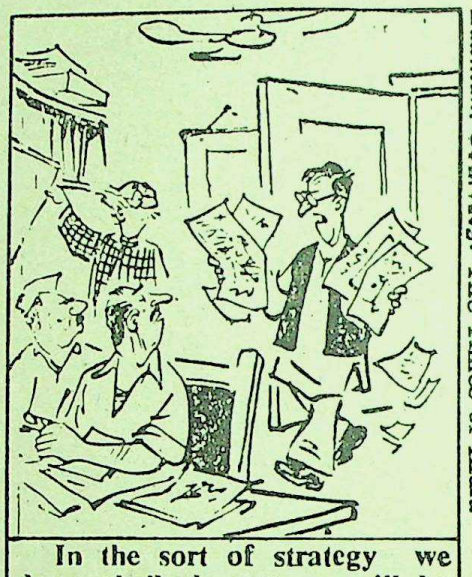
Notes

NOBODY is happy about the coming elections, except the devotees of Mrs Indira Gandhi and they are laughing all the way to the bank. (Supposing the bank is empty, and somebody else has taken the goodies away? But that's another story). The elite in particular seems paranoid : what will happen if Mrs G comes back? Possibly, awful things; possibly, nothing much. In any case, we can't have selective democracy, a la Pakistan, can we? If the people want her back, Shah Commission, Maruti Commission and all, come back she will. And if the guardians of democracy have any battles to fight later on, let them fight it out later on, instead of beginning to weep copious tears just now. And maybe the urban intellectuals would not cry so much if they left their urban niches and took a look at the villages. PS : When I say the elite, I do not include industrialists. They are delighted at the very thought of Chaudhury Charan Singh being removed from power.

CAN I take the liberty of injecting some humour into the awful paranoia? Both the stories are dirty : the first is true and the second a product of an exciting imagination. Being a work of fiction, the second is naturally better, funnier and more dirty than the first. The first story I owe to *Punch*. Apparently, Walter Brown, the Labour Party's deputy national organiser, was canvassing in Surbiton during Britain's general election earlier this year. Brown knocked on a door and a man's voice said, "Come in, I'm in bed". Brown entered, and found the man in bed with a woman. "I've always voted Labour, you can count on me," the man said. Brown asked : "And your wife?" The man replied : "Oh, this isn't my wife, this is Mrs Jones from number 6".

To top this one, I have the other story of a Labour Party official who fell in love with and duly married a lady who was a very strong supporter of the Conservative Party. You know how it is with these political types, and hardly had they finished the wedding breakfast than they fell into a violent quarrel, and within minutes were not on talking terms with each other. The stiff upper lip of the British is famous, and neither would compromise. The time came to go to bed, but who would break the ice? So they turned their backs on each other and went to sleep on the new marital bed, back to back, on this most important of nights. Finally, the lady, who was, if you recall, a strong supporter of the Conservatives, could not restrain herself anymore, and whispered to her new husband : "Darling...darling...there is a split in the Conservative Party.... If the Labour candidate stood now I think he could get in quite easily". The husband turned around, and with a gruff voice, almost barked out : "The hell he would. He's already stood as an independent and lost his deposit!"



Laxman. Courtesy: The Times of India

In the sort of strategy we have chalked out we will be having electoral understanding with every party in the country except our own!

WITH election fever beginning to catch on slowly, the slogan writers of the various Parties have begun wracking their brains. The effectiveness of a good slogan was evident both in 1971 (*Garibi Hatao;* this was created by Shrikant Verma, the excellent writer and Mrs Gandhi loyalist who was rewarded for his contribution with a seat in the Rajya Sabha; he has remained with Mrs Gandhi through the trials and tribulations) and in 1977. The Janata Party's catchy slogans still ring pleasantly in the memory : what a time of hope it was! Khushwant Singh has provided the theory behind the key slogan in Mrs Gandhi's campaign this time. *Indira Gandhi lao, desh bachao.* His parallel is with France and De Gaulle : when France was in a mess De Gaulle was brought back to rescue the country. Let's see if Mrs Gandhi lives up to her slogan. The Janata's main slogan reflects its bitterness : it will be 'Defeat Defectors'. When friends fall out, the tendency to leave the door open for the common enemy is always pronounced. The Janata(S) slogan will be around this theme : *Garib jagao, desh bachao.* (Awaken the poor, save the country). The catchiest of the jingles has come from the Janata(S) camp. It goes : *Sanjay, Kanti, Suresh Ram, Bech ke kha gaya Hindustan* (Sanjay, Kanti and Suresh Ram, have sold the country down the drain).

THE other favourite parlour game — well, media game too — has begun : predicting who will win how many seats. The demand for astrologers is very high, and presumably they are extracting a heavy price from the anxious claimants to power. Reports say that even Mr Raj Narain's favourite tantric has deserted him and predicted a victory for Mrs Gandhi. Well, anyone who trusts astrologers too much might learn a lesson from the number who predicted a smashing victory for Mrs Gandhi in 1977. But more than astrologers are involved in this game. Most predictions at the moment are nothing but exercises in wish-fulfilment : the simple truth is that nobody knows as yet how this election is going to turn out. I mean, barring the simple fact that there could be one of four results : a victory for the Alliance, for Mrs Gandhi, for the Janata, or confusion. But Maneka Gandhi in her very own magazine *Surya* has decided to venture into the dangerous realms of predictions, and confidently states that her mother-in-law and husband's Party will win 370 seats. You never know : anything can happen. But I doubt if even staunch loyalists of the Congress (I) who work in the field would venture to predict such a victory. What I found most intriguing was that Mrs Maneka Gandhi had awarded the Congress($) with five seats. Now just who could five people be, who have had the honour of being recognised as potential victors by their fiercest antagonists?

SURPRISE, surprise. There are gentlemen still left in Calcutta politics. The walls of this city are a favourite target of slogan-mongers, at the quietest of times; around election time the virginity of no wall is spared. What is most interesting is that you will find quite a few walls newly whitewashed, and blank, with a legend on them : Space reserved for Congress(I), or, Space reserved for CPI(M). Apparently, this understanding is maintained, and no one poaches on anybody else's self-allocated space. The walls guarding the Birla residence in South Calcutta have been reserved by the Congress(I). Does that mean anything?

M. J. AKBAR

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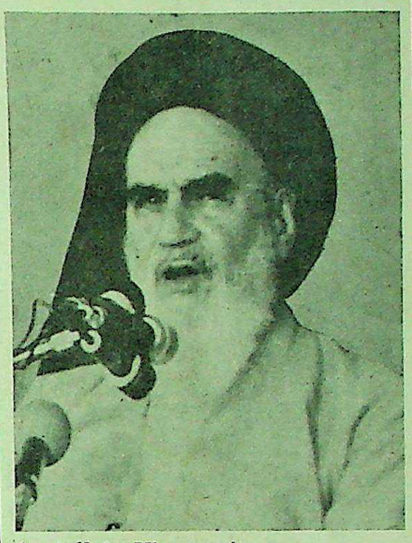
Iran's fascist Islam

The mullahs are without mercy, reports FRED HALLIDAY from Iran

IT does not take one long to sense the ferocious Right-wing Islamic fervour that grips much of Iran today. In the airport arrival hall, in front of the (unattended health controls, hangs a poster on which the dove of peace is being ripped open by a hammer and sickle. Underneath runs the simple message: 'The Mirage'. Along the walls on the way into Tehran the slogans 'Death to Communism' and 'Death to the Fedayin' can be seen, and amid the plethora of renamed streets none is called after any left-winger who gave his or her life in the 25-year struggle against the Shah. Huge placards show an Iranian revolutionary breaking through shackles imposed by both the Russian and US flags, and the walls of the massive Soviet embassy compound in the centre of the city are daubed with hostile slogans.

The second night I was in Iran I attended the first major public rally held by the Tudeh, or Communist Party, in the 30 years since it was banned by the Shah. A crowd of around 50,000 people had gathered to hear Ehsan Tabari, the party's leading theoretician and the grandson of an Ayatollah, who was now a candidate in the coming elections for a Council of Experts to discuss the constitution. Most of the crowd appeared to be students, but there was more than a sprinkling of older people, gnarled representatives of another age. As several hundred stewards with linked arms guarded the perimeter of the meeting, groups of right-wing youths, named 'Phalangists' by their opponents, roamed around shouting 'Death to the Tudeh and the Fedayis, Social Parasites' and repeating the most frequent rightist slogan heard in Iran: 'There is no Party but the Party of God, No Leader but the Spirit of God,' the latter being a reference to Khomeini. Thwarted in their main aim of disrupting the meeting, these Islamic militants turned on a hapless Iranian press photographer, and after chasing him across the campus grounds smashed his equipment and pummelled him to the ground amid chants of 'Allah is Great'.

This hysteria is not confined to Muslim activists on the street, but can be found at the centre of the Islamic Government from which it receives strong encouragement. Two of Khomeini's top advisers whom I interviewed, Foreign Minister Yazdi, Radio and TV Director Ghotbzadeh, had blamed the Left for Iran's present troubles and claimed that the



AP

Ayatollah Khomeini

Left had played no role in the revolution that overthrew the Shah. A similar view is held by Ayatollah Nuri, one of the key organisers of last year's anti-Shah demonstrations in Tehran.

For weeks, offices and bookshops belonging to left-wing organisations in the provinces have been attacked. On Friday August 10, for example, crowds coming out of the mosque in the Azerbaijani town of Urumieh burnt down the Fedayin bookstore, and this was followed by attacks on left-wing offices and bookstalls in Tehran on the following Monday. The new press law, which makes criticism of the Ayatollahs illegal and enforces wide-ranging censorship of domestic and foreign reporting, is another blow at those who criticise the policy of the Islamic government.

The attack on the Left by leading Government officials often takes the form of a rather crude scape-goating Bani-Sadr told me that the left was to blame for the standstill in industry, and both he and Ghotbzadeh blamed the unrest among Turks, Arabs and Turcomans on leftist interference, avoiding the question of whether the demands of these people were legitimate or not. Their defence of current policy towards the Kurds sounded like Ethiopian officials legitimating their repressive policies in Eritrea on the grounds that the regional opposition forces were also 'agents' of foreign powers.

In a tragic irony many of those who were in the forefront of the struggle against the Shah are now once again on the receiving end of Government repression and right-wing violence. Mohammad Reza Sa'adati, a member of the Kojahidin of the People guerrillas, who spent years in jail under the Shah, has now been arrested on charges of being a 'Soviet spy' and has the dubious distinction of being the first of the new political prisoners known to have undergone torture. Slogans calling for his execution have been written on walls in Tehran. Over a dozen members of the Socialist Workers Party, arrested weeks ago in the southern town of Ahvaz, still await trial, as does the poet Nasim Khaksar, who earlier spent eight years in the Shah's prisons. A lawyer I met had spent three years in jail, had been tortured by hanging on a cross — 'like Spartacus and his poor friends' as he put it to me — and had then had both his legs broken by SAVAK agents after his release. He was recently kidnapped by unknown assailants and taken up into the hills north of Tehran where he was badly burnt on his back and chest.

Mossadeq's grandson, lawyer Headyat Matin-Daftari, who was flogged and thrown over the side of a mountain in 1967 and imprisoned by the Shah last year, had to flee last week into hiding in order to escape arrest after the National Democratic Front, of which he is one of the leaders, organised the demonstration to protest the closure of opposition papers. A few days earlier I had lunched with him and had found him, despite the evident tension in the country, to be quietly optimistic. He sensed, as other opposition members did, that the akhunds or religious leaders were overreaching themselves by interfering in so many areas of public life and by their apparent inability to run the country. Many people felt that despite the current Government onslaught, the Left, allied with the movement for regional autonomy, could in the longer run establish a democratic system. One Azerbaijani poet I met went so far as to argue the daring thesis that events in Iran would mean 'the end of Islam', as popular revulsion against the akhunds led to a backlash in the months ahead.

Some signs of such resistance can be seen on the streets of northern and central Tehran. Music banned on the state radio is available in cassette form, and even though this is the month of Ramadhan when all-day fasting is obligatory, stalls selling soft

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drinks are open. People were smoking and playing music in public, and hosts proudly produced the odd bottle of whisky or champagne. In the oilfields, so I was told by a reliable source, the Government is taking no chances with the oil workers who demonstrated their power so effectively last year: there the workers' canteen remains open all day, Ramadhan or not.

Yet the power of the Islamic right must not be underestimated. Its appeal is not just an ideological one, since its strength rests on a set of institutions that retain great power at the neighbourhood level. Ayatollah Nuri, for example, explained how he could call on thousands of people all over Tehran who had been students at his lectures over the past few years, and the new anti-Left tone of Khomeini's regime is transmitted not just over the radio but in the Friday sessions at the mosque and through local Islamic associations.

THE position of women illustrates the uncertain status of the new Islamic regime. Khomeini's claim before his return to Iran that Islam guarantees equality of the sexes was never true given the theory and the practice of all Islamic societies. But the attempt to impose Muslim clothing, whether the cloak-like *chador* or the scarf-like *hejab*, was successfully resisted by the women's demonstrations of last March. Since that time, there has been no marked increase in the wearing of Muslim clothing by women in the centre and north of Tehran, and many women even in government offices remain without it.

However, Khomeini may well try to enforce the *hejab* in the future and he is reported to have told a woman poet who visited him that he would do so after the Islamic Constitution becomes law. In the mean time other factors are eating away at women's position. Although there are still women announcers on the radio, all solo women singers have been taken off the media—and Director Ghotbzadeh tried to tell me this was because they had all been connected with the Imperial Court. Women's sports have been virtually stopped, and the few women judges serving in the courts have been reallocated to their evident disgust that once Muslim law is imposed in the courts the Islamic prescription that one man's testimony as a witness must be considered equal to that of two women will come into force. One woman was elected to the 73-person Council of Experts now discussing the draft-constitution, but she was a nominee of Khomeini's and her election poster was a tragi-comic one, showing two eyes and a nose emerging from behind a black *chador*.

Probably the gravest attack on women's position has come in the realm of employment, where discrimination, as in other countries, is justified on grounds of economic constraint. Additionally, the organised feminist tide that was so successful in March has not continued. Most left groups seem to regard the question of women as a secondary one, but while I saw no women at the Fedayin headquarters wearing headscarves the Mojahidin told me that all women who join their organisation must wear one. One change the Government will find hard to put through is the segregation of schools, since only 15 per cent of primary school teachers are men and an almost reverse situation operates in secondary education. But the everyday pressures on women continue and it is easy for the demagogues of the right to talk of women's emancipation as part of some 'alien' imposition on Iran. Even the late Dr Ali Shariati, supposedly the theorist of a new enlightened Islam, argues in his *Omat va Imamat* that woman's liberation is a plot by the western cosmetic monopolies to boost their exports to the third world. Here again, the power of Islamic reaction over women must not be underestimated and one has only to see the phalanxes of chanting black-cloaked women on right-wing demonstrations to realise that Khomeini and his people can mobilise large numbers of women for their cause, such as fascist movements in Europe did in the 1930s.

Ayatollah Khomeini being greeted by followers in Qom

UPI

The position of the urban working class is, as yet, uncertain. Many factories are idle or running at a reduced level of output, and the masses of migrant workers who flocked to the cities to work in construction have been dispersed by the standstill in this sector, evident in the lines of unmoving cranes along the Tehran skyline. In the factories some of the workers' committees set up during the last months of the struggle against the Shah have continued to operate. But it seems that many of these have been taken over by the akhunds or by the Revolutionary Committees and no substantial organisations linking different factories have yet emerged to form the basis of a new trades union structure. The Islamic forces have been quick to see the need to pre-empt any threat from this source. While he fulminates against the left, Khomeini appeals to the workers in the name of Islam and a widely distributed poster depicts an industrial worker holding an Islamic banner beneath a quotation from the Koran promising a speedy victory.

The rhetoric of the regime places great emphasis on what it is doing for the *mostazifin*, a neologism based on the Arabic word for 'week', and usually translated as the 'deprived'. A classic populist concept, it is designed to appeal to the working class without thereby scaring off the other class allies of the Islamic movement. Yet it would seem that despite the immense sums of money available from oil, the new regime has not brought tangible benefits to these people. Loans for housing of up to £12,000 (300,000 Tomans) are available but only to those who can make a deposit of one-tenth this amount. The economics correspondent of one pro-Islamic paper told me that apart from providing electricity of under 100 Kilowatts free of charge nothing had been done to benefit the poor in the six months since Khomeini came to power. Meanwhile inflation runs at over 30 per cent.

The standard themes of Islamic theorists are those familiar to right-wing populist, and indeed, fascist movements elsewhere. Bani Sadr's 'Unitary Economics', a farrago of Islamic and socialist ideas, is little more than confusionist rhetoric, laced with some religious allusions, and

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has so far led to no concrete programme that could begin to solve Iran's economic problems. When I met him, Bani Sadr laid great emphasis upon how Iran remained a dependent country in which imperialism still played a major role, but neither what he told me, nor what he had previously written, led me to believe that he has a coherent grasp of the Iranian economy. Earlier, he told me that the spirituality of Khomeini had an important consolatory role to play given the serious material privations to which the people would be exposed.

The oft-heard slogan that 'There is no Right nor Left in Islam' and Khomeini's appeals for Islamic unity are the conventional fare of overtly fascist regimes, coupled as they are with attacks on all opponents as being 'enemies of Islam' and with a facile attribution of links with imperialism to all who question his views. Although he hardly ever mentions Iran, much of Khomeini's Islamic rhetoric is very nationalistic and his favourite ploy is to attack the Left for being western-influenced and alien to Iran's traditions. His denunciations of the intelligentsia especially writers and lawyers, and his attacks on the Press, indciate a willingness to stifle all critical discussion on the grounds that they are part of an 'imperialist conspiracy'. Yet so devalued have such accusations become that more than one Iranian I met was able to argue at great length how Khomeini himself has been installed by the CIA...

IT is as yet hard to evaluate the forces opposed to Khomeini, but they certainly go beyond the organised Parties of the Left. While Ayatollah Taleqani seems to have fallen into line behind Khomeini's rightist crusade, Ayatollah Sharriat-Madari, who called on his followers to boycott the recent elections, remains a powerful force, specially in his native Azerbaijan and among the estimated 1.5 million Azerbaijanis who live in Tehran. The other non-Persian nationalities are also resistant to the centralising tendencies of the Islamic Government, and the Kurds in particular are well-armed and should be able to resist the central Government for a long time. While they stress that they do not want to secede from Iran, the Kurds do want some form of substantial regional autonomy, and the draft constitution, offering only some ill-defined local councils which bear no relation to the nationalities themselves, is clearly inadequate to their demands.

The Left itself, based in Tehran but with substantial provincial support, comprises a number of competing groups. The National Democratic Front, which broke away from the National Front in March, comprises a number of liberal and socialist groups. Although not a Party, and formally nearer the centre than other Left organisatoins, it has so far been the most consistently critical of the Khomeini Government. Not only did the NDF call for a boycott of both the referendum on the Islamic Republic and the Council of Experts elections, but it took the initiative in organising the protests against censorship that sparked the recent clashes.

The two main former guerrilla

UPI

Supporters carry casket bearing body of Haji Mehdi Eraqi, a close aide of Ayatollah Khomeini. He was murdered along with his son by an anti-clergy group of terrorists in August

A Government firing squad executing Kurdish rebels

UPI

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UPI

Kurdish guerrillas in battle-readiness hold the key town of Sardasht on the Iran-Iraq border

groups, the Fedayin and the Mojahidin, enjoy substantial support among young people and could probably mount some kind of armed resistance to a Right-wing onslaught. But their leadership, drawn from people who have spent much of their adult life in jail, is inexperienced and they have been indecisive in their attitude to Khomeini's regime, trying to conserve their militant following while not breaking completely with the Government. Like the Peronist guerrillas who emerged into the open after the fall of the Argentinian military dictatorship in 1973, they have found it difficult to turn their undoubted prestige as militant fighters against the old regime into a durable political movement.

The oldest and wiliest of the Left groups is the Tudeh, in effect the Communist Party. Founded in 1941 their leadership is much older than that of other groups, and they evidently have a substantial organisation. They have chosen to back Khomeini without major reservation at this time: 'We consider him on balance progressive, and since we cannot lead, we have to choose,' was how one Party leader explained it to me. They remain in the most traditional sense a pro-Soviet Party, something that must do them immense harm in the current Iranian situation where anti-Russian feeling runs high. It is unlikely that their concessions to Khomeini will in the end spare them from the force of the rightist onslaught, and their paper is among those closed this week. Indeed, on Monday the authorities sealed the office of the Party.

The core of Khomeini's support lies in the poorer, southern districts of Tehran and in the cities running southwards from there along the edge of the great desert that forms the core of Iran—Qom, Isfahan, Kashan, Yazad Shiraz. The second main holy city after Qom, Mashad, may also favour him and the resistance to his consent of an Islamic Republic in the rest of the country is still fragmented. But with the economy in a major recession, and unrest in the regions, the initiative is slipping from the Government's hands.

It is in these circumstances that the state of the army and other repressive units becomes of major importance. Most estimates I heard indicate that about half of the pre-revolutionary army, say upwards of 150,000 men, remains in existence and there certainly seemed to be plenty of soldiers in the barracks I saw in Tehran and in the mountains to the north. The air force is still flying missions, although Foreign Minister Yazdi categorically denied the reports put out by Opposition papers that some dozens of US technicians had been brought back to the country. The army and air force have, however, lost most of their top commanders, and it will certainly take time to rebuild the esprit de corps and the command structure previously reliant on the Shah which were shattered in the revolutionary period.

An extremely ominous development is the growth of irregular military units, recruiting young unemployed men to carry out vigilante duties. Security Chief and Deputy Premier Mostafa Chamran is said to command a force called the Regiment of Youth, and a group named the Black Shirts has been growing in south Tehran. The Jamshidabad barracks in Tehran are centre of another semi-official force called the Army of Guards, and then there are both the Guards of the Islamic Revolution organised by the Government, and the Committee Guards, under individual mollahs and district chiefs. Ill-trained and divided as these units may be, and incapable of facing seriously armed foes like the Kurds, they are nonetheless a formidable force for urban repression and can be sure of further expansion in a time of high unemployment. In late July up to 60,000 of such irregulars paraded through the streets of Tehran. In a clampdown on the Left it would be to these elements, as much as to the regular army, that Khomeini would be likely to turn. Equally sinister is the rise of a new secret police organisation called SAVAME-SAVAK with one word altered ('Country' changed to 'Nation'). According to one man who recently came out of Evin jail, the imprisoned members of the former Counter-Espionage section of SAVAK were summoned to the central office there some weeks ago and asked to start working again, for SAVAME. Some of the indictments against Left-wingers now in jail are based on old SAVAK files.

Amid the clamour and confusion of contemporary Iran, it has become obvious, more quickly than was generally expected, just how incapable Khomeini and his associates are of running Iran and how quickly they are falling back, turbaned akhunds and western-educated Ministers alike, on demagogy about 'foreign plots' and on repression. Unwilling to guarantee basic democratic rights to the Press, the opposition of the nationalities, or to implement a serious programme of social change, they are dragging the country towards a bloodbath, the outcome of which no one can predict. Khomeini may believe that Allah is Great, but it certainly seems to be the Devil who is working overtime in Iran today.

(By arrangement with "New Statesman")

I'm a woman,

a woman whose skin is the mirror of the deserts

and whose hair smells of factory smoke.

I'm a woman—

hands full of wounds,

from the cutting blades of giant pain.

How shameless of you to announce

that my hunger is an illusion,

my nakedness

a make-believe.

These lines have been taken from the poem, *I'm a Woman*, by Marzieh Ahmadi Oskooii who fought against the gross injustices and social imbalances within Iranian society. She was shot dead in May 1973 by the imperial forces. The poem is one of the many from the book—*Echoes of Iranian Revolution—Poems of Revolt and Liberation* edited by Nasira Sharma and published by Vikas Publishing House Private Limited. The book is priced at Rs 45.

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Drought!

ARUN RANJAN finds out whether the disaster that struck Uttar Pradesh and Bihar was man or nature's doing

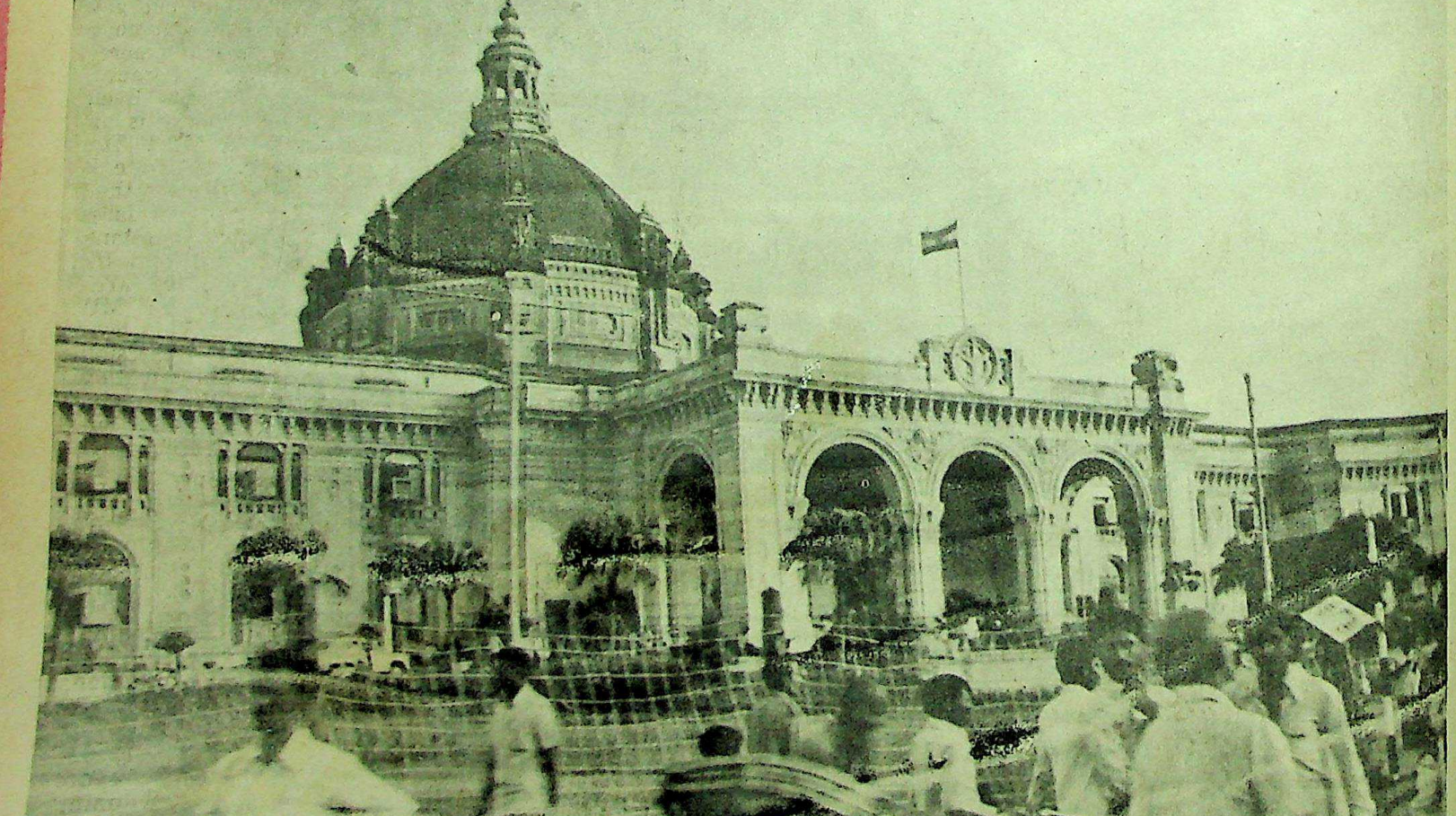
THE general view of the drough, that has gripped Uttar Pradesh is that it is the worst the State has witnessed in the last 40 years. Fifty of the State's 56 districts have been affected, of which the worst-hit are Jaunpur, Mirzapur and Banda. The State capital Lucknow has received reports of six deaths in Jaunpur, acute scarcity of water in Mirzapur, and an exodus of labourers from Bundelkhand. Only six of the State's hill districts have escaped the ravages of the drought.

With some rainfall only in the first week of July, the scarcity of water has badly affected large areas under cultivation. There was no more rain till the first of Augus , and on September 7, Varanasi, Jaunpur and Mirzapur had nothing more than light drizzles. This brought some respite for the crops. The target area for the kharif season was 102 lakh hectares, including crops such as paddy, jowar, bajra, maize, sugarcane, and til. Of these 102 lakh hectares, the condition of 65 lakh hectares of crops is particularly bad, the area having been rendered almost uncultivable by the lack of rain. Of the remaining 35 lakh hectares, irrigation facilities exist for only 23 lakh hectares, mostly in the form of tube-wells and pump sets. Besides this, there are 230 small and 10 big pumps. Water for irrigation in UP and Bihar is drawn from the upper Ganges, lower Ganges, Sarada, Ram Ganga, and the Gandak. Posses of Home Guards keep vigil on their banks to ensure that there is no unauthorised diversion of water for irrigation.

Last year the production of rice stood at 52.6 lakh tonnes. The target this year is 64 lakh tonnes, but owing to the drought, the final production figure is not likely to exceed 30 lakh tonnes. The loss in rice production alone is around Rs 400 crores. The estimated production of macca, was 10 lakh tonnes, bajra 7 lakh tonnes, jowar 5 lakh tonnes, dal, hang, urad and moong 1.5 lakh tonnes, and for coarse grains like kodon, sawa and kakun 2.5 lakh tonnes. But due to the dry conditions this season, as much as 40 to 70 per cent of these crops have suffered, which accounts for a total loss of about Rs 200 crores. The target for production including the kharif crops was around 90 lakh tonnes. But the farmers would be lucky if they can manage even to produce 50,000 tonnes. Under the circumstances, it is doubtful if farmers will be able to harvest 40 per cent of the targeted crop production. Official estimates for production are based on the availability of irrigation facilities, power, and recorded rainfall. But owing to an acute shortage of all these aids, the State authorities estimated total crop losses at around Rs. 900 crores.

All of Bihar's 31 districts have been hit by the drought. But officially the situation has only been described as "drought-like". In official jargon, only areas where 75 per cent of crops have been damaged come un-

UP Assembly House



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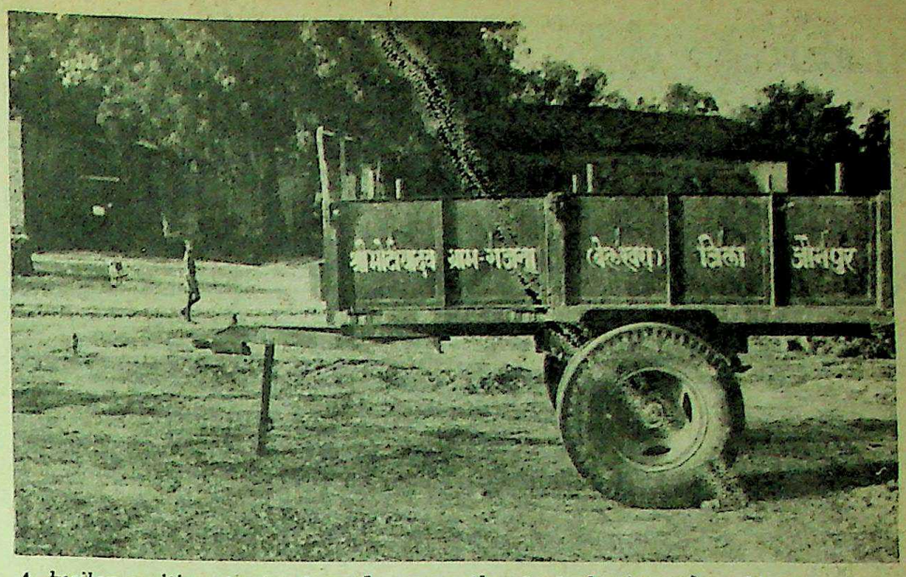
der the category of a proper "drought". Where 50 per cent of crops have suffered, the areas would be termed "drought-hit". Going by this definition, all the 31 districts are "drought-hit". In Palamau, Hazaribagh, Dhanbad, Giridih, Rohtas, Aurangabad, Nawadah and Monghyr the situation is particularly acute. The targeted production of foodgrains in the State was 112.5 lakh tonnes and for jute, around 11 lakh tonnes. The target for foodgrains included 90 lakh tonnes of rice and 11 lakh tonnes of maize. Bihar normally has some pre-monsoon rain, but this year it was scarce. There was little or no rain in June which resulted in losses in the production of jute, maize and pulses. Sporadic rainfall in the beginning of July was followed by sufficient rainfall later in the month. However, some southern districts remained comparatively dry. Till August 20, Singbhum, Dhanbad, Katihar, and Giridih had only half of the average rainfall they get in the period every year. There was approximately two-thirds of the normal rainfall at Aurangabad, Rohtas, Palamau, Madhubani, Begusarai, and Purnea.

Excessive rainfall in North Bihar even caused floods. Both floods and drought hit the State together. The sowing of crops suffered due to the scarce rainfall, and even where sowing was possible, seedlings could not sprout. While the target for paddy cultivation was 53 lakh hectares, crops were almost completely destroyed in 8.5 lakh hectares. Eventually, cultivation of paddy was possible only in 34 lakh hectares. The target for maize cultivation was 9 lakh hectares, but the drought reduced the figure to four lakh hectares. Of the 1.6 hectares normally under jute cultivation, 16,000 hectares remained barren. According to official estimates, 20.5 lakh tonnes of rice valued at Rs. 410 crores, 6 lakh tonnes of maize valued at Rs 90 crores, 2.5 lakh bales of jute worth Rs 70 crores and other assorted crops worth Rs 10 crores were damaged, bringing the total damages to Rs 580 crores. The situation is equally bad in Uttar Pradesh.

It is evident that in UP and Bihar, 70 per cent of the kharif crops have been damaged. Those which remain standing are fighting a grim battle against the drought. The plight of the farmers would not have been so bad had the loss been restricted to Kharif crops, but under the present circumstances it seems that the rabi harvest too would be very seriously affected. The cultivator's fate will be decided by the rainfall in October. It is probable that in the event of scanty rainfall in the coming months, drought could even lead to starvation. The villages in the interior could well reach starvation point in the near future. The Centre has declared that it has at its disposal 23 million tonnes of foodgrains in storage. The country produces around 130 million tonnes of foodgrains annually. Therefore 1.01 million tonnes are required to meet the emergency situation created by the drought. The kharif



A trailer waiting to be towed: even the fuel shortage is evident

crop production normally amounts to around 60 lakh tonnes. According to official estimates, the kharif produce will be 20 million tonnes in spite of the drought. This means that after the kharif harvest, the warehouses will have around 43 million tonnes of foodgrains. If we forget the rabi crop for the moment, we will require 52 million tonnes of foodgrains for the next 6 months, of which only 43 million tonnes seem to be available. Officials believe that the amount available will at least save the people from starvation. This can only be achieved by organising an efficient system of distribution. Blackmarketeers are bound to have a field day as soon as the foodgrains reach the cities. Only the comparatively affluent city folks will be able to buy the foodgrains at inflated rates. The villagers will be the worst sufferers. In the face of this grim situation, one wonders how soon and how well the distribution system can serve the villages.

Of the 180 lakh hectares under cultivation in UP, only 8.2 lakh hectares are irrigated. Ninetyeight lakh hectares have to depend on rain. In Bihar, only 22 lakh hectares out of a total of 80 lakh hectares of arable land is under irrigation. Faulty tubewells and insufficient power limit the irrigated areas to around 10 lakh hectares. In UP, for the same reasons, the benefits of irrigation are limited to about 60 lakh hectares.

In Bihar, the Gandak, Kosi, Sone and Kyol Chandan Barua canals constitute the principal arteries of irrigation. The Gandak and Kosi canals are not dry at the moment but they may cease to function in the coming months. The Sone canal may soon become totally useless due to scanty rainfall. Out of a total of 10,000 tubewells installed by the Government in the State, not more than 6,000 are functioning properly. Private tubewells number around 1,26,000 in the State, and 10,000 among these are out of order. Shortage of power and diesel is a constant headache for the farmers. On an average, the machines are not able to irrigate more than a hectare against their capaciy of two hectares. In UP, there are three major irrigation canals, over 200 smaller canals fed by pumps and 10,52,454 tubewells, which are privately owned. The State Government has installed as many as 15,000 tubewells. Forty per cent of private tubewells and 60 per cent among those owned by the Government need urgent repairs.

The State Government has issued a rule that power will be available for tubewells only from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. An irrigation official who returned from a tour of Ranchi, Nawadah and Hazaribagh told this correspondent that farmers do not get power for more than half an hour during the night! Power is generated in Bihar at Patratu and Barauni. Patratu has eight thermal units. Even if one unit is shut down there is an immediate shortfall of 60 MW. The total power demand of the State is around 720 MW. But not more than 200 to 250 MW are generated daily. This figure, too, is not constant. Bihar also buys electricity from UP and Orissa to the tune of 55 MW. Therefore, not more than 300 MW are available daily. With this level of power production it is impossible to cope with the drought situation. In UP, the thermal units are expected to produce 3,182 MW of power but the actual generation is only between 1,500—1,600 MW. (This is the production figure for 4.9.79). In UP only 36,000 villages out of a total of 1,12,000 have electricity. Let us consider the situation prevailing in some of UP's power centres: Obhira is plagued by low quality coal and defective machinery but is somehow functioning. Rihand, a hydel power station, is closed. Ram Ganga may soon be shut down due to unavailability of water. Harduangaj, Panki and Jamuna are functioning. The hydel power station at Chilla is running smoothly. Suhawla is only producing 3 MW daily against its installed capacity of 13.

According to available statistics,

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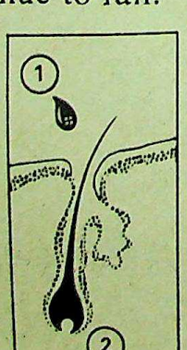

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only 25 per cent of the arable land in UP and Bihar is under irrigation. Inadequate supplies of power and diesel have made a mockery of irrigation in these areas. The remaining 75 per cent is left to the whims of nature. Successive Governments must be held responsible for this sad state of affairs.

An official of the irrigation department told this correspondent : "The power siuation has been always alarming. And we have always had poor irrigation facilities. But we have been hit by drought only this year. Why ? Perhaps you can tell me." This statement reflects the official stand regarding the drought. The concerned Ministries have developed the habit of blaming nature for drought and in the event of a bumper crop, they bask in its glory. A bumper crop is also exploited by Minister for political ends.

It is possible that the Government is using the drought to cover up its failure on the agriculture, irrigation, and power fronts. Before the drought set in, cities in Bihar and UP were plagued by power-cuts. When the drought began, the Government declared that the countryside would enjoy priority in the allotmen of power. Bu as things stand at the moment power is not adequately available either in the villages or in the urban areas. In Bihar too irrigation officials blame the electricity department for the mess. The Governmen must accept the blame for the drought compounded by the failure of irrigation.

Politics of disaster

People in the cities are apathetic, leaving politicians to exploit the situation, finds ARUN RANJAN

THE train was on its way from Lucknow to Jaunpur, the district in UP worst hit by drought. When the train stopped at Ayodhya a large number of pilgrims entered it among whom was a sizable crowd of Marwaris. Further down at Shahganj station another group of people entered. But they were different from the faces inside the train—ill-fed and dark with vacant looks in their eyes. A 'compassionate' passenger's voice was heard: "Since you are from the drought affected regions, go to the Government for relief. Do not come and disturb us." The men did not receive a single paise from any passenger inside the compartment. A young man suddenly asked: "How many persons have died of hunger there?" That was all the passengers could spare for the affected people—false sympathy and rude questions. Just outside Jaunpur station a dead bullock was seen. Comments were immediately heard: "Did it die for lack of fodder? No, yaar, it doesn't look starved."

Almost every other year the villagers in these areas put up with great hardship — floods, fires and drought—and the city people never realise their difficulties. First, bold headlines appear on the front pages of newspapers like: "Drought feared in State" or "State Government worried". Very soon everything seems to disappear into oblivion and the news about the drought finds its place in an obscure corner. Leaders begin issuing statements. Wherever we have gone in Bihar and UP—in the MLA hostels, coffee houses and newspaper offices the only discussions we have heard were about the coming elections. The intellectuals in the cities ascribe the drought to the power crisis. In the Central secretariat in Lucknow I had a glimpse of the Government's attitude to the situation. The information department could only give me the figures of the affected districts, the agriculture department could only provide me with the figures of foodgrains destroyed while the figures for power and irrigation seemed to be in possession of only the heads of these departments It was clear that the administration did not have a clear picture of the situation itself. Apart from the chief secretary and the agriculture secretary, no one else, perhaps, had any idea about how much land in the State was irrigated and how much was affected by the drought, what the capacity of the State's power stations were and how many pumping sets and tubewells were working. These two officials on the other hand were closeted in continuous meetings between themselves. The total damage due to the drought was officially put at Rs 600 crores. All I wanted to ask was what the break-up of damages were. Since nobody could or was willing to answer my queries I was pushed from one table to another. During my futile search for answers I met the MLA from Faizabad, Mr Shyama Prasad Pradip.

According to Mr Pradip, official statistics show that in 18 blocks of his district 86 to 99 per cent of land area is under irrigation, which is almost as good as the figure for Punjab. Statistics also show that in July 96.4 and in August 47.7 millimetres of rainfall were recorded in the area. In reality, the rainfall was no more than one-third of this amount. 99.28 per cent of land area in Baskhari, 86.29 per cent in Ramnagar, and 93.4 per cent in Bhison, in the Faizabad district are under tubewell irrigation, according to official figures. Since these figures are exaggerated, not much reliance can be placed on the figures indicating damages too. Statistical estimates are drawn up in cosy Government offices, and relief measures and compensation are planned accordingly. Mr Pradip looked contemptu-

A lady surveying the parched fields in Jaunpur

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ously at the official chart showing damages in various districts he was holding and threw it down.

There is a curious connection between drought and devious politicians. First, the people of an area press politicians to declare their regions as "drought-affected" in order to avail of relief. When this is done, politicians enjoy the kick-backs from relief measures. Here is an instance. Every year, the worst affected area in the Jharkhand district, one of Bihar's most backward regions, is Palamau. And every year there is a recurring campaign to have Madhubani, an area less severely affected by drought, declared a "drought-affected" area. The reason is that Madhubani is a Brahmin stronghold, and the Brahmins there are resourceful: the headlines of two papers controlled by the community make the 'drought in Madhubani' their daily subject. The starvation deaths in Palamau make obscure inside-page stories. Droughts have this habit of bringing politicians into the focus, in fact, they provide a fine opportunity to gauge politicians' popularity. Sibu Soren, Bihar's adivasi leader from Jharkhand, along with three of his colleagues, has threatened that if the Santal Parganas are not declared drought-affected, no adivasi would cast his vote in the coming Parliamentary poll. Politicians spare no pains to exaggerate the extent of the drought in their own areas in order to gain support, and since they are the leaders of the masses, MLAs pretend to think about the "welfare" of their constituencies. They have a lot to gain for this, more than popular support: the more they pretend to be concerned, the more facilities they are given. At least this is what happened in Uttar Pradesh. And the grant of special facilities to politicians, believe it or not, happened to be the first instance of any relief doled out by the UP Government in the wake of the drought. The MLAs' daily allowance was increased from Rs 15 to Rs 30, and they received this amount while the legislature was in session. Now they are to get the allowance for two more days—one prior to the sitting of the Assembly, and for the day after it has concluded. Along with this, they are to be granted an allowance for four days' leave. Until now, UP's MLAs were entitled to free railway travel for 15,000 kms on coupons. If they do not avail of these travel coupons, they will be paid Rs 3,000 as compensation towards travel. Each MLA and his companion is entitled to a maximum of eight free first class passes for a month. In addition, all legislators who wish to travel second class, shall be entitled to free travel for 25,000 kilometres, or compensation in cash. Ordinarily, each MLA is entitled to two first class passes for travel by train or bus. Under a recently enacted bill, legislators are favoured in the allotment of telephone connections — telephones shall be installed wherever they reside or work.

"The fields are the landowners', and whatever relief comes is their's too," said a shrivelled farmer in the harijan village Gajna in Jaunpur district. "We manage to survive on earnings from clay pots," he added. An older harijan said, "We always migrate from these drought-prone areas, and are getting ready to move out of here." How far had the sowing gone? "There were no rains, so the farmers did not sow. Now the only work left for us is carting dead animals," remarked a younger harijan. "All the Government officials visit the bigger villages. Who would care to visit a village of landless harijans? Who bothers about whether or not we have had a square meal a day? It is apparent that relief does not percolate to the lowest levels. Whatever little relief we receive is in the form of alms. So the only option left is to migrate," another young harijan of the village said.

Bihar's Agriculture department has blamed the Irrigation officials for not making adequate arrangements for providing water to the farmers. The Irrigation department has in turn blamed the Power department, which is facing the problem of water shortage itself. What these three departments — Agriculture, Irrigation and Power — have in common, however, is an inability to deal with the situation within their limitations. As for the Power department, this is evident from the manner in which the Lucknow Electric Supply Undertaking's (LESU) directives are being flouted: an LESU ad signed by the resident engineer Mr S. Mazumdar says that under its fourth and fifth clauses aircondition ers and neon ad signs are not to be used in Government offices and State undertakings. But there are no signs of this order being complied with anywhere in Lucknow itself. The people in cities continue to look at the drought with detached nonchalance. When I told him that I would like to ask the agricultural produce commissioner the reasons for the drought, a city-bred journalist in Lucknow remarked : "The only reason for the drought is that there have been no rains. What is there to ask?" This is the impression being encouraged by the Establishment. Did my journalist-friend know — if in an area of 1,000 acres, 700 acres were arable, out of which 500 acres were without irrigation facilities, and 200 irrigated, though with less power and water than it actually needs, who was to account for the future of the farmers? The fate of the non-irrigated 500 acres was at the mercy of the rains; who would account for that of the remaining 200 acres — god or the Government? And who then is ultimately responsible for this scorching disaster? Is it an apathetic and negligent Government, or god? These are questions that strike every thinking person, questions to which there can be one stock answer : the drought was man-made. There is no one, even after all this, to ask the Government why it has not provided irrigation facilities in all the arable land in the State in the last three decades. Instead, people are sponging the Government for relief. This is what encourages politicians to deceive people. The Rihand Dam in UP has been closed down ostensibly for lack of water. It is to be opened during the elections, obviously as a vote-catching device. Apart from destroying thousands of homes, one thing the drought has certainly done is to reveal politicians in their worst elements.

Relief runs dry

APART from some of the finest perfumes in the country, the district of Jaunpur is famous for its vegetables, tobacco and a special variety of rice. Most of the crops this year have dried up due to the lack of rainfall which has brought nearly 75 per cent of the population, for whom agriculture is the only means of livelihood, to the brink of starvation. Having already destroyed the kharif crop, the drought now poses a grave threat to the rabi crop in the area. The farmers for their part, are trying their best to irrigate their land manually with water from the Sharda canal. The level of the Gomti, which runs through Jaunpur, has fallen steeply. There is a shortage of water in the Sharda canal too; the water takes as long as 20 to 22 days to reach the land, and in the process more water dries up. Though the Sharda canal and its sub-canals can irrigate 25 per cent of the arable land area, only rich and prosperous farmers are left to benefit from this because of the sale of the water at the exorbitant rate of Rs 5 to 10 per hour. A majority of the peasants who are extremely poor and cannot afford to buy the water, are forced to make a living themselves with whatever they can grow. Their families are migrating to the cities in search of jobs.

Bejapur village, which is situated 10 miles east of Jaunpur city has hardly any facility for modern irrigation. The agricultural holdings are scattered far and wide, and this makes it difficult for a single pump to distribute water to a number of plots together. But despite the sorry lack of irrigation facilities, not only maize but also sugarcane is produced in the area in abundance, according to a rich landholder Mr Rajendra Pratap. "When it started raining between June 16 to 18, the peasants saw hope and began planting seedl-

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ings from June 23. But the lack of rainfall after the sowing, and the shortage of electricity and diesel for the pumps, brought everything to nought. The crops dried up. This meant losses for me of upto Rs. 4,000 to 6,000 for the seeds and labour. If the crops were produced, they would have fetched me as much as Rs 10,000. So I have effectively lost around Rs 20,000. This is also the lot of every other 'prosperous' peasant in Bejapur."

Speaking about the drought, the sub-divisional magistrate of Kerakat said that all the 450 villages in Jalalpur, Muftigang, Kerakat and Domi, under the Kerakat sub-division, have been hit by the drought. Water barely reaches the pumps from the various canals becaues the sub-division is situated at the tail-end of the irrigated area, the point farthest from the water-source. Even crops in the command area are therefore drying. There are 85 public tube-wells, of which 12 are permanently defective, and 13 are not working because of minor defects. A number of private tubewells provide the much-needed relief. Last year there were 300 millimetres of rainfall till August, and this year the rainfall for the same period was 93 milli-metres only. On September 2, the rainfall recorded was 2 millimetres and September 3 it was 6.5 millimetres. This was hardly sufficient for the kharif crop, and there is no hope of any more rainfall now, because the rainy season is almost over.

According to Ramashray Yadav who owns ten acres in Gajna, and Belkhara, there are about 250 families in the two villages which till roughly 450 bighas of land. Apart from a few Yadavas, the rest till no more than 5 to 10 acres each. Among them are harijans, Thakurs, Koiris and Lohars. There is a public pump near the harijan basti in Gajna. Though there are about 16 to 17 pumping sets in the village, this does not appear to help: this is evident from the sight at the maize plantations, where despite the presence of tubewells and pumps within close reach, the crops have dried. The pumps are not working for the lack of diesel.

The former Minister and MP from Kerakat, Ram Sagar Singh, is more worried about the rabi than the kharif crop. According to him, the drought poses a grave threat to the rabi crop, since the farmers have no seeds to plant due to the crop-failure, And Government help has also not been forthcoming.

Mr N. A. Vishwanathan, Jaunpur's young and enthusiastic DM, said that crops worth Rs 16 crores were damaged in the area. A food-for-work programme involving a 49-km stretch of road has been started. Of the 501 public tubewells only 423 are working. We heard a strange complaint in the DM's office: of the 600 cusecs of water earmarked for Jaunpur and Sultanpur, only 300 are being received. Of this Jaunpur's due share is 40 per cent but it is only receiving 25 per cent. On September 8, the DM wrote in protest to the State Government, against the inadequate arrangements made for the district. The DM confessed that only 17 per cent of the arable land in his district was irrigable. Mr Kedar Nath, a peasant in Kerakat complained that the lift irrigation technique was not working. Most private tube-wells have stopped working for lack of power or diesel.

The Government has announced that the consumption of electricity in cities will be restricted to save more power for the villages. According to the new roster, power cuts are to be effective on one day from 12 noon to 6 pm and on the next from 6 am to 12 noon, and so on, on alternate days. Villages are supposed to receive power for 6 hours every day. But farmers complain of receiving power for not more than two to three hours every day, and this too between irregular intervals. Power cuts result in problems in operating electric

Hanuman Prasad Singh

pumping sets. There is another problem. Power for irrigation is supplied at night, but the peasants are unwilling to work at night because of the fear of snakes which abound in the fields. The inconvenient hours of power supply have angered the villagers, who allegedly beat up the electricity executive engineer, Mr R. N. Singh, on September 4-5.

Mr Birendra Pratap Singh of Sakhoi village, talking about a fellow farmer, Kedar Nath Singh, who owns a foreign tractor, said that besides ploughing 20 acres of his (Kedar's) land, the tractor was being used to plough hundreds of acres of other farmers' land at a rate of Rs 15 to 40 per acre. (The differing rates were due to the different uses the tractor was put to). Mr Birendra Pratap Singh said that he had asked Kedar babu if he could use his tractor for ploughing four bighas of his own land, to which the latter replied that he would lend it only if given the diesel. "For the last 10 days my men have been looking for diesel in the city but in vain." According to the local Janata(S) leader Mr Hanuman Prasad Singh, the ten to 12 petrol pumps in the city have not been able to obtain sufficient diesel, and whatever little they have is being sold at the exorbitant rate of Rs 3.30 per litre in the blackmarket whereas the actual cost is Rs 1.68 per litre. Says Mr Hanuman Prasad Singh, "The Government has announced that diesel will be supplied on production of ration cards, but why has nothing been done about it?" The racketing in diesel has already given rise to tension among the farmers. Sometime back the pesants and their leaders gheraoed a petrol pump on the Allahabad Road in the Naigang municipality. According to a statement by a Government spokesman, diesel permits shall soon be issued in the Jaunpur district under which 30 litres per week are earmarked for pumping sets, 40 litres per week for tractors, 40 litres per day for trucks and buses and 20 litres per day for jeep taxies. This means a total of 577 kilolitres of diesel will be supplied to Jaunpur every month, while the actual demand in Jaunpur is for 1,600 kilolitres every month. The gap between actual demand and the amount promised is obvious. With prospects of relief in the villages declining a massive exodus has started towards towns and cities and an increasing number of people are taking to pulling rickshaws and working on construction sites as labourers. Only those who still have the courage and determination to survive on their land have stayed back.

The exodus from the villages can have serious implications for the agricultural economy since when the time comes for the rabi crop to be sown, there will be few hands around. The position of foodgrains is yet to be ascertained. The Government has opened some fair price foodgrains shops which are to sell wheat at a rate of Rs 138 per quintal. The market price of wheat has meanwhile shot up to Rs 145 per quintal from Rs 120 per quintal a few days back. This shows the enormous profiteering in wheat prices. The Government harps on the fact that there are large stocks of wheat in godowns, but has this helped check prices? As for loans to the peasants, the radio and newspapers announce that the Government has decided to stop temporarily the process of recovery of loans. But according to an ex-MP Ram Sagar Singh, the Government circular to this effect insists on the repayment of loans where it would be easy to recover them, while not pressurising the others. The language being ambiguous, the circular is interpreted according to convenience, so that non-payment of loans would appear in some cases to be acts of default, and in others, condonable.

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According to Mr Ram Sagar Singh, ten persons were arrested in Macchli Shahar for alleged default on September 3 and 4.

The farmers are also worried about not getting the right variety of fodder for their animals. According to a note issued by the Government's Animal Husbandry department the fodder being given to the animals is unhealthy since it has not been able to grow fully, and contains an acid (hydrocyanic acid) that is poisonous for the animals and can cause death within an hour if consumed. The effects of the acid can be seen in ten minutes: the animal develops breathing trouble, shivering and soon falls unconscious. Animals can also develop a skin disease, whereby the skin starts peeling off on consuming a poisonous plant Lantana Camara. This causes death within 24 to 48 hours. The Animal Husbandry department has advised farmers to keep their cattle under the shade and inform vets on discovering such symptoms. The Government has not informed the farmers where such poisonous plants can be seen. Besides, which poor peasant would take the pains to have the plants in and around his grazing area tested in a laboratory? Where are the laboratories in the first place? Meanwhile animals are fast dying and milch cattle are being sold cheaply. One of the reasons for the increasing number of animals dying is the lack of drinking water. People and animals are being forced to drink dirty water from wells and ponds. No one feels the need to use bleaching powder to disinfect the water.

The Government, while not denying the news of cattle dying, refutes the claims of human deaths due to starvation. Government officials continue to challenge such claims, even going to the extent of asking for the deceased persons' names and addresses. Some influential people say the deaths are due to cholera. It is a pointless controversy. For the common man, however, this makes no difference: for him, death due to starvation would mean death caused by malnutrition, unhealthy drinking water, etc. These are the reasons for the deaths in Kerakat. Do words matter?

Arun Ranjan

We want drought

NOT all villages in UP and Bihar want rain. Surprisingly, there are some which do not—precisely four of them. "Yes, we want drought. We don't want rains. We want the canals in our area closed. If it rains, we are finished," said Mr Rajpati Singh, a resident of Sakhoi village of Kerakat tehsil in Jaunpur, and continued. "If you want to know the reasons come and visit our village." And so we did. Kerakat tehsil is 25 kilometres away from Lucknow. Pressmen from the State capital had reported six starvation deaths.

A strange spectacle greeted us when we reached Sakhoi: the mud houses had developed cracks and about 25 of them had collapsed. The fields around the village were covered with water and the soil was marshy. Dry land was not visible anywhere. The ground under our feet was soft and we soon realised that the legs of the chairs we were sitting on had sunk into the earth.

Rajpati Singh told us the reasons for this "artificial flood". Some years back there were plans to construct the Jagdishpur canal, which was supposed to be 8 kilometres long. It was meant to irrigate the fields with water from the Gomti around Shivpuri village. But when in 1968-69 the canal was inaugurated, only 6 kms were completed. The last two kilometres—the storage area from where the unutilised water was to be channeled back to the Gomti—was never completed. As a result the unutilised water, instead of being channeled back to the Gomti, spread over an area of three to four square kilometres around Kerakat. Over the years, the irrigation canal scheme brought in crores of gallons of water of which only one-fifth was used for irrigation purposes. The rest just covered the ground saturated the soil and made i

marshy. In August 1978, Rajpati Singh's house, which cost Rs 60,000 to construct collapsed. In four villages around that area—Shivpuri, Sakhoi, Keshpur and Saidpur—nearly 125 houses have collapsed. In Shivpuri about 25 houses belonging to harijans and the backward classes have collapsed.

No crops are grown around these four villages. There are two reasons for this. The water accumulated at the roots of the plants causes them to rot and the salty minerals which are under the ground come to the surface with the water. This has eroded the fertility of the soil. In some places in the villages little pools of water could be seen. The stagnant pools have become breeding-grounds for mosquitoes and the attendant diseases they bring: filaria, malaria, etc. Drinking water, too, is a problem, since the water in the wells has been polluted. Bleaching powder is hard to get. Cows and other animals cannot graze anywhere since there is mud all over. The total crop production has been reduced by three-fourths. Women have been evacuated and men sleep in the open for fear that their houses might collapse at any moment.

An October 5, 1978, the District Magistrate of Jaunpur visited Sakhoi after a lot of persuasion. A report on the situation was given to him. It is said that the DM had wryly remarked that the villagers did not need pails to draw out water from the well (since the water level had risen). When the Government thought of helping out with relief to the tune of Rs 100 to Rs 200 per head, the people refused to take it. The amount of damage suffered was nearly Rs 25,000 to Rs 50,000. Following the report of the District Magistrate, Rs 1.75 lakhs was spent on raising the walls of the canals flowing through the villages. Rajpati Singh said that the canals should be closed for a long time. According to him nearly Rs 30 lakhs had been spent on the Jagdishpur canal scheme and it still remains incomplete. This year the drought has brought some relief to the people of Sakhoi and the surrounding villages.

AR

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Beginning October 7

This week the Sun alone is in Virgo. Venus, Mercury and Uranus are in Libra, Neptune is in Scorpio, Kethu is in Aquarius and Mars is in Cancer. Jupiter, Saturn and Rahu are conjoined in the Sun. The Moon will be moving through Taurus and Gemini from Aries.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) An unexpected journey is probable. Keep away from quarrels and erratic actions. Exercise caution and circumspection in all your dealings. If you proceed carefully, luck will favour you in subtle ways. This week is good for romance and matrimony. For people in the field of arts, success seems imminent. Letters are likely to bring good news. **Good dates:** 7, 8, 9 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable direction:** North-east.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Progress on the business front will surely lead to financial gains. Your bad days are about to come to an end. Don't lack self-confidence. Employers and those in authority will prove very helpful in the coming days. Womenfolk will buy expensive clothes and ornaments. This week is favourable for courtship. Domestic and social problems must be solved peacefully. **Good dates:** 7, 8, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** South-east. and West.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Your financial front will prosper to no end. You may have to do a fair bit of travelling too. Some extra expenditure is probable this week. Those in service may be promoted or transferred. Mixing business with pleasure may prove fatal in the long run. Your friends will inspire you. The domestic scene will be a source of joy. **Good dates:** 8, 9 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 11. **Favourable direction:** South.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) This will be a happier and more successful week. The stars promise a good time for romance and matrimonial affairs. An elderly relative will prove helpful to your new ventures. It is likely that employers will favour you in many ways. Womenfolk will show great cooperation. Do not be extravagant. Speculation will surely pay. Social engagements will keep you busy. **Good dates:** 8, 9 and 11. **Lucky number:** 6. **Favourable direction:** South

LEO (July 23 — August 22) Your intuitions and business acumen should help you to surmount problems on the financial front. Soon, many of your recent problems will cease to bother you. Help from elders and secret sources will be forthcoming. Forge ahead on all fronts. You are, however, advised against making impulsive changes. Be discreet in all your dealings. Do not feel shy to ask friends for help. **Good dates:** 7, 9, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable directions:** South and West.

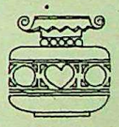
VIRGO (August 22 — September 22) Employers and those in authority may prove to be very hostile. Attend to business. It would be really foolish to neglect your profession. The heart should not rule your head. If you are careful and discreet in your dealings, luck may favour you. You will make new friends this week. The domestic scene will remain peaceful. Do not undertake dubious love adventures. **Good dates:** 10, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 5. **Favourable directions:** South-west and North

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Your health will show signs of improvement. On the financial front, things are bound to brighten up. Utilise hidden reserves of energy to further your plans. Your ambitions are within your reach. For property matters, this week will prove lucky. Exercise caution in romance. **Good dates:** 7, 8, 10 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Exercise circumspection and caution in your speech and writing. All correspondence must be read thoroughly. Examine all documents relating to business very carefully. Guard against deception and theft. Important paper should be kept in safe custody. An unexpected event beyond your control may put all your plans into disarray. Keep your temper under control. **Good dates:** 9, 11, 12 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Despite small problems, this week will prove to be a happy one. Luck will favour you in more than one way. Those in authority will encourage your new ventures. The financial front will prosper and your family will have a comfortable time. Intellectual pursuits will prosper. You are, however, advised against making erratic changes. A short journey is indicated. **Good dates:** 7, 8, 9 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 11. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Your indomitable willpower and perseverance will help you to negotiate all obstacles placed in your path. Push all your business affairs to the utmost. Seek favours and make changes to achieve your goals. An old friend will render invaluable service. Keep away from gambling and doubtful love adventures. Meditation will ensure mental peace. **Good dates:** 7, 8, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North and South.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) You will achieve a fair measure of success. Influential friends and relatives will extend all possible help and cooperation. Artistic and intellectual pursuits will prosper during this week. This is the right period for entering into new contracts and business deals. Letters will bring good news. Romance is indicated. **Good dates:** 9, 10 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable direction:** North.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This is a period of trial for you. Patience and courage should, however, see you through this long and dark period. Exercise caution in all your dealings. You may have to undertake long journeys. Devote time to business affairs. The domestic scene will be a source of joy and happiness. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 10 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North and North-west.

M. B. RAMAN

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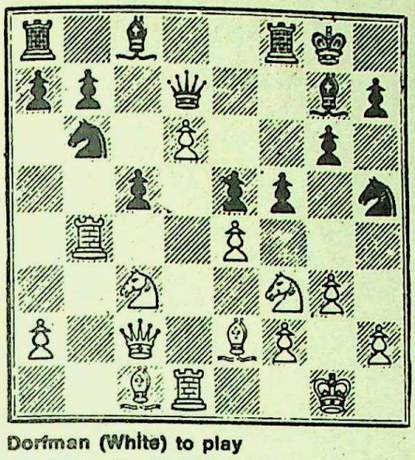
chess

Grigorian (Black)



Dorfman (White) to play
Position after Black's 16th move

Chess fever

CHESS is not a great spectator attraction. Relatively few people have a sufficiently deep knowledge of the game to understand the ins and outs of a five-hour grandmaster struggle, and even for the fortunate minority the temptation to nod off half way through can be overpowering. Yet popular interest in chess is undoubtedly high. Viewing figures for BBC-2's 'The Master Game' are good and would in fact seem to exceed the number of people in this country who actually do play chess. It is this interest among people who presumably have only very little knowledge of the game which is particularly fascinating.

The strangest example is that of the Philippines, hosts to the recent World Championship Match. Chess is officially the second most popular game/sport on these islands, first place going to, believe it or not, basket-ball. (The height of the average Filipino does not rise far beyond the level of Ronnie Corbett's kneecaps). Chess coverage in the media is extensive, and Eugene Torre, their first grandmaster, enjoys the same level of popularity as a Bobby Moore or a Henry Cooper in this country. But, and this is the intriguing bit, precious few Filipinos understand the first thing about chess. I can best illustrate this by the following conversation which occurred when an ardent Korchnoi supporter phoned the playing hall during one of the World Championship games to find out how her hero was getting on: 'Who is leading in today's game?' she inquired. 'Er – Mr Korchnoi, he is leading, Ma'am', came the reply after some deliberation.

'Oh good! By how much is he leading?' This follow-up would have stumped all but the greatest authorities on the game: 'Er – well, Ma'am. Mr Korchnoi, he has played 32 moves and Mr Karpov, he has only played 31!'

Today's game is from a country where the people really do know what they are talking about – when it comes to chess anyway – the USSR.

White: Dorfman. Black: Grigorian
Soviet Championship 1977
King's Indian Defence

1. P—QB4, N—KB3; 2. N—QB3, P—KN3; 3. P—K4, B—N2; 4. P—Q4, P—Q3; 5. B—K2, O—O; 6. N—B3; P—K4; 7. O—O, QN—Q2; 8. Q—B2, P—B3; 9. R—Q1, Q—K2; 10. P—Q5, P—B4; 11. P—N1, N—R4; The knight does not stand so well here. Better 11. . . N—K1.

12. P—KN3, N—N3; 13. P—QN4, P x P; 14. R x P, P—B4; 15. P—B5, An inspired sacrificial breakthrough.

15. . . P x BP; 16. P—Q6, Q—Q2; (DIAGRAM) Losing by force. Relatively best was 16. . . Q—Q1.

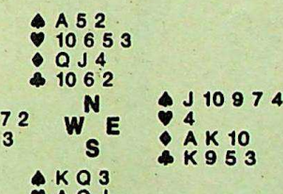
17. R x N! P x R; 18. B—QN5, As Nimsowitch used to say, the queen is not a good blockader.

18. . . Q—Q1; 19. P—Q7, R—R4; 20. Q—N3+ K—N1; 21. N—N5! R x B; 22. N x R, and Black resigned. His position has fallen apart at the seams. On 22. . . B x P most accurate is 23 N—Q6! Q—K2 24 N(Q6)—B7+ R x N 25 N x R+ K—N1 25 N—R6++ mating.

MICHAEL STEAN

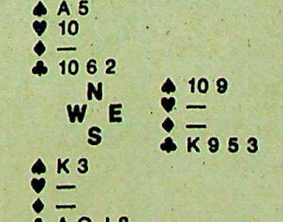
bridge

A SERIES of articles by the veteran Hungarian Géza Ottlik in the American *Bridge World* created a big impression, because many of the positions he described were extremely unusual and seemed to belong to the world of problem-setters. The achievement of **Adventures in Card Play**, by Ottlik and Hugh Kelsey (Gollancz, £7.95), is that it establishes the practicality of these difficult plays. It is a book ahead of its time, but techniques improve; the Vienna coup, once the wonder of cafe society, now seems quite simple. I remember this deal from the *Bridge World.*



South plays in 3NT after East has opened One Spade. Spurning his partner's suit, West leads the 9 of diamonds, which is covered by the Jack and King. East returns a heart, won by the King, and a second diamond enables the defence to take the first four tricks. East exits with ♠ J.

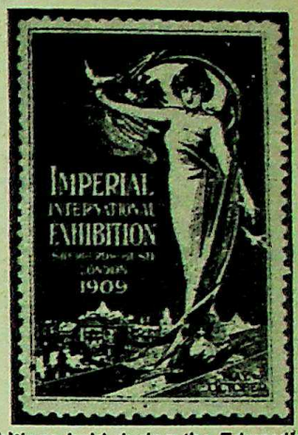
South, on the surface, has nine tricks —three spades, three hearts and (at least) three clubs, but there are entry problems. Declarer reaches this position:



South may play the King and Ace of spades, but what next? The heart 10 squeezes him, and if he doesn't lead the heart he can make only three clubs. But try overtaking ♠ K with ♠ A and leading ♥ 10: now East is the sufferer!

TERENCE REESE

stamps



Exhibitions held during the Edwardian era at Earls Court and in the Great White City at Shepherd's Bush were not commemorated by the issue of special postage stamps but several were advertised by stamp-like publicity labels. Having no postal validity, these labels were neglected by Edwardian collectors and some types are now very scarce, costing towards £1. The Imperial International Exhibition publicised by this embodiment of 'Peace and Commerce' was opened on 20 May 1909 by the Duke of Argyll.

C.W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. What is white noise?
2. What is degaussing?
3. What is economic warfare?
4. What was Festung Europa?
5. What is concrete poetry?
6. What is a Skinner Box?
7. Who coined the phrase 'Theatre of panic'?

ANSWERS

1. An incoherent combination of frequencies over a wide band.
2. Process of neutralising the magnetisation of ferromagnetic objects.
3. The disorganisation of the enemy's economy as a prevention against carrying on war, especially through economic measures, like denial of imports.
4. Fortress Europe, as it was known, was a Nazi propaganda symbol for enforced European unity and strength against invasion by Anglo-American forces in 1943.
5. A concept of poetry formulated and launched in 1958 by Brazilian poets and designers.
6. A device developed by B. F. Skinner for training animals to learn appropriate responses.
7. French dramatist Fernando Arrabal, to describe a type of cerebral theatre coined the term in 1926.

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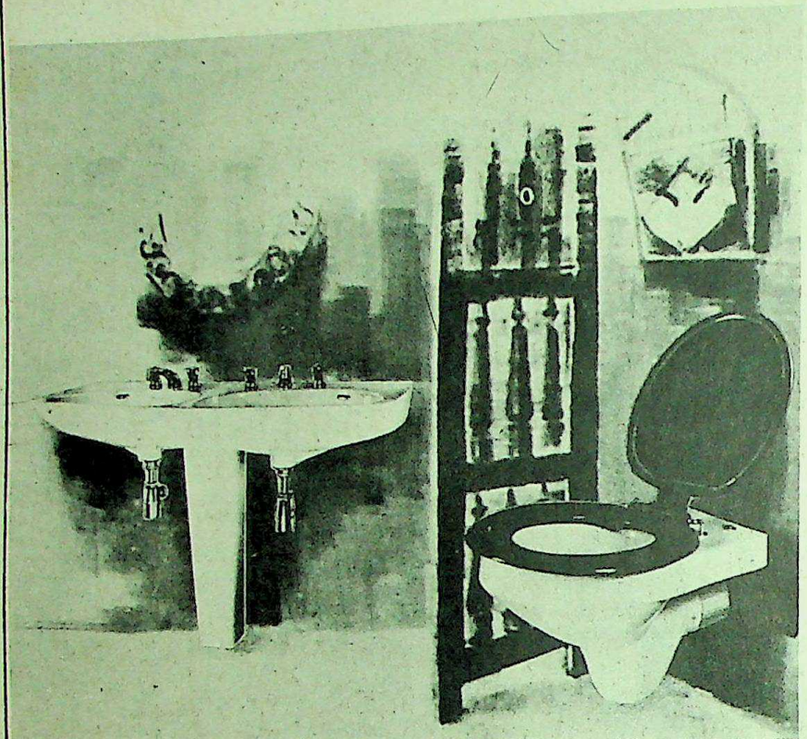

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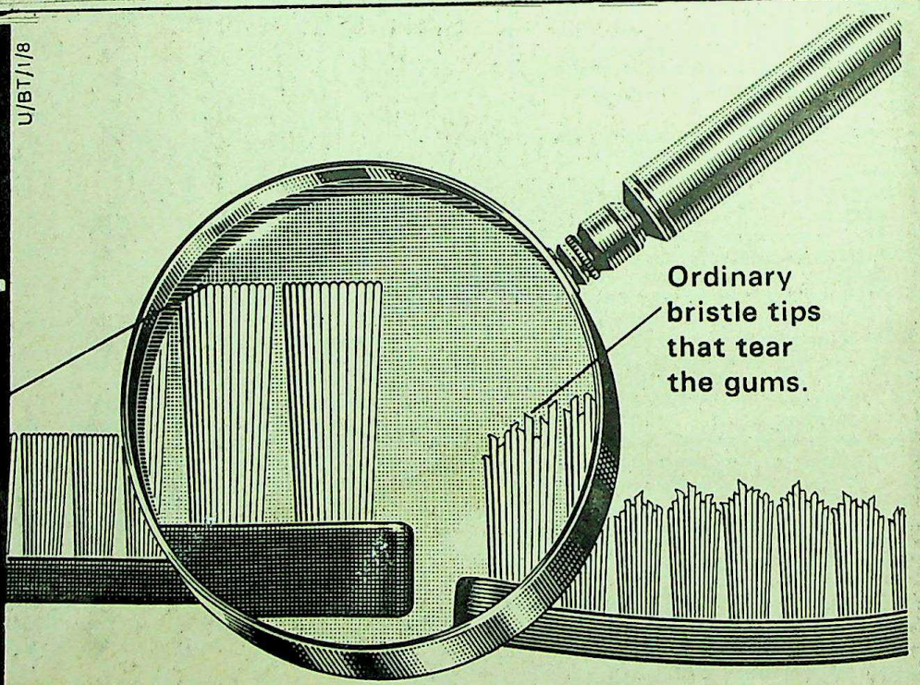

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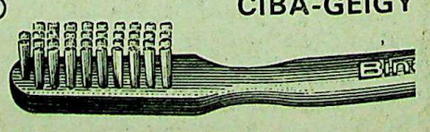

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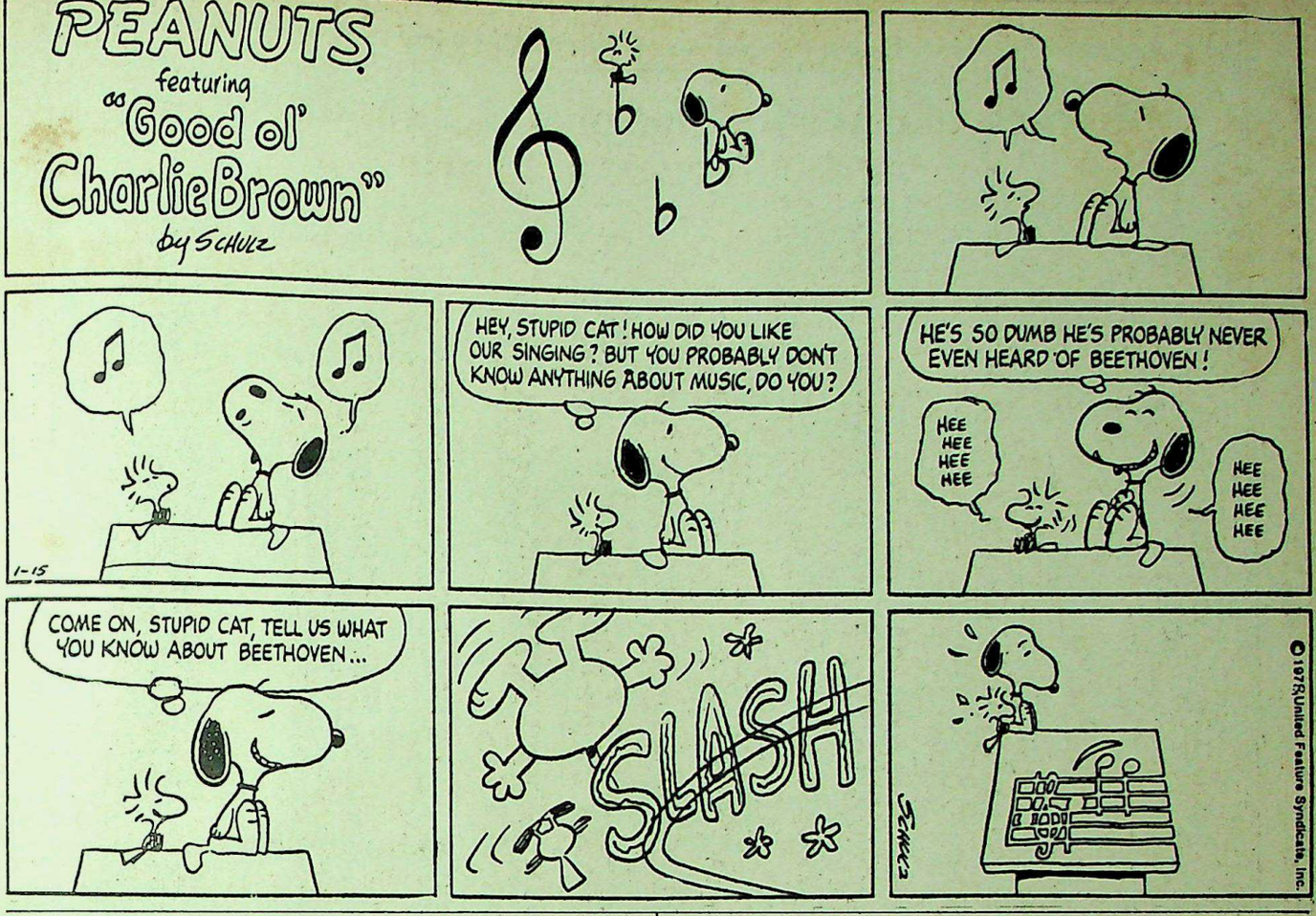

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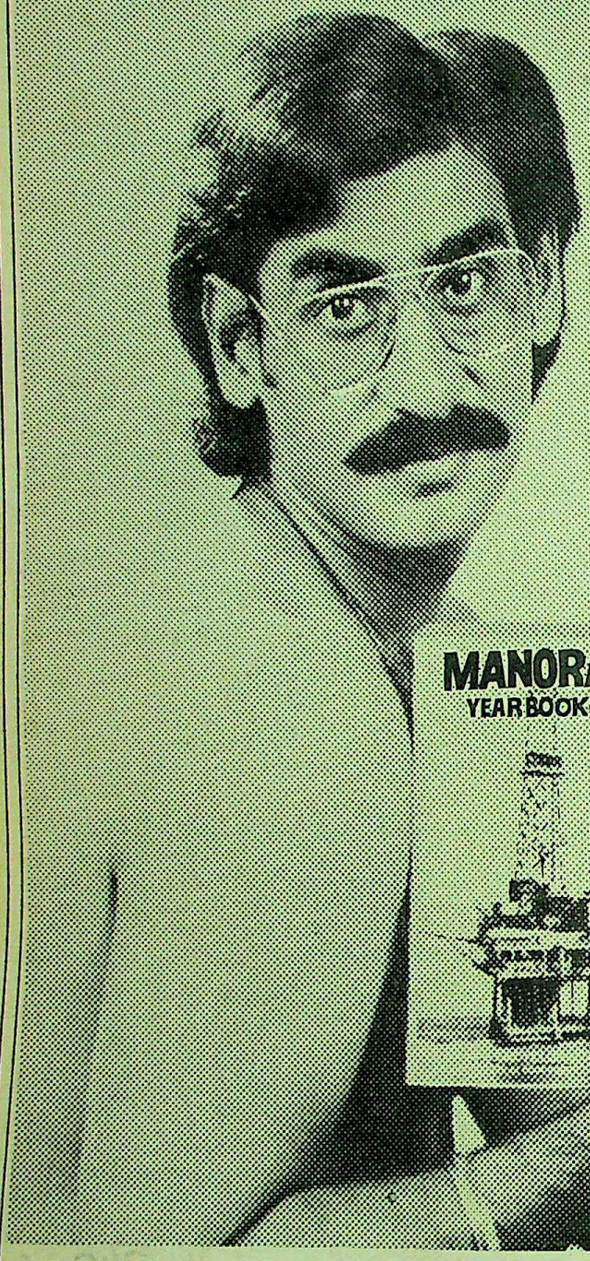
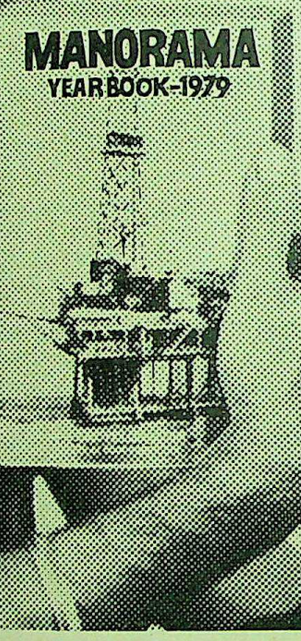
My shirt, yes...but my Manorama Year Book...No!



MANORAMA YEAR BOOK 1979



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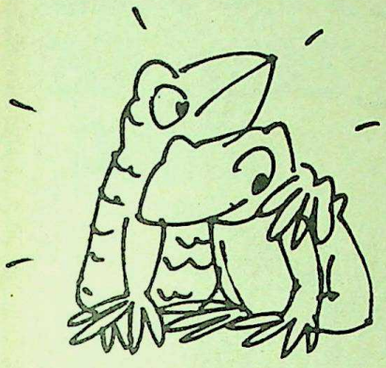

RAIPUR : It was a strange marriage — to please the God of rains, Indra in a village 30 km from Mahasamund in the drought-hit Raipur district. The "bride" and the "bridegroom" were kept in separate pots. They were toads. The marriage was performed with all the formalities in a special "mantap" at an auspicious time workd out by pundits. The wedding ceremonies were conducted by women — men were allowed only to watch—amid chanting of mantras followed by a community feast for all the villagers. The bride was named "Machli Rani" (Queen of Fish) and the bridegroom "Meghraj" (The King of Clouds). The two toads were then ceremoniously let into a tank — *Deccan Herald* (Arasu, Bangalore)

NEW DELHI : Two young men fond of lively conversation with young girls on the phone found that they had dialled the "wrong" number. The girl, a schoolteacher in north Delhi, they had been dialling, proved too smart for them. She not only taped their love talk on the phone but also invited the young men to come over. As the two reached the teacher's house, they found to their chagrin, policemen and not their "love" — *The Hindustan Times* (Dunder Raman, Delhi).

JAIPUR : One kilo of hair was taken out from the stomach of a boy during an operation performed by a doctor at the Mahatma Gandhi Hospital in Jodhpur recently. The 18-year-old boy, Ram Kishore of Government Higher Secondary School, Nagaur, had been fond of eating hair for the last 16 years, it is said. He gradually developed a tumour and had frequent stomach ache. Last year, Dr Singhvi operated upon a woman, also of Nagaur district, and took out a bunch of hair weighing 750 grams — *Deccan Herald* (P. S. Rao, Udipi).

NEW DELHI : About 50 to 60 boys of St. Stephen's college stripped themselves neked sang and danced on Chattra Road, in between the Postgraduate Women's Hostel and the Miranda Girls' College Hostel. On a telephonic message from Dr Kukla, Dean of Students Welfare, Roshanara police rushed to the spot at 11.30 p.m. and found the complaint to be true. They managed to arrest eight of the boys while the others ran away—*The Hindustan Times* (Rajesh Karnik, New Delhi).

NEW DELHI : A 16-year-old son of a resident of Ramkrishnapuram, New Delhi, literally tied himself in knots while trying to pull a fast one on his parents. It is stated that his parents went shopping leaving him in the house. When they returned they found him gagged, and tied to a chair. They found that a cupboard had been ransacked, and Rs 950 and a necklace were missing. The boy told them that someone rang the doorbell in their absence. When he opened the door two men attacked him, and tying him to a chair, they ransacked the cupboard and escaped with "something". The parents reported to the police. However during the interrogation the boy broke down and confessed that he had concocted the story. *The Statesman* (Nandita Bhandakkar, New Delhi).

dia abroad

NEW DELHI : Australia's first Hindu temple was formally opened at Sydney by Swami Ranganathanada of the Ramkrishna Mission on September 1, according to reports received from Sydney. The funds for the Sri Mandir temple, situated at the Sydney suburb of Auburn were raised by the Sri Mandir Society, an association of Indians in Australia. The images for the temple are expected to reach Sydney shortly. According to Dr Anand, the society's president, Sri Mandir aims to hold language classes and religious seminars. Mr L. N. Birla is the president of the Sri Mandir—*The Hindu*

SEOUL : Hot pepper, worth 1.5 million dollars, imported from India was burnt to ashes by South Korean officials on September 2, according to the Agriculture and Fishery Ministry. This was part of 2,500 tonnes of hot pepper the Korean Government imported from India last year which turned out to be inedible because of harmful colouring matter, antiseptic and other alien substances mixed in the commodity, the Ministry said. Mr Nam Wook, vice Agriculture and Fishery Minister said the burning was made at the request of importers who did not want their pepper returned to save freight charges. He added that the Indian exporters promised to compensate for the destroyed pepper—*The Hindu*

without comment

THE President Mr Sanjeeva Reddy will have to go if the Janata Party got an absolue majority in the elections—A. B. Vajpayee

I AM a simple man. All my dependants are in service, not business—Charan Singh

TARKESHWARI SINHA was the most undignified woman Parliament has ever had—M. O. Mathai

LIKE tuberculosis, Mr Sanjay Gandhi, destroyed the backbone of the Congress—Devaraj Urs

THE CPI is the country's political invalid. It has so far stayed in the Congress(I)'s pocket but we don't want to have that situation any more—C. M. Stephen

I WILL chase Raj Narain like a torpedo through the constituency... My aim is to become the Prime Minister, ultimately—I. S. Johar

Mr Devaraj Urs is the new star of the south. After rising like a meteor, he is certain to plunge into the sea—S. K. Patil

IT IS a good thing that we did not agree to India's suggestion to restrict the number of bouncers to two per over otherwise Karsan Ghavri would have been in trouble —Bob Merriman, Manager of the touring Australian team

humour in real life

THE LONG delay of the Indian Airlines flight had thoroughly exasperated the passengers. So when they were finally aboard and the air hostess was serving fruit juice, one particularly nasty passenger said: "Haven't you got something more hot to offer?" The air hostess replied: "Would you like to try my temper, sir?" —Teju Pagedar, Calcutta

ADVERTISEMENT at a lottery corner: "Buy one ticket and you become Muqaddar ka Sikandar"— M. Baruah, Dibrugarh

strations/Ahi Bhusan Malik

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The Bazigars made a precarious living.

The Bazigars of Khanna in Punjab were professional acrobats. Who risked life and limb to keep body and soul together.

Today they face nothing more dangerous than the kick of a cow being milked. Because Bank of India has financed the Bazigars for purchasing milch animals.

Today they live in pukka houses set in a colony resembling a co-operative dairy farm. The income from their dairying has brought to them a prosperity they never knew.

Just another instance of Bank of India's concern for the weaker sections of society.

Secure your future with India's largest nationalized bank.

Bank of India
(A Government of India Undertaking)
Where service makes the difference.

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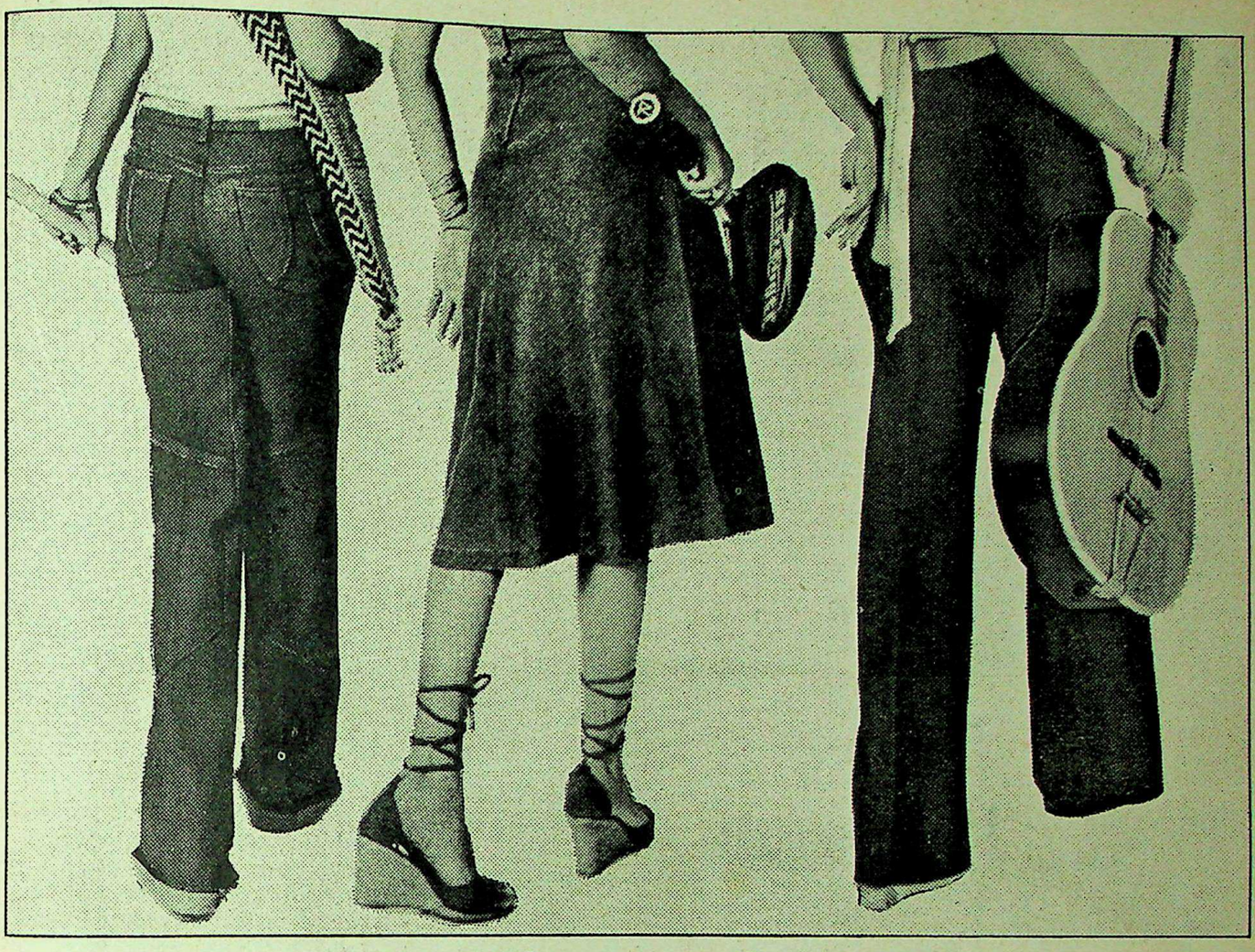
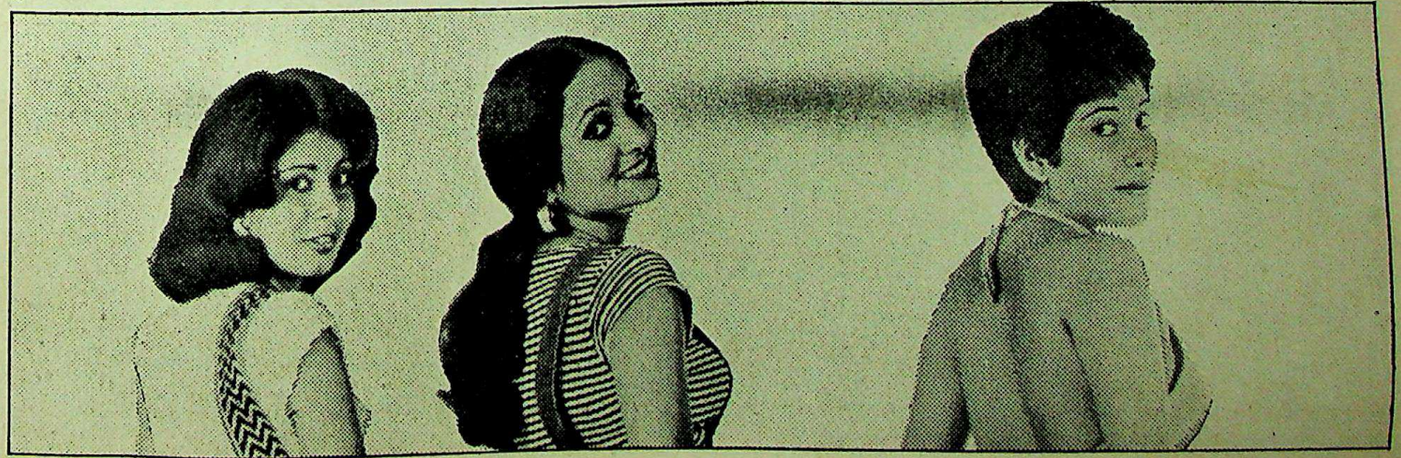


Calling girls who like the liberated look

NAGDA PROMISES TO MAKE HEADS TURN YOUR WAY.

NAGDA SUITINGS SHIRTINGS

Adroit-1293



See the latest arrivals in Top Dyed, Terrywool, Texturised, Summerlene Suitings and Party Shirtings.

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All colourful festivals begin at home with Bombay Paints

Give your house the festive look.

With Bombay Paints your walls resound with mirth, your windows breeze in good cheer, your doors swing light-heartedly and you hit the ceiling with our vast range of colours. Making your entire house celebrate the ritual of colours.

Bombay Paints are easy to apply, cover greater areas and last longer than any other paint.

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Kangaroo Paints-best in the long run

ARMS-BP-30-270

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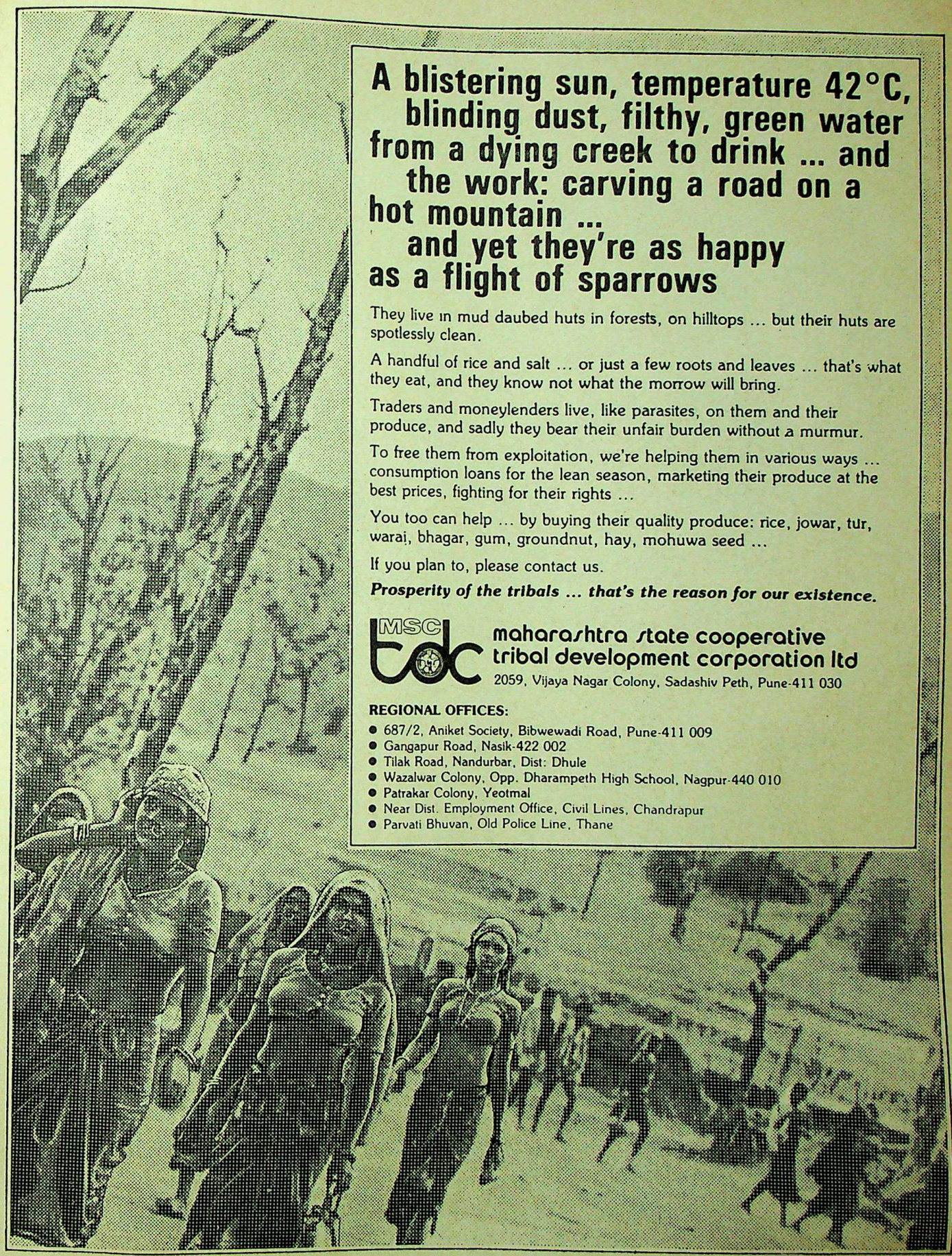

A blistering sun, temperature 42°C, blinding dust, filthy, green water from a dying creek to drink ... and the work: carving a road on a hot mountain ... and yet they're as happy as a flight of sparrows

They live in mud daubed huts in forests, on hilltops ... but their huts are spotlessly clean.

A handful of rice and salt ... or just a few roots and leaves ... that's what they eat, and they know not what the morrow will bring.

Traders and moneylenders live, like parasites, on them and their produce, and sadly they bear their unfair burden without a murmur.

To free them from exploitation, we're helping them in various ways ... consumption loans for the lean season, marketing their produce at the best prices, fighting for their rights ...

You too can help ... by buying their quality produce: rice, jowar, tur, waraj, bhagar, gum, groundnut, hay, mohuwa seed ...

If you plan to, please contact us.

Prosperity of the tribals ... that's the reason for our existence.

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maharashtra state cooperative tribal development corporation ltd

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- 687/2, Aniket Society, Bibwewadi Road, Pune-411 009
- Gangapur Road, Nasik-422 002
- Tilak Road, Nandurbar, Dist: Dhule
- Wazalwar Colony, Opp. Dharampeth High School, Nagpur-440 010
- Patrakar Colony, Yeotmal
- Near Dist. Employment Office, Civil Lines, Chandrapur
- Parvati Bhuvan, Old Police Line, Thane

PRATIBHA 79-159

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We are more than just Flashlight manufacturers... ...and it was time our name reflected it.

From Electroplating to flashlights...miniature bulbs... dry cells

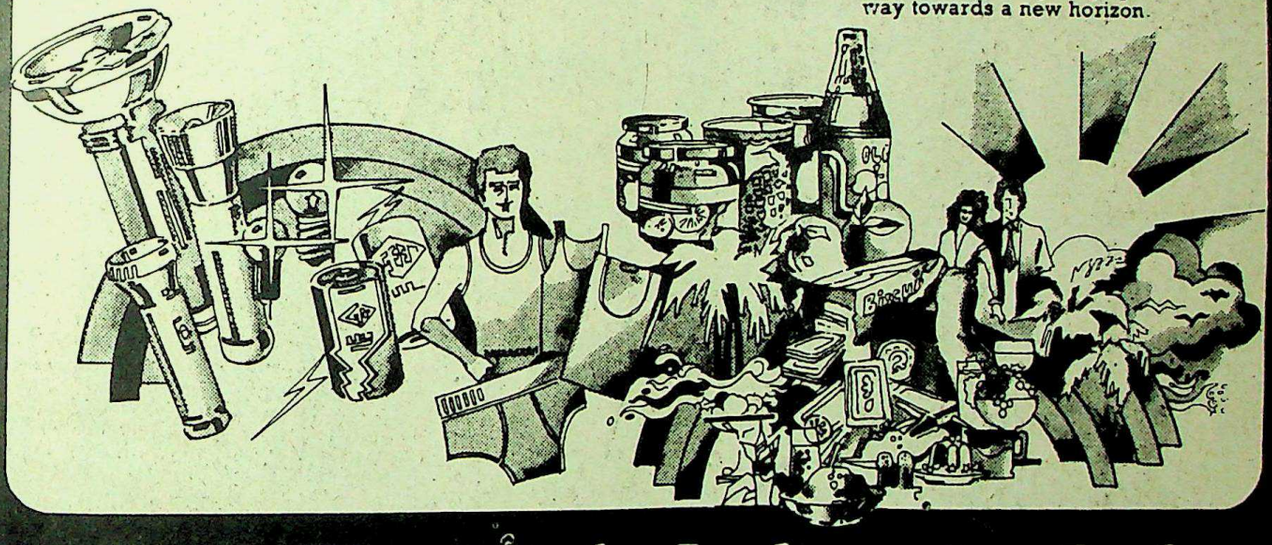
We started off as electroplaters. Then came Flashlights & miniature bulbs and close on their heels came dry cells. And today Geep is the second largest manufacturer of dry cells & flashlights in the country with a range of 18 different types/sizes of flashlights & 5 varieties of cells. And yet our name reflected only flashlights.

Soon hosiery & food products

Soon, Geep will mean even more. Like hosiery—a range of vests and briefs that will bear the stamp of Geep's consumer marketing expertise will come to you through our vast retail network. And in as divergent a line as food products, that will combine economy with excellence of quality.

A new dynamism...a new name

With all this activity, a change in name was really inevitable—a name that reflected the diverse fields of Geep's current activities & future plans—Geep Industrial Syndicate Limited. But beneath this new name will be the same irrepressible quality, the same finesse, the same dynamism—all symbolised by the same brand name that today is a household name—Geep. And thus begins a significant era with a bright, successful past lighting up the way towards a new horizon.



Geep Flashlight Industries Ltd. now becomes

Geep Industrial Syndicate Limited

Regd. Office : 28, South Road, Allahabad GEEP (A Shervani Enterprise)

STERLING/GISL/78

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FREE
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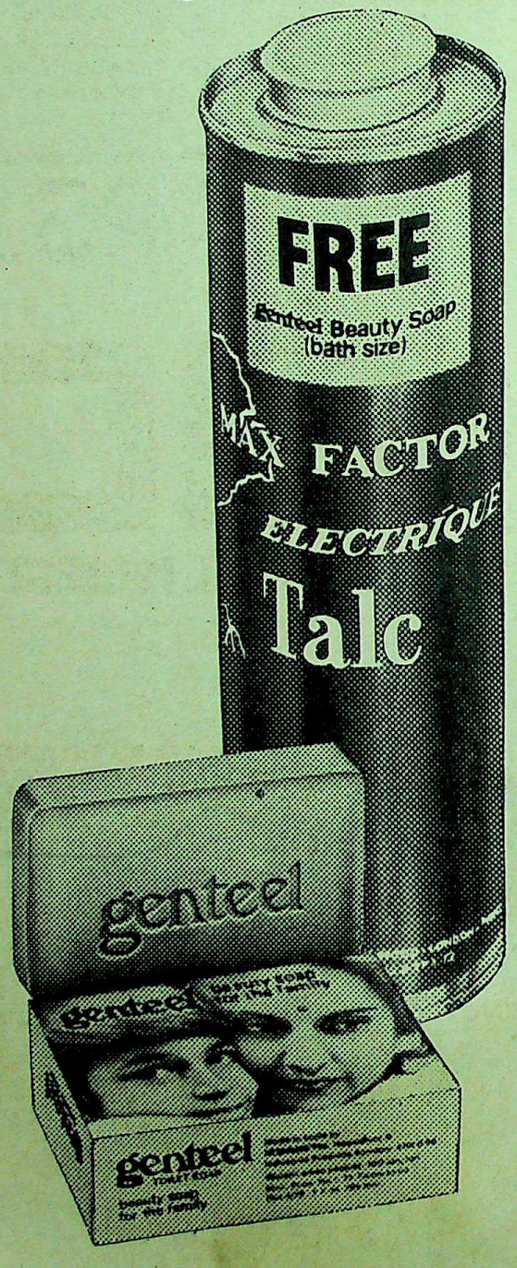
Regular size
genteel Beauty Soap
with 400 gm.
ELECTRIQUE Talc



Mini
genteel Beauty Soap
with 100 gm.
ELECTRIQUE Talc

Shilpi DM 20/79

From the beautiful world of Max Factor...naturally

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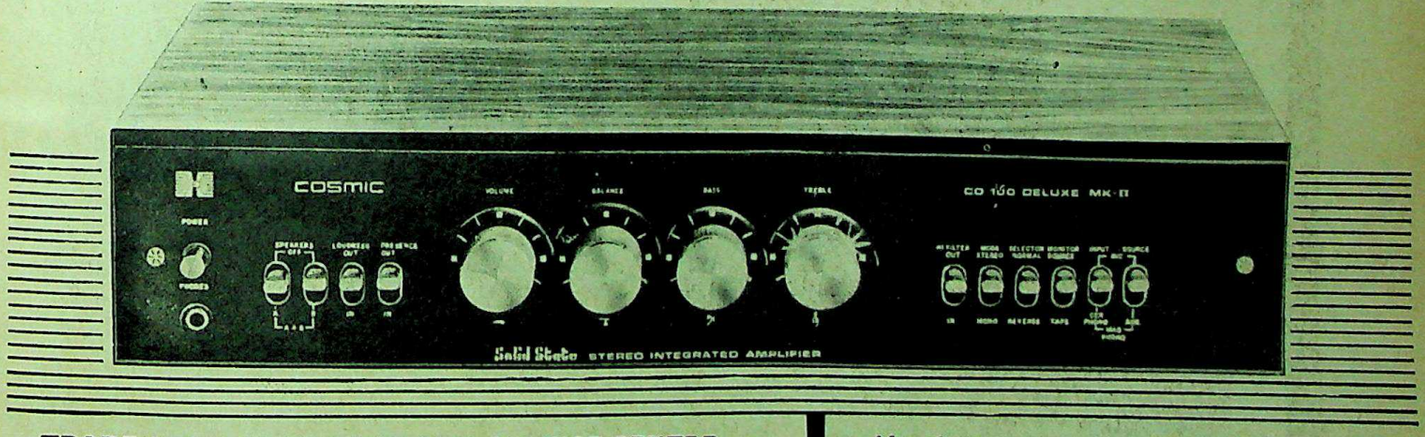
Cosmic brings another Dependable and Sophisticated model for your Stereo System, the Cosmic Co-100 Solid State Amplifier. It synchronises accurately with any low voltage signals to magnify them to the desired degree with low Distortion and can be combined with Stereophonic or Monophonic Systems. The Solid State Circuitry gives instant warm up, and helps keep down heat generation, and consumes less current and has a wider Frequency Response. Additional

Phonographic inputs enable Record Players equipped with Magnetic or Ceramic Cartridges to be played with it. Also incorporated are some special features like Balance Control, Loudness Control, Main & Remote Control for Speakers, Microphone input and others. The full complement of Controls helps smooth operation and sound technical perfection. And all this comes to you enclosed in a sleek veneered cabinet that matches superbly with any Stereo System and blends with any decor.

WE REACH YOUR HEART THROUGH YOUR EARS...

COSMIC

CO-100 DELUXE MKII AMPLIFIER



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STEREO SOUND CENTER,
7, Woods Road, Mount Road,
MADRAS-600 002. Phone : 82599

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BANGALORE-560 002. Phone : 24048

EASTERN REGION :
DUNICS, 128/18, Hazra Road,
CALCUTTA-700 026 Phone : 481338

NORTH INDIA :
HIMSONS ELECTRONICS,
12, Angoori Bagh Market.
DELHI-110 006. Phone : 269105/278228

MADHYA PRADESH :
MUSIC PALACE, 82, Kothari Market,
M. G. Road, INDORE. Phone : 38857

GUJARAT :
MUMTA TRADERS, Joglekar Building,
Anandpura, BARODA. Phone : 63593

Manufacturers:
COSMIC RADIO
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DELHI DIARY

INDIA'S KINGS

INDIA KINGS is the most expensive brand of cigarettes manufactured in the country. Lately because of the squeeze on the imports of tobacco, India Kings remains the only cigarette which uses ten per cent of imported tobacco. ITC cut down manufacture of this brand and has more or less stopped its sale within the country. But there are some VVIPs who are prosperous and resourceful enough to smoke the best cigarettes in the world, and because they feel impelled to project their "swadeshi culture", have to settle for the Indian brand which comes nearest to the foreign one. India Kings choose themselves.

ITC has been manufacturing about 5,000 special India Kings packets a year for the Indian President. The cigarette is the same as the ones ordinary mortals get, except for the Ashoka emblem stamp on the packets and a label which says "specially manufactured for the Rashtrapati Bhavan". However, in order to avoid the additional costs involved and also the problems of producing a small number of cigarettes for exclusive consumption, ITC has not been too enthusiastic to earn the honour of making cigarettes for India's Head of State. Incidentally, sometime ago, when the President Mr Sanjeeva Reddy was in Hyderabad he felt like smoking and demanded India Kings. But they were not available. This created panic among the President's minions, who in turn took it out on the ITC. Now it is learnt that ITC will manufacture specially-made-for-Rashtrapati-Bhavan India Kings for Mr Reddy once again.

TROUBLE

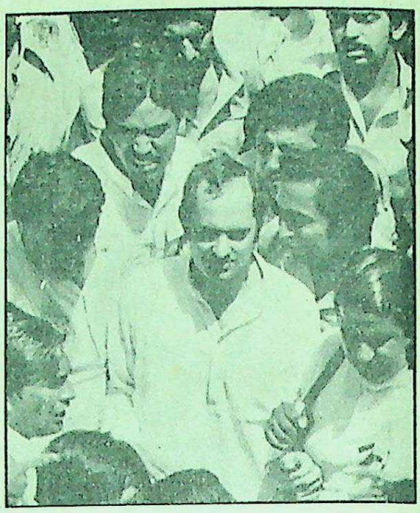
MR SANJAY GANDHI, as usual, is behaving as if he is above all the law courts. And lately his behaviour, which was never anywhere near being gentlemanly, has crossed all limits of accepted codes of good conduct. The way he and his Youth Congress hoodlums stormed the Dehra Dun Court last month and ransacked the august premises is a reminder of the stuff Mrs Gandhi's *enfant terrible* is made of. The Sanjay marauders tore off the clothes of the CBI counsel and even went for the presiding judge, who managed, in the nick of time, to take shelter in an ante-room. The Sanjaysena was looking for the records of the road-rollers case, but fortunately the court 'munshi' had the sense to save them before the hoodlums could lay their hands on them.

For the same flagrant violation of decorum, any other person would have been summarily imprisoned, but Mrs Gandhi's Sanjay got away. For much lesser crimes —for example for the violation of Section 144 — people have been thrown into jail but Sanjay can go scot-free even with the grossest desecration of the judiciary, without so much as a warning.

MORE TROUBLE

FOLLOWING his brave and heroic act in the Dehra Dun Court, Mr Gandhi, on his way back to Delhi, knocked down a villager somewhere in Meerut district. The victim's arms and legs were broken. Sanjay after one look at the man, who was bleeding profusely, flung two ten-rupee notes at him without getting out of his car. In the meantime, a passerby pleaded with Mr Gandhi to at least drive the victim to hospital. But Sanjay couldn't care less, flung another tenner and drove his blue Matador away. The poor victim who came under Mr Gandhi's wheels, lay helplessly on the road for over four hours before the police arrived on the spot to take him to the hospital. The X-rays reveal that the victim sustained multiple fractures all over his body that would take months to heal.

Incidentally the national Press, specially the chain that sees nothing wrong in corruption amongst politicians, just did not give a dime for these two stories. One para was written about the accident, and a couple on the court-ransack story.



TROUBLE AGAIN

ON AUGUST 8, listeners of the Gorakhpur Station of All India Radio were rudely jolted when, in the midst of a programme, they heard raucous slogans of "Indira Gandhi zindabad", "Sanjay Gandhi zindabad" and "Desh ki neta Indira Gandhi". The slogans came on the air while a programme for farmers, "Gram Jagat", was being broadcast. Who shouted the slogans? Who else but Brij Narain Sharma and Umesh Tiwary, two of Mr Gandhi's proteges, who had barged their way into the small AIR studio, taking everybody by surprise.

The authorities have kept the incident a secret and the Press, of course, is not concerned. The thought of Sanj and his pet "durbaris" forcing their way into a prohibited area should alarm anyone entrusted with the security of the country.

TRADITION DIES

TWO cases of choice varieties of imported liquor' and 'Indian made foreign liquor were seen being carted out of Shastri Bhavan on the September 17 afternoon. Apparently these were stocks kept in bond in the PIB for being served to foreign correspondents whenever the principal information officer met them. This was an old practice, but was stopped when the Janata came to power. So these bottles of whisky, gin, brandy, etc., were gathering dust in a PIB room. They were being sent back to the Excise Department, since the PIB had no further use for them.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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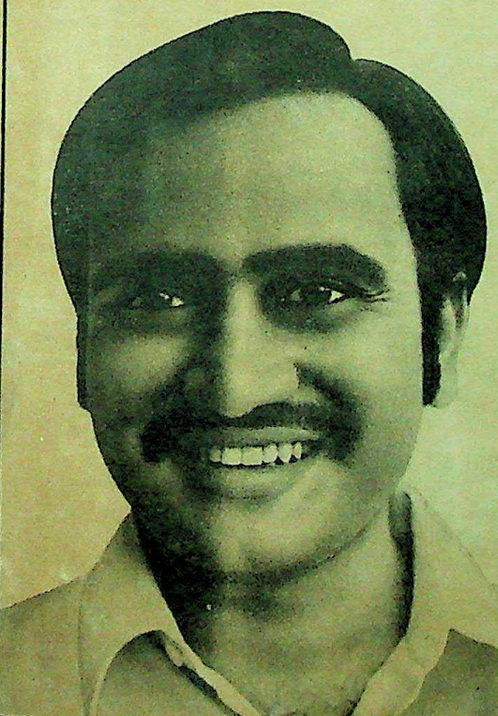
FREE expensive gifts with Leonard

While stocks last. Offer limited to Western, Eastern and South India

Contact your nearest dealer. Eastern U.P. only

Leonard preserves butter in Bangkok

Leonard keeps chicken fresh in Chikmagalur



Leonard keeps Prashant smiling in Pathankot

Leonard serves millions of families around the world. Its dependable compressor and new ingenious defrost system guarantee you long, trouble-free service.

When Leonard owners are asked about their refrigerators, they just smile. After all what more need we say about a friend of the family.

Leonard

Since 1881. Trusted the world over.

Another quality product from BLUE STAR®

Leaders in refrigeration

Bombay • New Delhi • Calcutta • Madras • Ahmedabad • Pune • Kanpur • Indore • Chandigarh • Jamshedpur • Bangalore • Cochin • Secunderabad • Visakhapatnam.

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THE SPECIAL AGENT

WADRENE
POLYESTER SUITINGS

BOMBAY DYEING

ULKA-BDM-40

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SUNDAY

A HOPE IS DEAD

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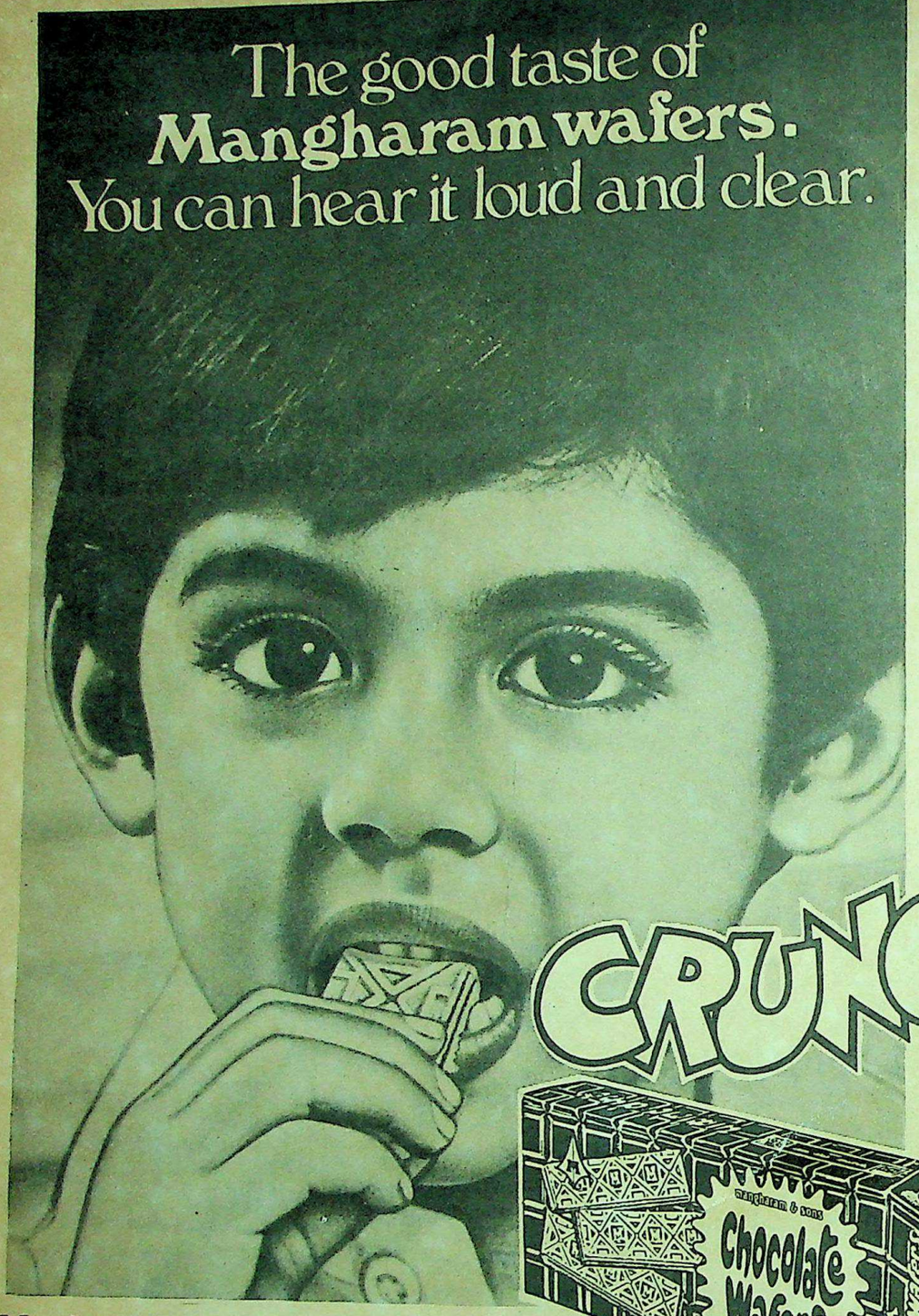
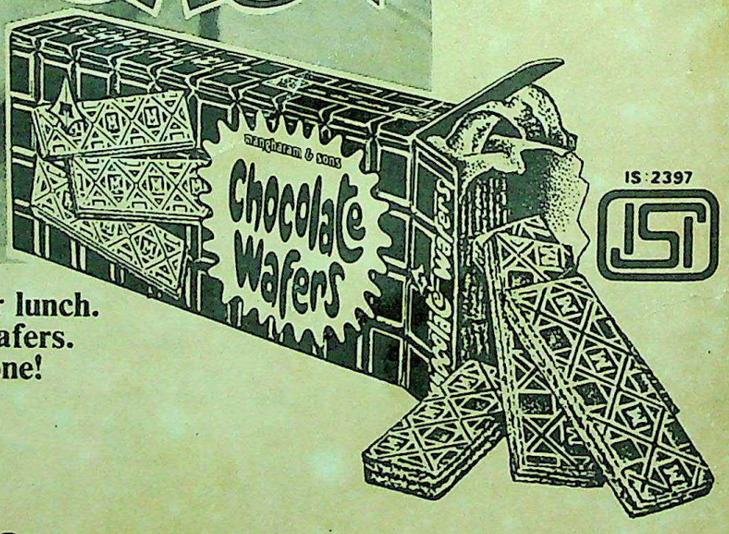
Sista's-MS-185/79

The good taste of **Mangharam wafers.** You can hear it loud and clear.



CRUNCH!



IS:2397

Munch two for breakfast. Crunch two for lunch.
Nightcap with two more. Mangharam Wafers.
The taste is so good you can't stop with one!

In eight yummy flavours —
★ Pineapple ★ Raspberry ★ Mango ★ Lemon
★ Coffee ★ Chocolate ★ Orange ★ Honey

mangharam & sons
Bangalore

Makers of the finest biscuits, wafers & cookies

Mangharam wafers. The taste that sounds good.

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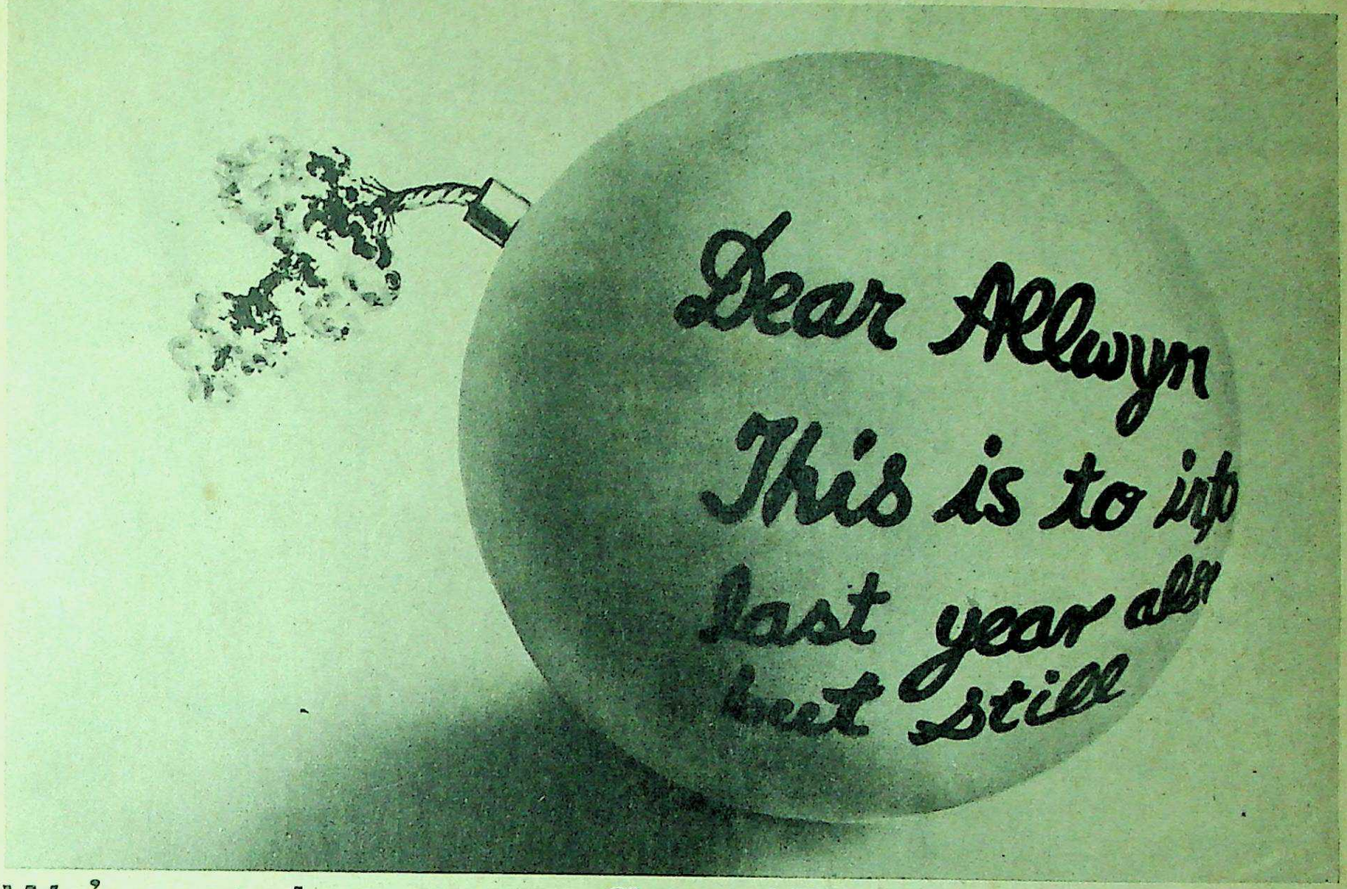
Sista's-MS-185/79

In the past, we got a few letter-bombs from a handful of our customers.



We've cooled all that fire with our technical knock-out. The 'high-impact' polystyrene liner.

The 'high-impact' polystyrene liner. Now, that's a sound way of sealing the temperature inside the fridge. Because it doesn't chip. Doesn't rust. Doesn't discolour. And doesn't smell.

Well, we'd really like to thank all people who wrote letters to us. You see, it's helped make the Allwyn better.

A whisper-smooth compressor

To be really frank, some of our older models started developing a few snags. Some people told us their fridge was too noisy. So we developed a super-compressor that runs whisper-smooth. On 30% less power.

Auto-defrost with outside drainage tray

Other people said that water from the freezer dripped inside the fridge. Today's Allwyns have Auto-defrost, with a self-draining system. Something you should insist on when buying any fridge.

The defrosted water drains to a special outside drainage tray. No dripping. No mess inside the fridge

The Roll-Bond freezer

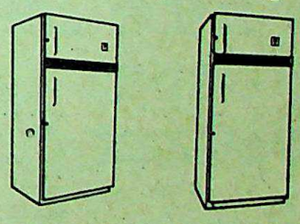
Today's Allwyn has the Roll-Bond freezer where the cooling tubes are integrated into the walls itself. So you get first rate cooling and quick freezing. Which means increased operating efficiency of the compressor. In fact only Allwyn offers you the Roll-Bond freezer in India.

Of course most of the improvements are a result of continuous research and development. But we do give a great deal of attention to customer feedback.

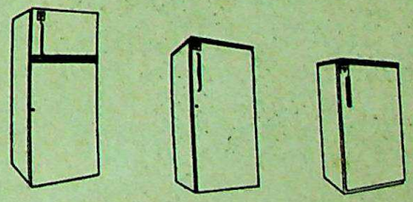
That's how you got the second door in the Allwyn 300. India's only 2-in-1.

And today, Allwyn offers you the widest range to choose from. The fact is, Allwyn was the first Indian refrigerator to come on the market. To a lot of people it's still Number One.

The Allwyn Range



Allwyn 380. Allwyn 300.



Allwyn 298. Allwyn 165. Allwyn 85.

Take a look at today's Allwyn.

HALLWYN

Better living starts with Allwyn

THE HYDERABAD ALLWYN METAL WORKS LIMITED

HA/106A/79 3

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Your dream of living in your own nice little house will come true... If you act now.

"Celebrate a wedding, construct a house. You will know what you are in for" This is an old saying—to emphasise and remind you that you will have to meet these big expenditures sooner or later-warning you to be prepared.

Syndicate Bank makes these big expenditures sit lightly on your shoulders. The easy way, without any strain. All that you have to do is to commit yourself to a definite, time-bound saving plan at Syndicate Bank. We have several schemes to help you meet your needs.

Act now, today, for a better tomorrow. Call at the nearest branch of Syndicate Bank. We are waiting for you. Rest assured we will take care of your money problems now or in the near and distant future.

OUR SPECIAL SCHEMES

SWAGRIHA YOJANA

Deposit Rs. 100 every month for 63 months. You can get a loan of Rs. 16,000. Invest more for higher sums.

AROGYA CUMULATIVE DEPOSIT

This is a regular Cumulative Deposit and you can get a loan equal to twice the amount standing to your credit for meeting the medical bill at the time of illness. Maximum loan Rs.5000 at concessional rate of interest.

SURAKSHA DEPOSIT

A deposit of Rs.500 only for 61 months gives you interest plus Personal Accident Insurance Cover.

maa SB 102

SYNDICATE BANK

Where your welfare and happiness is our concern

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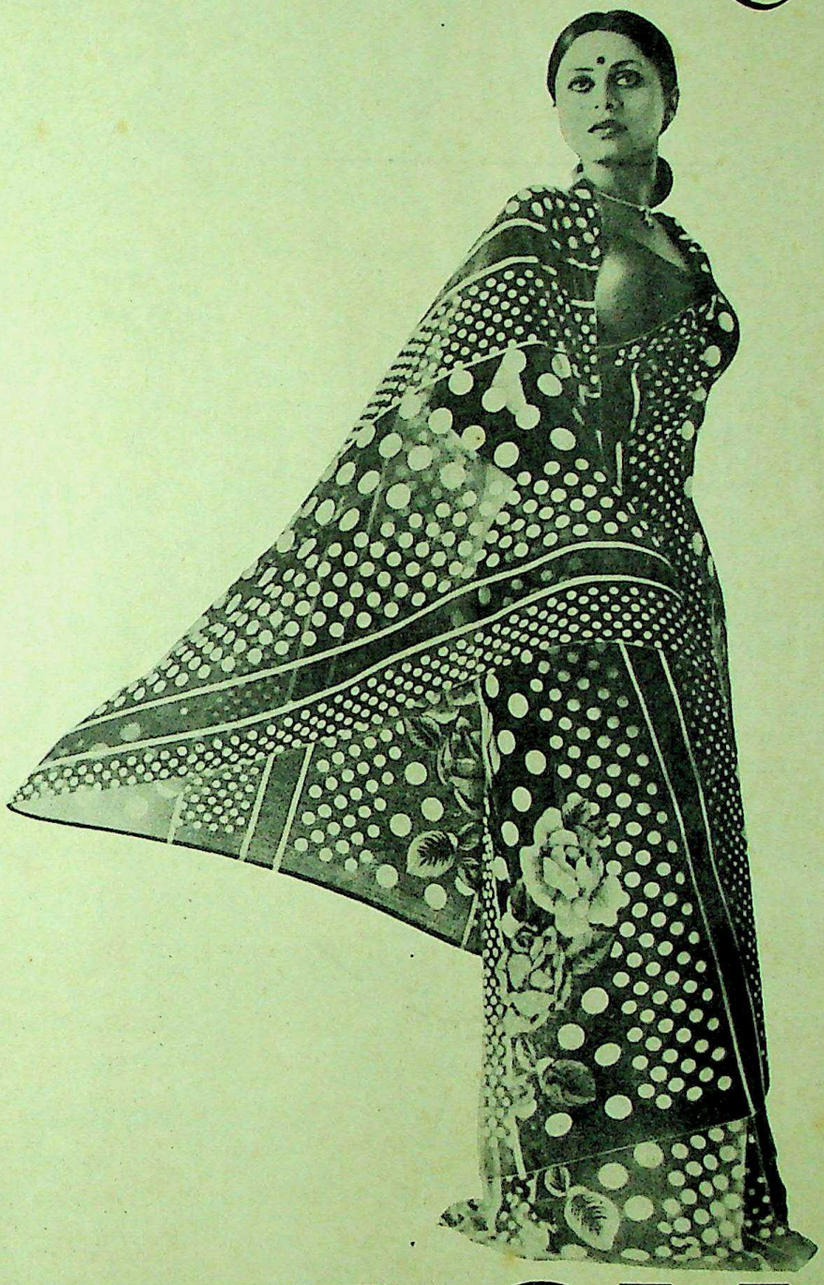
THE EYE-CATCHERS



HINDON

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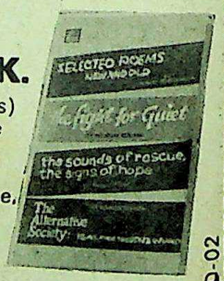

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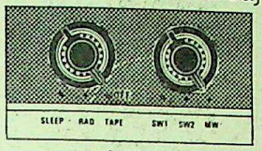

for. So you can fall asleep listening to your radio. You don't have to stay awake to switch it off.

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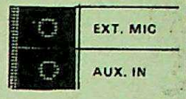
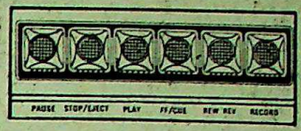
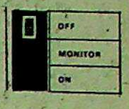


It can tape a telephone conversation.
You can record a whole telephone conversation by using a pick-up coil!





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the morning tea the morning bath and Kerala Kaumudi

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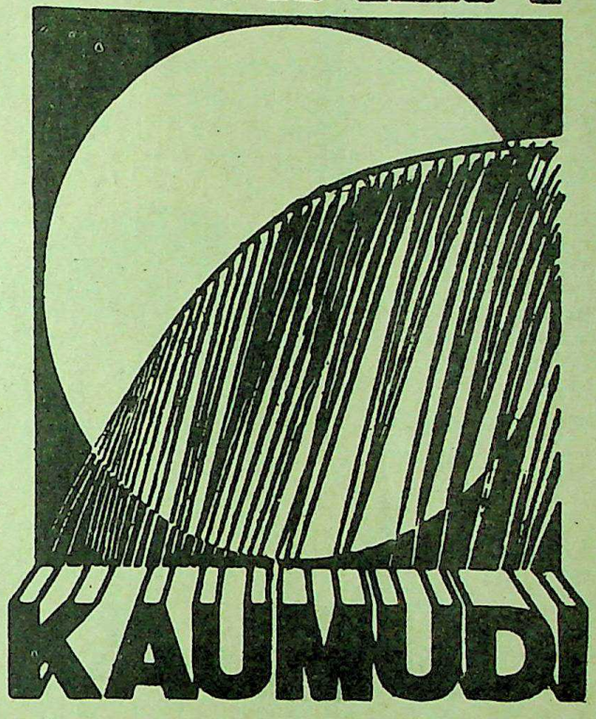

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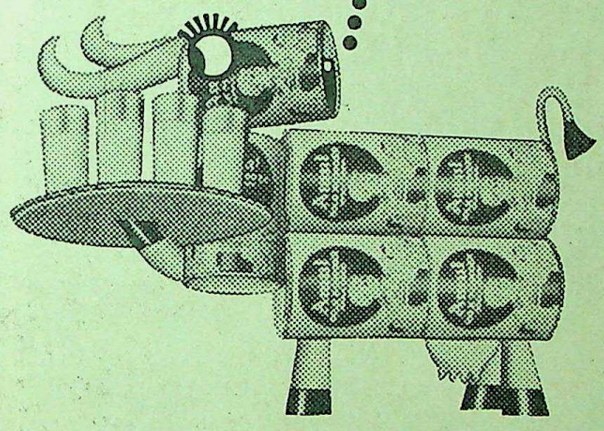

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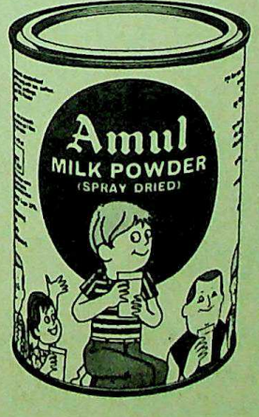

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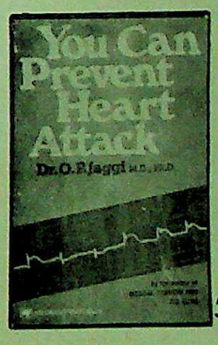

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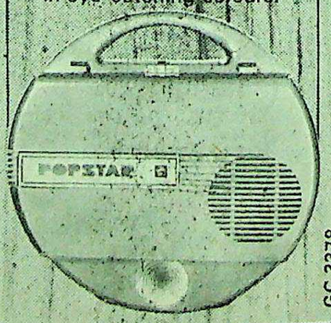

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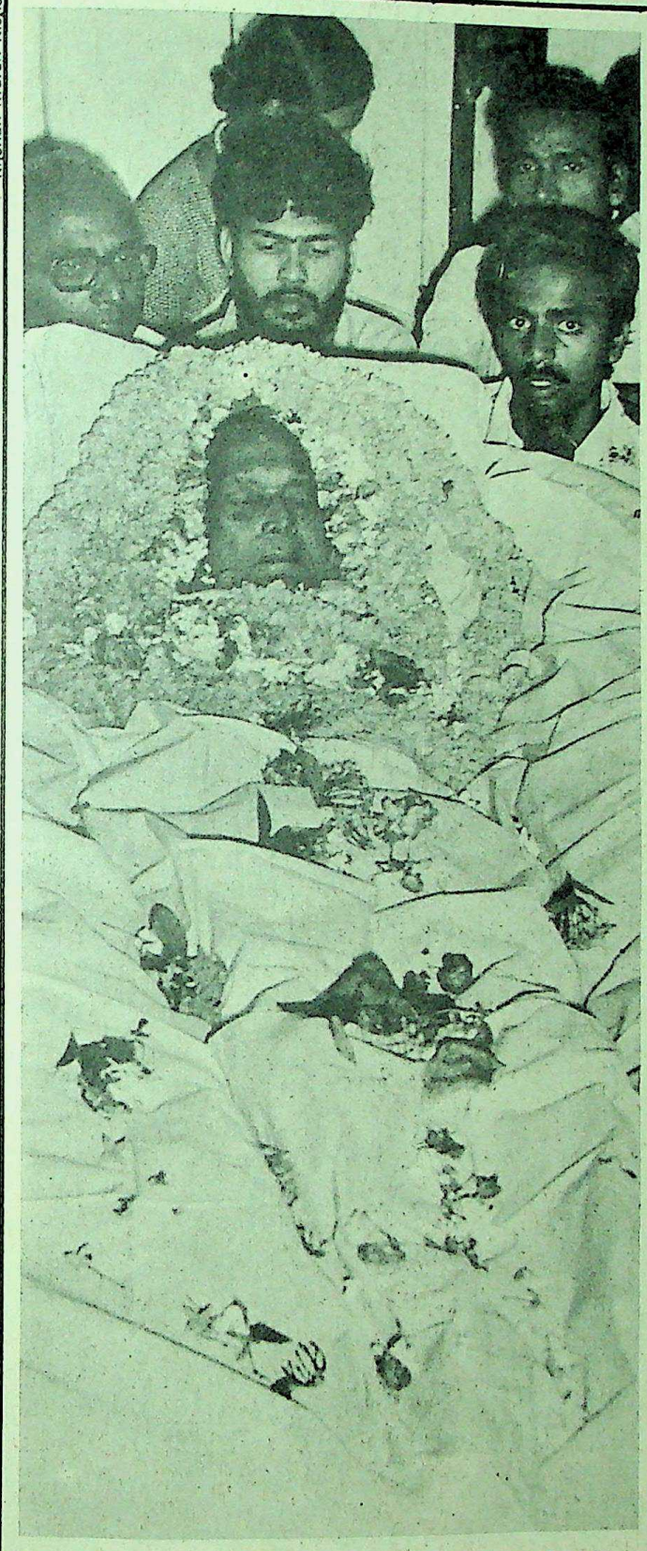
SUNDAY VOLUME 7
ISSUE 19
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

October 14, 1979



Krishan Murari Kishan

As we were going to press for our issue dated October 14, we learnt of the passing away of one of India's greatest figures: Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan, a leader who by his work had already secured his place in our history, but during the last decade indisputably put himself among the handful of truly great sons that our nation has produced. We decided to change the contents of this issue, and bring out a special number in a small homage to a selfless genius.

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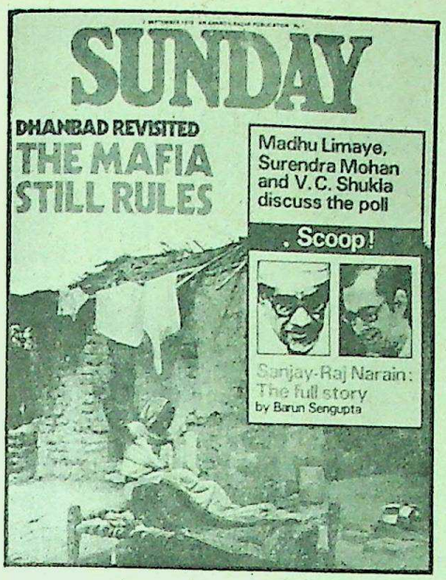

An eye-opener

TIRTHANKAR GHOSH's article "Dhanbad revisited: The Mafia still rules" (September 2) was bold and persuasive. It has opened our eyes since he has acquainted us with the nasty goings-on behind the curtain. A moral emerges: Our trade union leaders and politicians organise strikes for their personal aims and gains. When there is violence it is the innocent labourer who is often killed. Indirectly, the leader is responsible for the poor worker's death. Hence, the leader is a murderer.
Jagannath Oleti, Bhubaneswar.

MR GHOSH's article clearly indicates the stage we have reached when there is no respect for the law or its keepers. A strong man can take the law into his own hands and dominate a certain area at his own will and pleasure. Even top officials cannot set him right because he has a cosy relationship with the politicians. If this process continues the day is not far off when everybody will be afraid to walk on the street in broad daylight.
Bhupendra, Jamshedpur.

'THE mafia still rules' amply demonstrates Mr Ghosh's hollowness of mind and lack of proper understanding. He seems to have a special fascination for Mr Karpoori Thakur and justifies all the misdeeds perpetrated by a prejudiced and biased mind, against a section of the people whom he calls a mafia. A man's failure cannot be justified by blaming others. There is nothing wrong for an MLA to follow the leader of his choice and nothing unprecedented about a common man being wealthy. Even Mr Karpoori Thakur, the ideal hero of the author, can be cited as an example. Being a poor barber's son he managed to come to the top of the State's affairs and even went a step forward in directing the State's policy in such a way that it not only demoralised the administration but also caused the death of innocent people.
Prahlad Singh, Jamshedpur.

THE article on the mafia was superb. In fact, the mafia controls the Press too. Two English and one Hindi daily published from Patna have a large circulation but they don't dare to print even a single line on the atrocities committed by the mafia. Now that the ball has been set rolling they should come forward and start a campaign against it.
Asit Kumar, Dhanbad.

THE cover story on the mafia in Dhanbad pointed out the comfortable relationship between the public sector organisation, Bharat Coking Coal Ltd, and the mafia. That a trade union leader is more powerful than the officers of the administration is only possible due to political interference. Dhanbad displays yet another instance of law and order falling a prey to politics and corruption.
Maharaj K. Koul, Srinagar.

AFTER going through the issue dated September 2, one is tempted to re-christen the issue 'Violent SUNDAY'. I presume that you have developed a sudden taste for violence. You are deviating from our Gandhian policies.
Arup Roy Choudhury, Calcutta.

Mis-read

PERHAPS because of an error in reading the proofs a statement has been attributed to me, "Marcuse may be heard yet" (September 2), which makes me appear silly and ill-informed. I did not write that Marcuse had proclaimed the establishment of a socialist republic in Bavaria in 1918 after the defeat of Kaiser Germany in the First World War. I only wrote that when Marcuse was young, a socialist republic had been proclaimed in Bavaria.
Rajendra Mathur, Indore.

YOUR tribute to the great philosopher, Herbert Marcuse, was timely. His death went almost unnoticed in our country. However, it should have been a little more profound. Marcuse was a Marxist but never an uncritical one. It is said that a member of the Conservative League of his university pinned a button with the legend 'To Hell with Communism' on his coat. When he entered his class he explained to the shocked students that he had not resisted the pinning of the button because he agreed with the sentiment it expressed. He said he would rather go to hell with Communism than stay in the US without it. His admiration for Communism, however, was not for the corrupt version practised in Russia and his *Soviet Marxism* is an "immanent critique" of the Soviet version of Communism. His greatest contribution to social theory, in my opinion, is his expose of the totalitarian nature of the societies of the so-called free world.

Lastly, a word about Mr Mathur's "flippant thought". I want to disabuse him of the belief that Marx was a Jew crying for Israel only to find it in the proletariat. Marx was not born a Jew but a Christian. Much of Marx's system was anticipated in the works of Hegel, Feurbach and even Ricardo. Were they all Jews? The Bolshevik revolution succeeded because it went against the course prescribed by Marx. The Mensheviks who interpreted Marxism literally wanted to wait till a bourgeois state was developed to the full. Lenin revised Marxism and brought it up to date to suit himself. If Mr Mathur still thinks that Bolshevism was a Jewish idea, I recommend E. H. Carr's volumes on the Bolshevik revolution. Marcuse's thought is in no way influenced by his Jewish pedigree.
G. N. Phani Kumar, Cuttack.

No collusion

THE report entitled "The Old Lady and the Law" (September 2, 1979) is obviously a one-sided story. It is unfortunate that you have thought it fit to publish the same without checking up with us.

In the report you have referred to "some shocking facts about the attitude of the top brass of Bennett Coleman and Company, publishers of *The Times of India*, have been brought to light." This is an obvious reference to the alleged collusion between the management and the workers' union for the strike. We do, hereby, categorically deny that there was any collusion on our part with the striking union.

The company had put up various notices for stopping the strike and had pointed out that the strike was illegal. The company did not initially choose to go to court for declaring the strike as illegal and compelling the workers to come back to work since it is well known that the employees, in such circumstances, do not come back to work. Even if the complaint had been made, it is very doubtful that it would have resulted in anything useful. The strike was in the key sections like Rotary,

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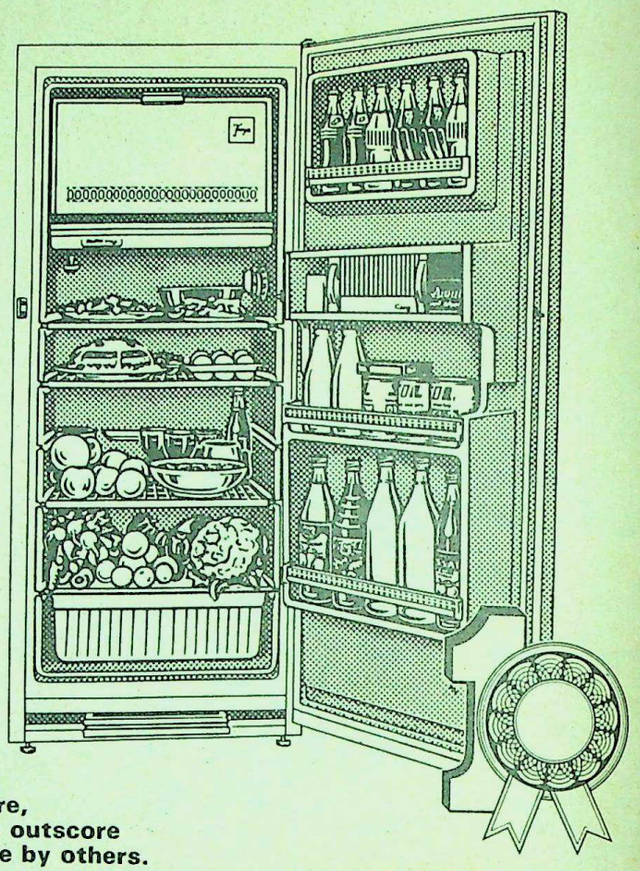

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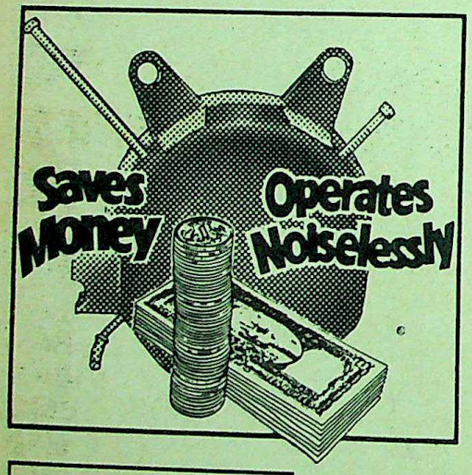

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Stereo, Binding, Process and other departments and production could not be carried out and therefore, the company proposed to declare the lockout. The Industrial Court held that the lockout notice was legal and the strike was illegal and the High Court did not interfere with this part of the judgement.

The company had filed an appeal against the order of Justice Pendse but in view of the settlement effected in the meantime, the company withdrew the said appeal. All that had happened in the company's offices was the result of inter-union rivalry. You know that it is usual for rival unions to allege complicity on the part of the company with the other union. In fact prior to the commencement of the strike, although there were certain negotiations with Mr Kolhatkar's union on interim relief, no agreement could be reached with them as the company wanted that whatever the agreement, it should be placed before the Palekar Tribunal.

It is unfortunate that notwithstanding the company's keenness to stay aloof, the rival unions have alleged complicity on the part of the company with the other union. As regards the High Court's observations, we have only to say that the court came to the conclusion "that the allegation of collusion was not without foundation" on the ground that the company had not filed a complaint against the striking workmen in the Labour Court, without appreciating that such a step would not have resulted in a solution to the problem. If the appeal was proceeded with before the Division Bench, our position would have been properly vindicated.

Ram S. Tarneja, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd., Bombay.

Wrong call

SOME reports have appeared in the Press in recent months about the TV receiver project in which my family is financially interested. One of them appeared in your magazine ("Amritraj family in big business" by P. Devarajan, August 19). Normally I would have ignored such reports. In fact, anyone who reads them would know for certain that they are inspired reports. If I have to say anything about our project, I will do so at the appropriate time. Unfortunately these reports contain many incorrect statements, factual errors, halftruths and untruths.

For instance, the following: "Everything about the project seems to be wrong. To start with, the unit styled Orient Vision does not have a valid industrial licence..." Wherever Mr Devarajan got his information from, it is wrong. We not only have a valid industrial licence but also all other licences required for our project. Another incorrect statement made is that Mr K. V. Srinivasan is thinking of withdrawing from the project. Instead of leaving the project he continues to be the deputy chairman of the company.

What I cannot countenance is the correspondent making factually incorrect and damaging statements about my family. I quote: "It is contended that even if the banks pull out, the Amritrajs can foot the whole bill as the total assets of the Amritraj family are placed at well above three crores. All the three brothers are non-residents of India. Ashok is a US citizen, while Anand and Vijay stay at Bermuda..." On what authority is the writer saying that our assets are above Rs 3 crores? How can you allow such a statement to be published? The difference between being a non-resident Indian, which Ashok is, and being a US citizen, which Ashok is not, is great.

At another place, the writer makes a serious allegation. "His wife ran a corrugated box unit behind their residence in Madras. The unit is still in operation and its entire output is absorbed by the Railways, thanks to Mr Robert Amritraj's connections with his former employers". We do not have any connections whatsoever with the Railways and my wife does not do even a single paisa worth of work for the Indian Railways. I decided to treat this false allegation with the contempt it deserves, knowing that the writer of this article is a tool in the hands of interested persons. The writer, unfortunately, does not have the moral courage to withstand the pressure tactics of influential persons in the TV industry who are scared that the success of our project will spell their doom. This is so obvious from the article: "The portable TV set, if sold indigenously, will be priced at around Rs 1,300 per TV set and provide effective competition to the existing units in turn forcing them to cut back their prices". So this is the crux of the matter! The reason behind the tirade against my family is that the existing TV units will be forced to cut down their prices once our TV receiver set comes into the market. Assuming that such a thing were to happen, it is for the good of the consumer and the country. However, if the writer thinks that by publishing such a damaging and totally uncalled-for article and forecasting doom for our project he is going to deter me from proceeding with it, he will realise pretty soon how his calculations have misfired.

Robert Amritraj, Madras.

Karpoori helped Urdu

MHASHIM KIDWAI's letter (Opinion, September 2) deserves some comments. Mr Kidwai asked: "What status did Urdu enjoy in 28 months that Janata Party was in power?" I do not know what happened in other States, but a process had started in Bihar in 1978 during the Janata rule under Karpoori Thakur (who is now with Lok Dal). Every school in Bihar is to select text books published by the Bihar Textbook Committee and that State Government controlled Textbook Committee did not publish textbooks in Urdu and Bengali in the previous ten years. As a result, hundreds of Urdu and Bengali medium schools had to select Hindi textbooks for their students. When Mr Golam Sarwar (now with Lok Dal) became the Secondary Education Minister in 1977, he reconstituted the Textbook Committee with Urdu-speaking and Bengali-speaking members, who arranged the writing and publication of Urdu and Bengali textbooks from 1978. Mr Sarwar had a plan to allow private publishers to publish Urdu and Bengali textbooks for school students if the Bihar Textbook Committee failed to publish all the textbooks in two languages.

Mr Kidwai should not overlook this fact for political reasons. May I point out that the left Parties are also not free from anti-Urdu bias? The predominantly Urdu-speaking Topsia ward came under the Corporation of Calcutta in 1954. But the area is yet to have a primary school run by the Corporation or the State Government. Though the area elected two CPI(M) MLAs (one of them is an Urdu-speaking person) in 1977, the Corporation or the Government is yet to start a primary school.

By solely blaming the RSS for riots in Jamshedpur, Mr Kidwai like others is underestimating the communal forces in the steel town. In October 1978, the mini-riot in Jamshedpur was started not by the RSS but by Congress(I) elements.

Niranjan Haldar, Calcutta.

I WOULD like to highlight the fact that the Minorities Commission report (published after its visit to Jamshedpur and Aligarh) clearly states that the riots in Jamshedpur and Aligarh were not engineered by the RSS nor was there any evidence against the RSS. It is sad to note that even learned persons like Mr Kidwai are guided by political propagandists. In fact the RSS has done good work and continues to do so. In the recent disaster in Morvi, Gujarat, the RSS workers collected the dead corpses for cremation. The RSS is also constructing houses for victims of Morvi. Is the RSS not a social organisation?

Mahendra Prasad, Patna City.

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THE LAST GOODBYE

Photographs : Raghu Rai, K.M.Kishan

Krishna Murari Kishan

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The end came quietly, peacefully, in his sleep, on October 8, 1979. They put it at 5.45 a.m. And JP was where he had always wanted to be in the end, in his beloved Patna, at the modest house in Kadam Kuan owned by the Mahila Charkha Samiti which his wife Prabhavati helped organise.

Janki his adopted daughter was there soon with her son, only a few months old. The ladies of the Mahila Charkha Samiti were there as well in half an hour. The one who had sung bhajans for him regularly was doing so again. Now for the last time.

He was taken out of the Kadam Kuan house at 11 a.m., down the narrow staircase by the doctors (C. P. Thakur and Uma Kant Sinha) and his personal staff and a priest from the Takth Har Mandir.

To the Srikrishna Memorial Hall and there to lie in state till mid-day the next day for the high and the lowly to pay homage.

There was a lathicharge at Kadam Kuan to control the crowd which had gathered like an expanding torrent. Among those who came to pay their last respects on October 9 at the Srikrishna Memorial Hall were the President, Charan Singh, Raj Narain, MGR, Y. B. Chavan (who could not hold back his tears), a cripple and countless others.

After 11.30 when all the leaders had paid their respects JP was put on a truck and taken round the Gandhi Maidan which had been the scene of the launching of his Bihar Movement in 1974. Then began the last journey. On a gun carriage, with full military honours, along routes lined by lakhs of mourners.

At the end of the two-hour journey to the Bansghat the body was taken down by pall bearers from the Armed Forces and carried to the pyre by the side of the "Mother Ganga".

S. N. Sinha

Krishna Murari Kishan

Krishna Murari Kishan

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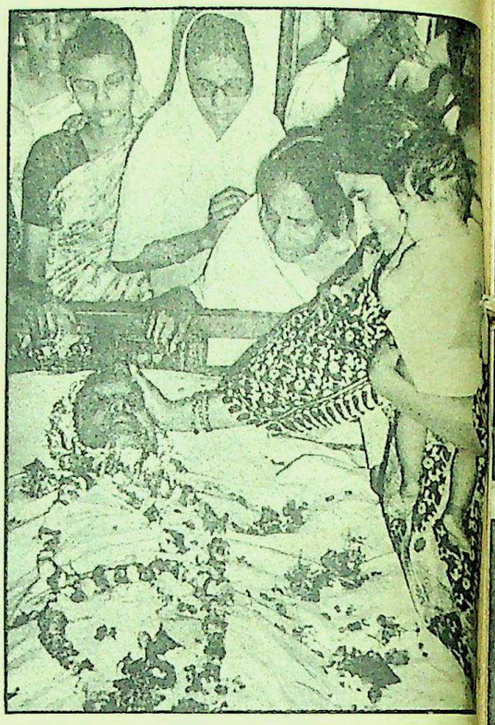
Krishna Murari Kishan

The most touching was frail Acharya Kripalani hobbling in, helped by the President, come to bid goodbye The body was bathed in the Ganga and Pandit Vishnu Kant performed the last rites. Then with the sounding of the Last Post and a 21-gun salute JP's nephew. Ratneswar Prashad, lit the pyre at 2.05 p.m. and as the flames and smoke rose into the air, it was all over.



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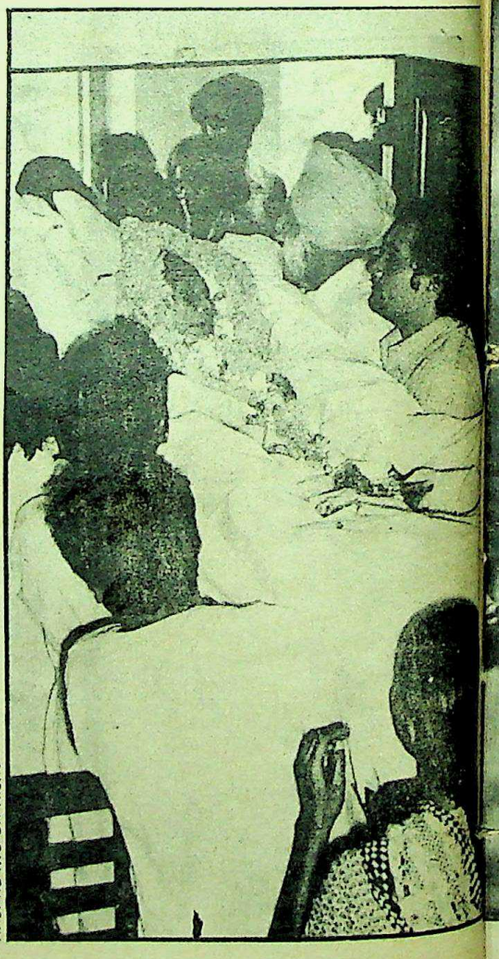

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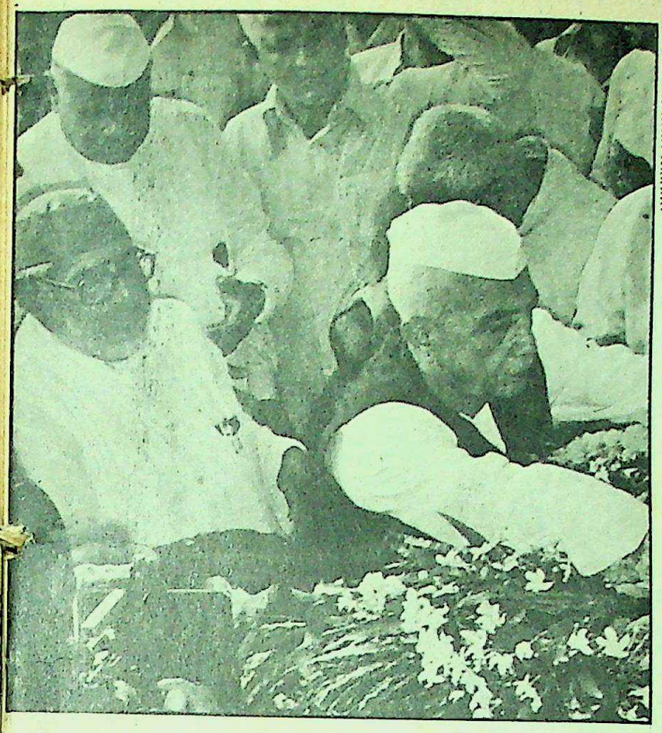
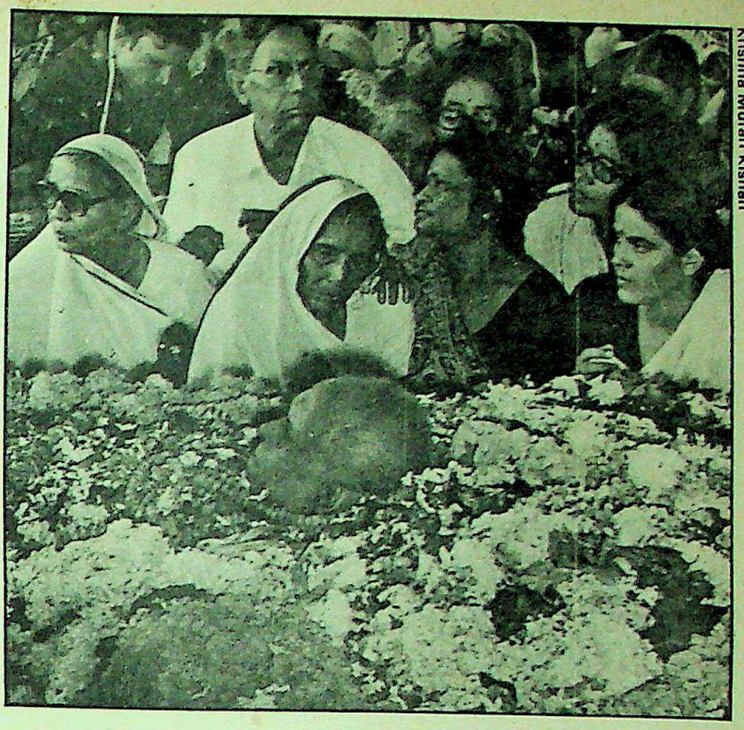
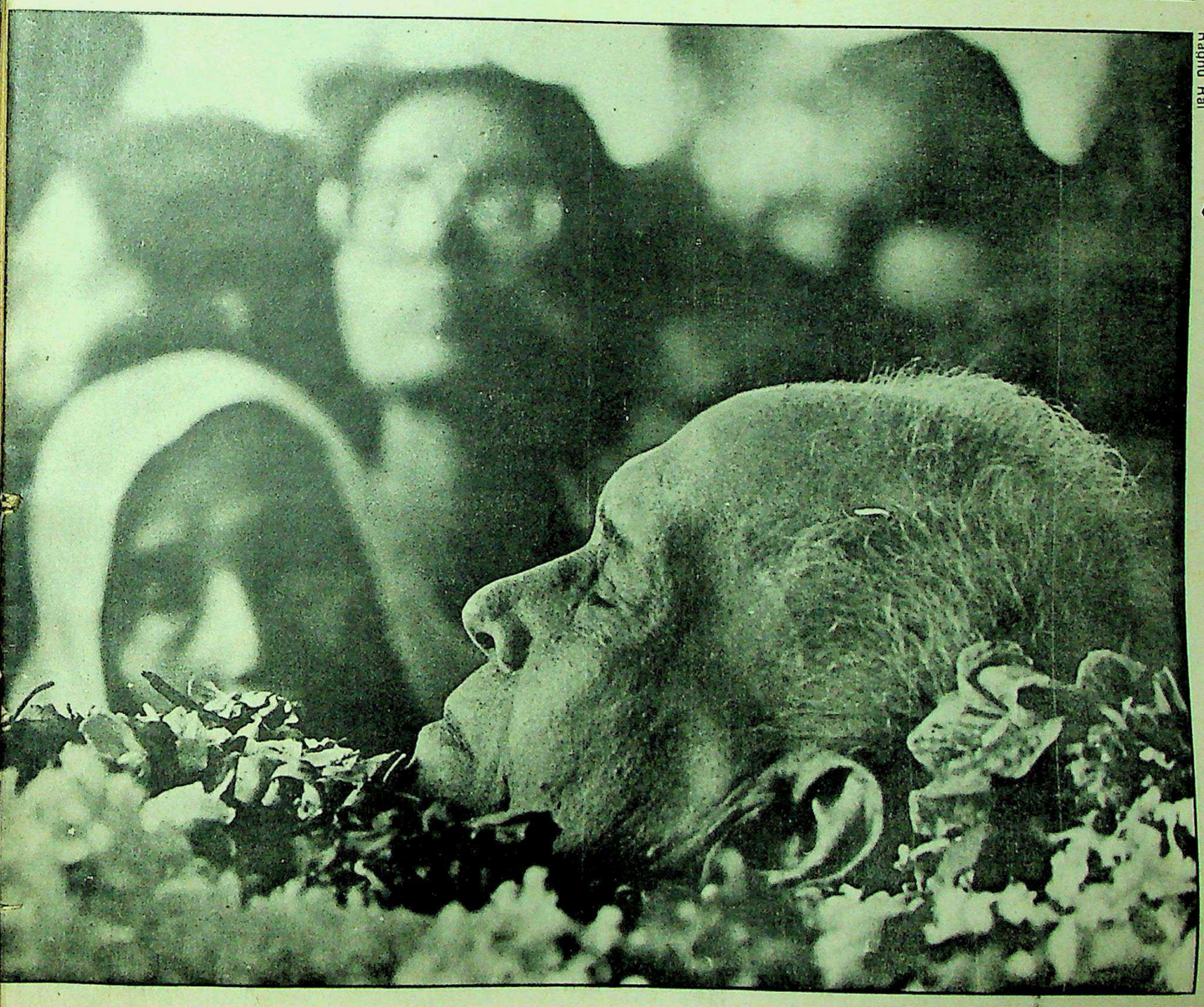


Krishna Murari Kishan



Krishna Murari Kishan



Raghu Rai

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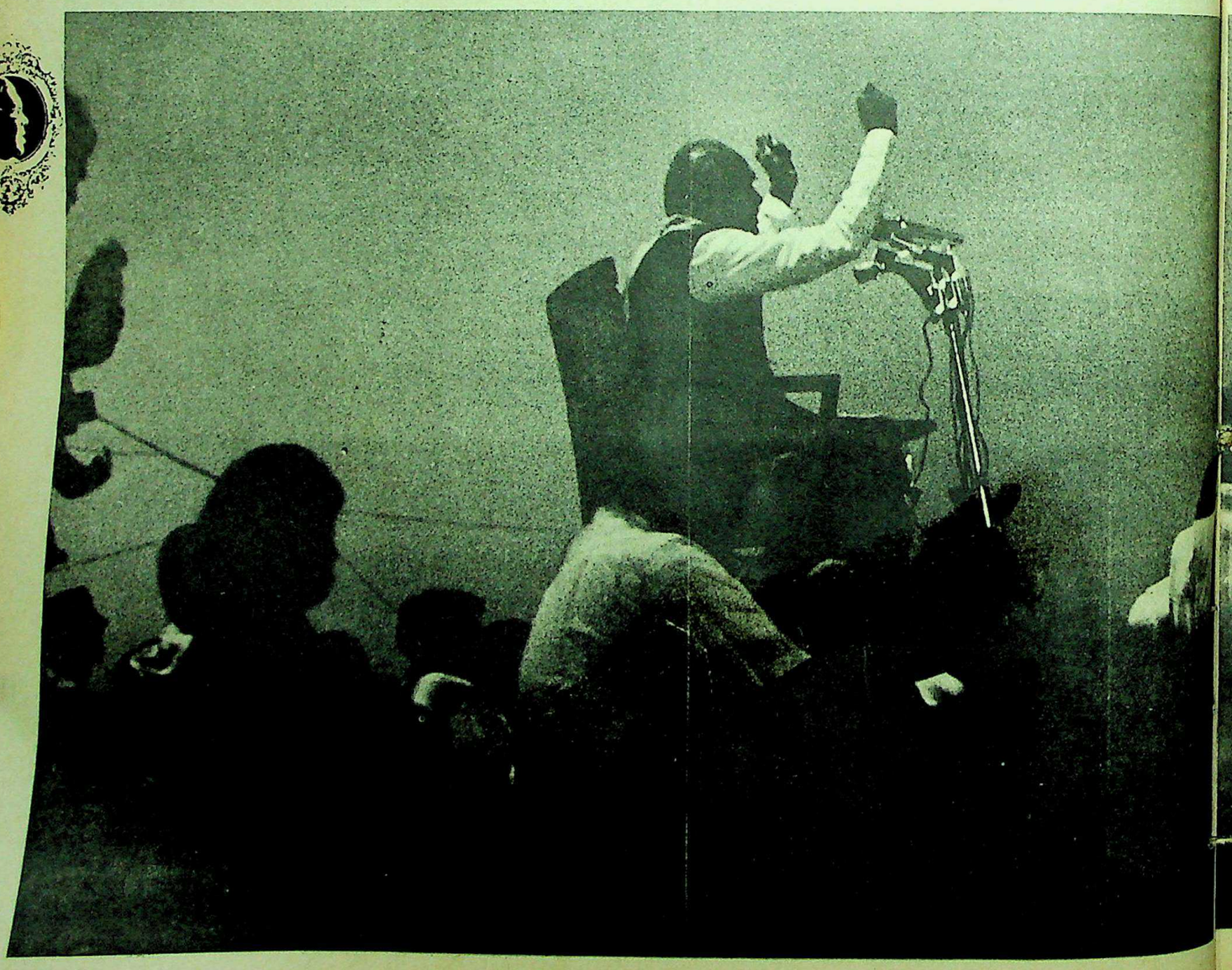
Loknayak Jayaprakash Zindabad !

Patna and Bihar said a passionate goodbye to a man they had loved more than any other

By M. J. AKBAR



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LIKE a beloved but painfully ill member of a family, who had just died, Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan, Bihar's greatest son, was laid to rest. While a deep sense of loss echoed on every lip, there was still a subdued sense of relief that a man's personal physical tragedy was over. There was sorrow, but no tears; there was enormous sentiment, but no spontaneous passion. Everyone had been waiting too long for the death of the hero.

And Bihar gave its beloved JP a hero's funeral. When in the mellow bright light of the early morning, news first began to spread that JP was no more, many people did not believe it, considering this as yet another rumour in a city which is full of them. But soon, very soon as the news began to percolate from official channels, doubt became certainty, certainty became mourning, and the crowds began to collect at the simple house at Kadam Kuan which JP had lifted from obscurity into a national edifice. The people began pouring into the narrow streets which had seen so much history, particularly in the last decade; and the leaders who owed their current fame and position to the selfless struggle of one man, one flickering candle in the darkness, one voice in the fearsome silence, one truth in the marketplace of lies, began gathering there, tremulously walking into the house which they had ignored, or, worse, manipulated, to such cost to the country.

Finally the pressure of the crowd forced the people in charge of JP's death to take his body to the Sri Krishna Memorial Hall, just opposite the historic Gandhi Maidan which has seen the inauguration of so many causes. The Sri Krishna Memorial Hall has an interesting history. It is ironic that JP's body should lie there. All through the Emergency Mrs Indira Gandhi's dictatorial armed forces used that as a haven, and one of the demands JP had made was that the armed police should be removed from this memorial to one of Bihar's greatest Chief Ministers, Sri Krishna Singh. And of course soon enough Mrs Indira Gandhi herself came to pay homage to JP there. She had done everything to destroy him when he was alive. Still, one could understand her presence: she had as much right as Jagjivan Ram or Y. B. Chavan to be there. But what was impossible to take was the presence of the young Sanjay Gandhi, the Crown Prince and brutal authority during the Emergency. What was Sanjay Gandhi trying to prove that he suddenly acquired respect for a man who stood for everything that Sanjay Gandhi tried to destroy.

All through the day, all through that quiet night, the lights kept burning over JP's body, and the faithful sang bhajans in his memory, and never for a moment was there a pause in the queue of mourners who wanted to take a last look at the man who had given them so much in inspiration, in idealism. And if the response seemed a little muted on the first day, the day of the funeral cleared all scepticism about what the people of Bihar felt about their moral leader. They participated in a funeral the like of which had never been seen before, and was not likely to be seen again in the foreseable future. After the death of this internationally renowned who could Bihar boast of? In fact, Bihar is leaderless today: the only figure of national fame from Bihar is Karpoori Thakur.

Raghu Rai

AND yet a shiver of disillusionment was running through Patna, particularly among those people whom JP had elevated from the battles of the streets into the cool and spacious corridors of legislative and executive power. In the innocent period of the Janata wave, around 30 young men who had been blooded during the JP movement became MLAs in the Bihar Assembly. They had been sent to change the world; and if the world had not changed them into corrupt and heartless professional politicians yet, it had certainly stripped them of any illusions that they might have harboured. There was only one profound regret in their hearts: if only JP had been well enough to provide the moral and practical leadership he had shown during the movement, if only JP could have still been able to talk to the masses who he loved and who gave him their affection and trust in return! The country would perhaps not have been going through the political uncertainties of today. The RSS will surely and with typical RSS sophistication begin to claim JP as its godfather, but the record shows that JP had clearly wanted the RSS to disband itself and merge into the Janata Party—and what a fundamental difference that would have made. JP had indicated that he would join the people in their protest against the Janata Party if it remained inactive and uninspiring: JP would have spoken out and stopped the rot. In an age when old politicians seem never to die did JP, the honest JP, have to be treated so cruelly by destiny? One young MLA told us that he refused to avail of the legislator's quota in buses or trains, because if he did so he would immediately be recognised by the people as an MLA—and how could he face them without cringing in shame at the performance of the Janata Government? This MLA is still in the Janata Party.

WHEN you leave the fog and blindness of a city and go into the villages, the stars of the night become luminous. From one end of the horizon to the other they are scattered, in dense clusters, like twinkling jewels pasted into a bowl by an extravagantly generous monarch. Like the haze of a light white veil the Milky Way stretches across the brilliant sky. The air is clean and caresses you with a healing touch. Darkness and silence stretch away on either side of the road, occasionally interrupted by a lonely wandering torch, or a faint voice.

We were travelling through the beauty of the night and the countryside, from Patna to JP's ashram in Nawadah district. The highways were, occasionally, dotted with small towns: one-street towns, rows of brick and cement buildings that provided the stations for trade and transport to the villages that radiated away into the unmapped distance. Trucks and buses were the only other vehicles on the road—apart from the stray police jeep, full of armed guardians of the law, searching for dacoits, on the highway, who infest rural Bihar. The buses were always overcrowded, with people piling on the roof, clinging for safety to each other's garments at the back. This was a day after JP's funeral. We were nearing JP's ashram, deliberately situated by JP at the edge of nowhere, two hundred kilometres away from Patna. We saw a bus, loaded with young people. And as we passed, quite unexpectedly to our ears came the cry which had shaken the nation and destroyed the Nehru kingdom—at least for the moment. ■

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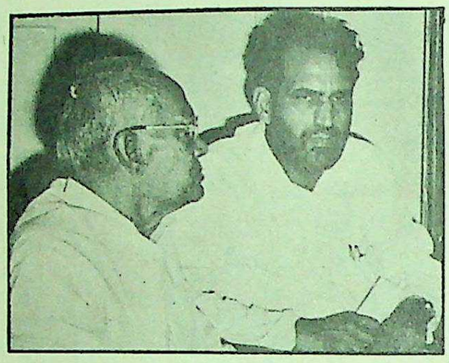
Chandrashekhar's homage

He didn't make speeches. He remembered that JP had built an ashram

By M. J. AKBAR

THE pyre had been lit; the massive crowds had dispersed quietly; JP had now become an inspiring memory in the hearts of a generation coming into its own. Even as the embers still glowed, and the black tunnel of smoke angled away into the sky, young people from the bursting crowd which had tumbled over into the Holy Ganga, charged towards the funeral pyre to pick up some ash, or a still burning piece of wood, to remember their beloved hero by. Upstairs, their duty done, the politicians hurried away into the waiting cars. There were a handful of Great Leaders of course who were genuinely upset, at the passing away of this genius, but most had been putting on an act over a man who they had ignored, insulted, beaten with lathis, arrested and tortured. But today they sat there under the shamiana, with hypocritical frowns on their faces—one or two even tried wiping a nonexistent tear from an eye. They had come by special flights: even Sanjay Gandhi and Mrs Indira Gandhi, whose brutal Emergency finally put a temporary lid on JP's national movement, came with wreaths and faces which had lies written all over them. And then there was Morarji Desai, who had never had any respect for JP, and was willing to say so (he has, more or less, said that in the interview published in this issue). And so on; the litany could be endless, and totally non-partisan.

They had come because they were all in queue to claim JP for themselves: ignored and humiliated in life, most tragically by petty men like Morarji Desai whom he had sent to power in 1977, JP had become a valuable asset in death. Just as the politicians had done during the last two years of his painful illness, they were queueing up to exploit him after he had gone. A couple of hours after the funeral, a man with a loudspeaker went around parts of Patna announcing that a "shok sabha", a condolence meeting, would be held in the Gandhi maidan at six in the evening. Who the organisers were was left vague, but it was clear that some politicians had already



decided to make the first claim to JP's legacy. And the people showed their disgust at this: very, very few, hardly a hundred, turned up. There was a generator to illuminate the faces of the leaders who would address the multitudes: but there were no multitudes. Ramanand Tiwari, the Janata leader, was there; there was Hansraj Gupta, the RSS chief of Delhi with his Bihar counterpart, and Vidyarthi Parishad leaders like Sushil Mody. Seeing the absence of response, the "top leaders" left in their gleaming Ambassador cars.

The next day, there was a squabble among the JP loyalists over when the condolence meeting should be held: some were in favour of holding it that very evening (on October 10), and others thought the next day, October 11, which was also JP's birthday, would be a better occasion. And while these squabbles were going on, one of the key persons in the organisation of the arrangements, a man who could claim the closest relationship with JP among the politicians, suddenly revolted: he could not take this sordid business of using JP's name any more. Without informing many people, Chandrashekhar got into a car, and accompanied by a few close friends, drove off to Sokhodeora, about two hundred kilometres away from Patna, in the interior of Nawadah district. Here, touching the hill range which separates Nawadah from Hazaribagh, in the quietness of one of the poorest areas in the country, Jayaprakash Narayan had started an ashram after he had left Party politics and given his life for social work. While the other politicians fought to make speeches, Chandrashekhar ran away from them, at least at this moment, and went to a place which was an important symbol of JP's life and achievement. It was an act which said a great deal for Chandrashekhar, the man.

Everyone had forgotten about the students and the workers of this living legacy of JP, and had been thrown into uncertainty. Chandrashekhar's visit restored their confidence and spirits. As long as JP was alive, they knew, enough people would be interested in this successful 70-acre experiment in co-operative agriculture (the profits are shared by the works on the land). Sushila Sahai, who had also come with Chandrashekhar, was among the first people to work on the ashram when it began in the early Fifties: then it was merely a piece of donated land on which nothing had ever grown, full of snakes, particularly the vicious and poisonous krait; there were scorpions, there was malaria, there was kala azar, and there were only simple huts (which still survive). But there was also one couple's will: JP and Prabhavati's; and there was the tremendous dedication of a handful of dedicated young people. Sushila's husband, Dayanand Sahai, now a prosperous MP, was also one of the first people to come: he had exchanged his comfortable job in the planning department of the Bihar Government for the ashram in response to JP's call. And he met his wife there: JP and Prabhavati Devi organised their marriage. There were no roads then, recalled Dayanand Sahai—only a kutcha path, which was serviceable only during summer and winter, but totally waterlogged during the rains.

Chandrashekhar avoided going to Patna even on JP's birthday: he wanted no part in the speechmaking that would inevitably take place on that day. Instead, he was on his way to Gaya district, to inspect a spot in Rajgir which he felt would be suitable for the building of a hospital. That hospital, to be called Jayaprabha, would be another important memorial to JP and Prabhavati Devi; and it would be far more valuable than all the speeches in the world. ■

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JP's last days: The wounded soldier

By SANTOSH BHARTIYA

ON October 11, 1978, many of the friends and admirers of Jayaprakash Narayan who had come to Kadam Kuan to celebrate his birthday thought that this would be his last. There weren't many VIPs in the gathering. The great politicians were busy with their games in Delhi: even Chandrashekhar, who was the nearest to JP among the politicians, sent only a telegram. JP used to celebrate his birthday on two days: on Vijayadashami according to both the Indian and the Roman calendar. (He was actually born on Vijayadashami.) This year JP did quietly celebrate another year of his now increasingly sad life: and in every respect so, both in broken health and broken dreams. But he could not reach his birthday by the Roman calendar.

The worst thing was that people had begun to feel in the last two years that JP was no longer their leader but the leader of only other leaders. This impression is largely due to the statements made by the various leaders who have tried to exploit JP's name to further their narrow ends. The truth was that JP never knew who was angry with him and why.

I reached JP's house on the morning of September 27, at around 8.15. The house was deserted. On the ground floor, except for a plainclothes security man smoking a Charminar cigarette, there was nobody. Suddenly the contrast with the turbulent days of 1974 and 1975 hit me. I had participated in that movement myself, and during that glorious moment in our lives JP's house was always crowded as in a carnival. And the roads on either side used to swarm with activity. The young revolutionaries, from every corner of the country, would simply not budge until they had seen JP at least once. Who knew, particularly after March 1977, that once again very soon, JP's house would be as silent as it was during the long days when JP had renounced politics. When I reached the upper floor, on which JP lived, I found Taki Rahim, the top leader of Bihar's Marxist Coordination Committee, reciting a few ghazals to JP. JP saw me approaching, watched me silently for a while, and then reacted. "*Acha Santosh, baitho, baitho* (Oh, is that Santosh, sit down, sit down). After Taki Rahim had recited another

Mandira Puri

ghazal and left, JP beckoned me to come nearer and sit with him. I had come from Lucknow, where I was based. I told JP about UP politics, in response to a question from him. He wanted to know the prospects of the various Parties. I had hardly finished answering when Sachidanand, JP's secretary, felt that JP was tired now, and needed some rest. I was trying to get up quietly when JP said, "Come inside for a chat."

JP was very weak. He had to be helped up, and half-carried to his bed. It was not long ago when one simply could not conceive of spending so much time with JP. There was always a queue of visitors. And now here I was spending so much time with him. JP was very eager to know what exactly was happening all over the country. His secretary used to read out the newspapers to him every day. But nobody would tell what he really wanted to know: The truth behind the wheeling and dealing of politicians, the background that he was sure existed, because he knew the pygmies of Delhi only too well. When, illustrating with specific incidents, I told him that people were angry with him, he was astonished. "Why? why are people angry with me?" When I told him that the end result of two years of Janata rule was that a lot of people were beginning to look positively at the Emergency and suggest that things were better then, JP sadly looked up at the ceiling and kept staring at it. When I added that the self-confidence of the people which the movement had built had been, to an extent, destroyed by the performance of the Janata, JP turned towards me. Suddenly, a flash of the old fire lit his eyes, and he asked, "Should I say anything to the people now?" His secretary, Sachidanand, interrupted and told JP, "You had told Ataljee (Vajpayee) that you would think about this". I protested that the question was not of JP supporting any political Party: JP should tell the people that he belonged to them and not to any political Party. JP looked intently at me. I left after saying this, adding that I would return in the evening.

My heart was heavy and I kept remembering a part of the conversation which had taken place earlier, where JP had described himself as a wounded soldier. I had told him that only he had been successful, and the others had failed, and JP had replied,

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"No, even the leader has failed, will history ever understand that I was never among those people who provided leadership from inside a closed room?" Downstairs it was still deserted. And that same security man was now listening to Vividh Bharti.

In the evening, there was the same silence. In his room, a retired officer of the Bihar Government, Ranchhor Babu, was sitting. I waited outside. JP's nurse came and sat by me and told me that JP could not sleep well at night. He could hardly sleep for more than two hours at a stretch. He was less weak these days, he kept pressing his right hand. She became emotional, and she sounded as if she wanted to cure JP with her love. On three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, JP used to have his dialysis, which would last for six hours at a time. Every drop of blood leaving the body, one at a time, being cleaned and returned to the veins. One day, in utter pain, JP began crying like a child. "Am I not a human being? I too feel pain!" he shouted.

I did not wait for Ranchhor Babu to come out, and went into the room. After he left, JP commented, "Ranchhor Babu is very clear in his mind about planning". The doctor came in and began checking JP's blood pressure. On the wall above JP's bed, over his head, was a framed couplet: *Malik teri raza, aur hi tu rahe, baki na main rahoon, naameri arzoo rahe.* (God only you and your will survives, neither I nor my desires.)

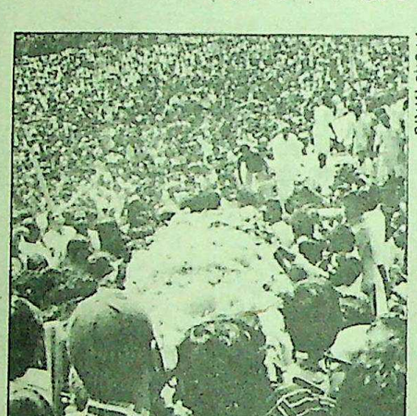
There were pictures of Gandhiji and Prabhavati (JP's wife) together, and JP and Prabhavati together. To the right of the bed was the dialysis machine, and the room had a strange smell, partly of a hospital, partly of a home. JP turned towards me and began saying something when I stopped him, "I have not come to talk", I said, "Just to sit here". Sachida Babu began reading from the day's newspapers. JP was cynical about news. But became visibly agitated about a report from Amnesty International about the number of political murders that had taken place in this decade. The political developments in Delhi elicited only one response from him: "I take my strength from the people. If only I could meet the people again..." The sentence was incomplete, but the meaning could not have been clearer.

JP again looked at the ceiling. Perhaps he was remembering that he was the man who made the promises to the people. I said, "the people you had bailed out (from political oblivion) have jumped bail now". JP smiled in reply. Suddenly, he wanted to go out onto the small terrace and we began walking together. He became tired. His room, bathroom, verandah and that small roof: that was the sum total of JP's world now. JP could not get out of that. It was Sachida Babu's belief that if JP, even now, could go back to the people, he would become all right. I laughed to myself. None of JP's young workers were allowed to meet him these days. But this dying old man could be made to sit for an hour, by those around him, to wait for Sanjay Gandhi to come and see him (Sanjay Gandhi, as it happened, did not meet him). Glamour boys could meet JP, not ordinary workers. Now, even the Sarvodaya people had more or less stopped meeting JP. JP had unintentionally done them the last favour with the Amrit Kosh Fund, and now perhaps they would return only when a fund would be raised in the name of a dead JP.

September 28—that was dialysis day. I reached Kadam Kuan around seven in the morning. JP asked me about the attack on boys of the Sangharsh Vahini at Bodh Gaya over the math's land issue (SUNDAY September 9). After narrating the incident, I suggested that what we were passing through was a crisis of faith. People were giving up hope in the Government. And in its ability to do anything for them. "What do you think will happen?" I asked JP. Tears welled up in his eyes. And he replied, "*Dekho, Kya hota hai* (See what happens)". My heart welled up too, and suddenly I bent down and touched his feet. JP gave me his ashirvad and said softly, "*Phir aana* (come again)".

Downstairs, I met Sachidanand. There was another kind of anger in him. And he was also waiting for his opportunity to tell the world the truth about JP being isolated from the people. His other secretary, Abraham, said that there was a great deal in his diary, but he would not publish it. History will remember JP as a man who only gave all that he had. And took nothing, absolutely nothing, in return. ■

JP : "They have lost a wonderful opportunity"



Aloke Mitra

I MET Jayaprakash Narayan on September 25, at his residence at Kadamkuan in Patna. He had undergone dialysis on the previous day and he looked feeble but cheerful. When I asked him about his health, he said: "These days I have to undergo dialysis every alternate day." I could see a lurking smile on his face when he added: "The doctors spare me on Sundays." Yet it was on a Sunday that he had to undergo an emergency dialysis and he died in his sleep early on October 8.

I found JP unusually alert. When I talked about my friend Professor Raj Krishna, he asked me: "Why did he resign from the Planning Commission?" Later when I told him about Raj Krishna's spirited interview to SUNDAY magazine, he immediately asked one of his secretaries (Shri Sachidanand) to get a copy of SUNDAY and read out the interview.

I switched on to national politics and referred to the distressing state of affairs in the country. JP was sad and silent. After a long pause he said: "They have lost a wonderful opportunity." I could see in his tragic eyes his total disillusionment with our political leaders.

I moved on to rural health. I informed JP that I was trying to study the working of the new rural health scheme based on Community Health Volunteers. I also told him that I was planning to visit a Primary Health Centre and some Sub-Centres, and introduced to JP the officials from the Ministry of Health of Bihar Government. JP asked me: "Which place are you planning to visit?" I replied: "Maner Primary Health Centre". At this JP did not look happy at all. He observed: "But Maner is half urban". I felt very guilty and added rather nervously: "But the Sub-Centres are in the interior." JP was right. My quick field work confirmed that even Sub-Centres were not in the interior villages.

It was remarkable that JP could remember not only the names of the villages but also the type of villages. I started discussing the details of the rural health scheme and JP seemed deeply interested. I did not want to tire him out and soon I parted saying: "You are the last of the great men of India." Quick came his reply: "I make no such claim."

I knew I would not meet Jayaprakash Narayan again. I did "pranam" in the Indian style and touched his feet. He took both my hands in his and bid an affectionate farewell.

ASHISH BOSE

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The last 24 hours

How the end came

By S. P. SAGAR

SUNDAY, October 7, 1979; the time : around 6 a.m. On the first floor of the Mahila Charkha Samiti building in Patna's Kadam Kuan area, JP — the untiring fighter against authoritarianism and revolutionary extraordinary, now a frail old man afflicted by serious kidney trouble — had woken up to another dawn. It was a quiet morning, with no traces of the tension and anxiety that had gripped the place six months ago when JP was last seriously ill. Of late, in fact, he had been keeping "very fine, in the best of health, and showed a much better memory", as Dr R.V.P. Sinna, his resident physician, would often say.

As the ailing leader lay in bed, waiting for Gulab, his trusted attendant, he wore a look of relief. There was to be no dialysis that day, and the old man must have felt relieved at being spared the agony of the painful exercise. Gulab arrived with a glass of water, JP washed his face, gargled. Gulab led him to the bathroom for his morning ablutions, and he returned feeling relaxed.

In a short while breakfast was ready. There were corn flakes, eggs, plantains and an apple. He ate his fill, and then listened to Mr Sachidanand, one of his secretaries, read out selected items from the newspapers. He relaxed in bed for some more time and then asked Gulab to prepare him for a bath, as usual, in lukewarm water. Soon, JP was back in his bedroom, bathed and shaven looking refreshed, to face a familiar audience : Secretary, Mr Abraham, Jagdish babu. They got talking.

Not much later, JP began showing signs of discomfort. At about 11 a.m. he complained of breathing difficulty, and uneasiness in the abdomen. Such complaints were not unusual, but when Dr C. P. Thakur, another of JP's personal physicians, examined him, he decided to administer oxygen to give JP immediate relief. While the old man continued to complain of pain in various parts of his body Dr Thakur advised him to drink as little water as possible. Gulab was told to prepare JP's meals with less salt, and Dr Thakur ordered dialysis in case JP's breathing trouble continued. For lunch, which was served at noon, the leader had rice and mutton liver curry, his normal food, and curd. Not satisfied at the quantity of liver curry, JP asked Gulab : "Kyon ? Itna kam kyon laye ?" (Why have you brought so little?)

Meanwhile, he continued to have difficulty breathing. At about 3 p.m., an old friend of his from the socialist movement, Achyut Patwardhan called. "Hullo, how are you?" he asked, to which the leader—strangely pessimistic about his fate — replied . "Lingering on, waiting for death." After that, they talked heartily, and not about politics. Since the breathing trouble, bodyache and uneasiness in the abdomen continued, it was decided to conduct an 'emergency' (meaning unscheduled) dialysis. Patwardhan and JP hugged and kissed each other on the forehead, and hoped they would meet again before the former left.

By 4.15 p.m all was set for the dialysis. Janaki Bahen, JP's adopted daughter, and Mr Abraham started the dialyser. Two needles were inserted into the grafted region of his right hand to begin the process of cleaning his blood, which lasts for five hours. JP was brought under local anaesthesia. While he persistently complained about the pain, the operation continued and in two hours about two kilos of the excess fluid his blood contained were eliminated. Towards the end of the operation, Mr Abraham, momentarily losing his patience, asked : "How much longer ?" "Ten minutes," came the reply. Actually it lasted another 15 minutes. Dinner — with the same menu of rice and mutton liver curry — was served during the dialysis, and this time, as the normal practice was during dialysis, JP was spoonfed by Gulab. The process finally ended by 9.39 p.m., after which the frail man looked relieved but exhausted.

"That night he seemed better," Mr Abraham said, remembering his moments with JP. While Gulab gently pressed the portions of his body where he complained of pain, he began dozing to sleep, and told both Gulab and Mr Abraham to go away. Mr Abraham left by about 11 p.m., assured that he was asleep. A round-the-clock vigil was kept on the ailing leader by a team of six doctors and three nurses. The persons on duty that night were nurse Kanti Mishra, from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m, a Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti member from 1 a.m. to 4 a.m. the next morning and Amrit, an office staffer, from 4 a.m. to 5 a.m. After 5 a.m. Jagdish babu, whose room is on the same floor as JP's, took over till 6 a.m., when Gulab relieved him. The doctor on duty that night was a child specialist, Dr U. K. Singh, who lived on the ground floor of the building.

At 4.45 a.m., says Amrit, JP asked him to bring a glass of water. Having been given the water, he told Amrit to leave, saying that he was again feeling sleepy. Amrit left, and on his way informed Jagdish babu. The latter woke up to find JP sleeping with his body inclined to the right. This was around 5 a.m. Around 5.40 a.m., Jagdish babu returned to JP's room, peeped in through the door and found him in exactly the same position : head and torso bent to the right at a curious angle. Unsuspectingly Jagdish babu went to the bathroom. At about five or seven minutes to six, when Gulab, who had left JP's room at 11.30 p.m., was on his way to the room again, Jagdish babu told him to switch off the airconditioner since it was "somewhat cold". Gulab entered the room, and by what he saw, was almost petrified. The battered figure was upcurled, the knees almost touching the abdomen, the back arched, and the whole body tilted to the left, balancing on the edge of the bed. It was a horrid sight, but with something strange about it : his right hand was reaching out across the body to the left, where the calling bell press button lay fixed to the side-table. Gulab stood transfixed. He walked up to the bed and touched JP's sullen face, which was turned downward, the nose pressed against the edge of the bed, and turned it upward. JP's eyes were shut, but his mouth was agape.

Gulab ran out of the room screaming. Jagdish babu rushed to the room, and straightened the curled body. Gulab ran down the stairs and brought the doctor. The doctor hurriedly examined the body. He felt and massaged the chest, and found no sign of life any more.

Gulab demonstrated to us the leader's last posture : a kneeling, prostrate figure, the back curved up and the right hand reaching out left, in the direction of the calling bell button. While there was no sign of a struggle, could it just be that the dying man had wanted to ask for help that did not come ? ■

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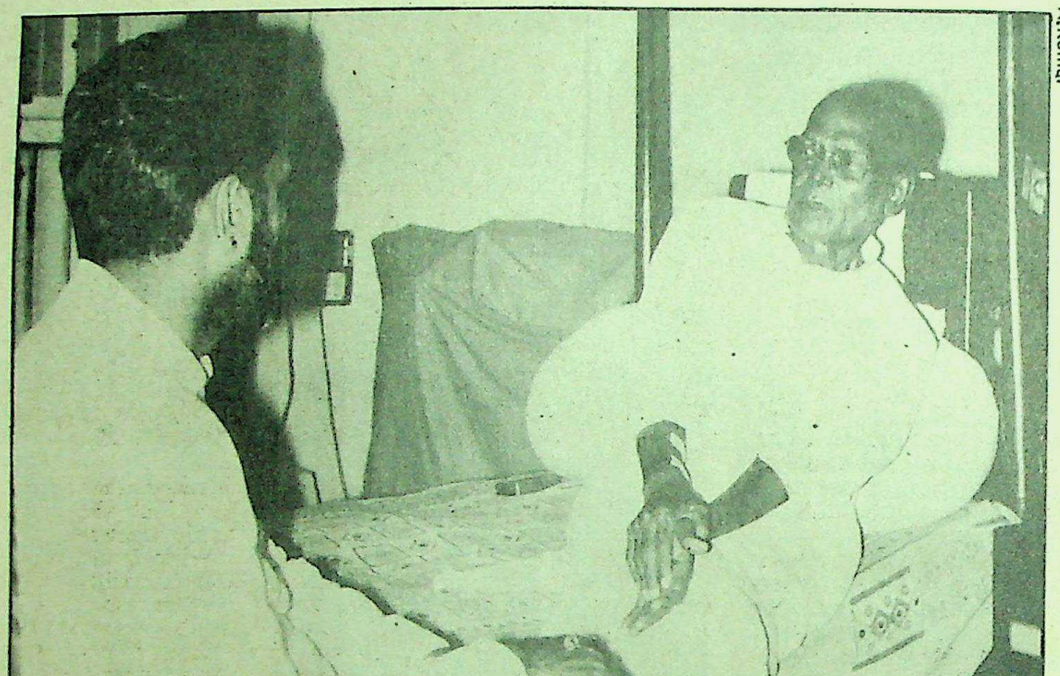
The man I loved

He was a second Mahatma

By CHANDRASHEKHAR



A.Kumar

I HAD seen JP for the first time soon after he was released from jail in 1946 from a distance. But I personally met him first in 1951 soon after I passed my MA from Allahabad University. He had gone there as a socialist leader to tour Allahabad district. At that time the Socialist Party in Allahabad was in a very weak position. I was asked by the Socialist Party headquarters in Lucknow to organise his programme. He had a hectic programme for a day. After the programme was over in the night he asked someone he wanted to see me, the person who had organised the programme. That was the beginning of my close contact with him. After that it became a very intimate personal equation. And later, all the time, even when I differed with him politically, the personal touch was so overpowering that I could never desist from coming close to him. His affection and consideration for me remained the same even when I was strongly opposing him on many political issues.

It is very difficult to remember all the past incidents. But some very sweet memories come to my mind when Prabhavatiji and JP were together in the early days in their home village of Sitabdiara. I, as a socialist worker, used to be present at the village whenever JP visited it. I remember he looked after every worker. In the night, if it was winter, he would personally see whether everybody had been provided with adequate coverings. If any worker was sick, he would make enquiries about his health and make arrangements for his treatment. I remember one incident when Mahanand Mishra, who was a hero of 1942 in Ballia district, was suffering from serious eye trouble. JP was in Ballia. Friends told him that Mr Mishra needed good treatment. JP took him to Patna with him. On the (Patna) railway platform, Mahanand Mishra in his usual style could not catch JP in the crowd because his legs had weakened due to torture in the 1942 movement. When JP was going out of the station, he immediately remembered Mahanand Mishra and came back searching for him. In the whole crowd, people were amazed how JP was searching (for someone) and they were surprised to see that JP caught hold of Mahanand Mishra and asked him why he was left behind. Then he realised that Mr Mishra had weak legs. He told his Party colleagues to take special care of Mr Mishra, to take him to hospital.

I remember another incident. There was a friend of mine, Mr Mustafa, a student hero of the 1942 movement. After Partition many of his relatives went over to Pakistan. But this young man simply refused to go to Pakistan even though he was offered very high positions by that country. In the university he was a hero. After the examinations were over, Mustafa wanted a job but he could not get any job. I met JP along with Mustafa and for a few moments JP was dumbfounded to learn that Mustafa was unemployed. He said that "if free India could not provide a job to a person like Mustafa, I do not know what freedom is for." He immediately wrote a letter to Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was then the Railway Minister. Mr Shastri forwarded the application to the railway authorities but nothing happened for six months. After that JP was on a by-election tour in

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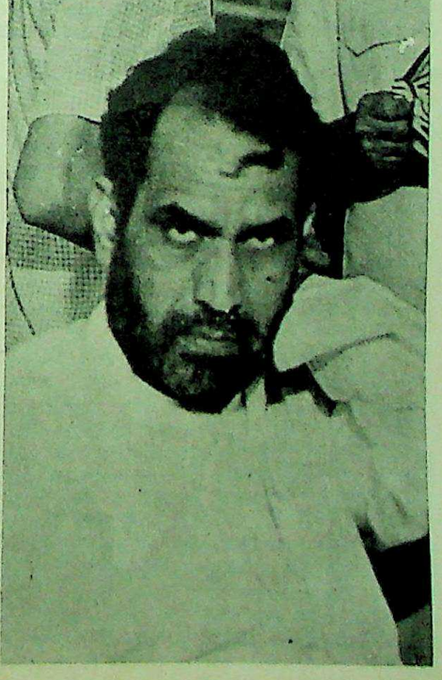
Azamgarh District. And Mustafa and myself met JP and he immediately wrote a letter to Rafi Saheb. I still distinctly remember the wording of JP's letter. "My dear Rafi Sahib, if we cannot provide a job to men like Mustafa, we should feel ashamed. If you cannot do anything, I will write to Bhai Saheb (he meant Jawaharlal Nehru)." Rafi Sahib provided some job to Mustafa. That is a long story. But this shows how careful JP was about ordinary persons.

When the Emergency was declared and JP was arrested I immediately rushed to the Parliament Street Police Station where he was taken. Only there did I learn that there was a warrant of arrest against me. I informed JP and he just smiled and said "You too are being arrested. They have gone mad." Then a UNI correspondent asked what was his reaction. He gave the famous reply *"vinas kale viparit budhi"* (when one's ruin is near, one's mind loses its balance). After my release from jail when I went to meet JP, he told me, with tears in his eyes, that he pleaded with the Government authorities that he was feeling very lonely in Chandigarh and he should be allowed my company and I should be transferred to Chandigarh. But the authorities did not concede his request. He remembered the days of 1932 in the Lahore fort and said that "even the British Government allowed Ram Manohar Lohia and myself to meet. I do not know what was so serious about you. They did not allow me your company."

I remember another incident. Soon after the Janata Government was formed, JP was a bit annoyed. He sent a message as to why I did not become a Minister. I went to Bombay and told him my views about joining the Government. He said he did not consider it from that angle. He immediately said : "You have done the right thing." Then after a few days, he suggested to some friends that I should become the president of the Janata Party. When I was informed of it, I went along with my friend Brahmananda to Jaslok Hospital and I pleaded with JP that he should not give advice on such matters because people at the helm of affairs may ignore his advice. Moreover, I told him that if I was made president of the Janata Party on his recommendation I shall feel humiliated and "if your request is not accepted it would be derogatory to you also." JP said : "No, why should they not accept my advice?" I remember Brahmananda and I narrated a story. In 1947 when freedom came, Gandhiji suggested to Jawaharlalji that Acharya Narendra Dev should be Congress president. But Jawaharlal Nehru could not accept that advice. I told JP that "neither am I Acharya Narendra Dev nor are you Mahatma Gandhi and the present leaders are also not Jawaharlal Nehrus. This is a power game and you should keep aloof from this power game." Since that day I always insisted that JP should not be brought into any political controversy, whether that of internal politics of the Janata Party or outside. But unfortunately sometimes JP's name was used by some people. But JP, all the time I met him, was anxious about the work being done for the poorer sections of society. Last time when I met him, he was so worried about the impending disaster because of the drought. He was always thinking as if a calamity was falling on the country and he was not able to do anything to come to the help of our people. He never discussed the affairs of the Janata Party but always talked about national problems.

Krishan Murari Kishan



When I met him last, he was in perfect health. He was in the same condition as he was before going to Bombay for treatment last time. I thought that JP was going to survive for a longer time. All his associates were pretty sure that there was no problem for JP now. But his end has come all of a sudden. This is too much of a shock. But sometimes I feel that for a person like JP the sufferings he had undergone during the last three or four years were too much for him. He had died in peace. That should be a matter of solace for us. JP has contributed something to Indian history which the nation can never forget. The grateful nation will always remember JP as the protector of democracy in this country.

I feel that after Mahatma Gandhi, JP was the person who gave a new inspiration to our masses and could make them realise that they were the real masters of this country. They are the arbiters of the destiny of this nation. It is not the politicians and not the few people at the helm of affairs who would determine the future of this country, but young men, the peasantry and the toiling masses. They are the determining factors. This was the message of hope and confidence that JP wanted to impart to his colleagues and all those who came in touch with him. He could inspire the nation, not from the seat of power. I hope his ideals and his dreams will be fulfilled by the coming generation. ■

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Last of the founding fathers

He never wavered on his principles

By MADHU LIMAYE

I AM stunned by the sudden death of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan. He was the last of the great national figures, the tallest among whom was Mahatma Gandhi, followed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Sardar Patel. I met JP when he visited Poona after the outbreak of World War II. I was then a graduate student of Ferguson College and was also the secretary of the local Congress Socialist Party. I was tremendously impressed by his pleasant personality. He was very handsome and had a very charming manner. I always felt at ease in his presence. JP was considered by us the third most popular leader after Mahatma Gandhi, that is after Jawaharlal Nehru and Netaji Subhas Bose who was then affectionately called Subhas Babu not Netaji.

His public speech on the Shaniwar Wara ground in his deep husky voice was very inspiring. JP was married to the daughter of a leading disciple of Mahatma Gandhi who worked as his lieutenant in the great Champaran struggle. Prabhavatiji was a Gandhian and for many years JP was a confirmed Marxist. Prabhavatiji deeply influenced him in her own way. JP took an active part in the non-cooperation movement in the Twenties. Later he went to the USA for continuing his studies. But unlike most other students from the well-to-do families, JP's education was not financed by money orders or cheques coming from home. JP worked on plantations, on farms, washing dishes and as a waiter. He was a believer in the dignity of labour. He practised it himself. In his last year in the USA he was gradually drawn towards the Marxist doctrine and the Great Depression finally convinced him that capitalism was on its last legs and that only a socialist transformation of property relations would solve the country's problems.

When JP returned to India, the country was in a great ferment. On the banks of the river Ravi, the Congress had passed a resolution on complete independence under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. JP came in close contact with the young Congress president. Jawaharlal had a weakness for foreign educated young people and among these young leaders were Jayaprakash Narayan and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. JP worked as the labour secretary of the AICC, was himself arrested and spent long periods in jail. When the AICC was banned JP also worked as the general secretary of the Congress. He was imprisoned in the Nasik Central Jail in the years 1932-1933. With him were many other future leaders of the Congress Socialist Party like Minoo Masani, N. G. Goray and Asoka Mehta.

After his release from jail the conservative leadership of the Congress Party again turned to constitutionalism and to the parliamentary path and the younger Congressmen who in their long terms of imprisonment came into contact with Marxist ideas were disappointed with the course that the Congress Party had taken. They had reservations about Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programme. They felt that it was necessary to organise the workers and peasants on class lines and bring them into the freedom movement. Those who thought alike met together in Patna and Bombay in 1934 and so the Congress Socialist Party was launched with Jayaprakash as its general secretary. Acharya Narendra Dev, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Kamala Devi Chattophadhyay, Yusuf Meherally, Minoo Masani, S. M. Joshi and other comrades were his colleagues. There were also young people—E. M. S. Namboodiripad, P. Ramamurthy, Sundarayya and others. They later on left the Congress Socialist Party and founded the Communist Party. Later JP continued to have excellent relations with the CPI(M) because of its leaders' close association with the Congress Socialist Party and the freedom movement.

In the beginning Jayaprakash was a fierce critic of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy. He was then an orthodox Marxist and in his booklet *Why Socialism* he had not only attacked Mahatma Gandhi's ideology, but also strongly criticised the traditional Hindu thinkers like Bhagwan Das. In the Ferozpur document of the Congress Socialist Party he persuaded the Party to declare itself as a Marxist Party. JP thought it was necessary to heal the breach between the Congress Socialist Party and the Communist Party, both of whom professed Marxism. The main dispute between the Congress Socialist Party and the Communist Party at the time was that the Congress Socialist Party leaders regarded the Indian National Congress as the anti-imperialist national front and believed that all socialists, Marxists and leftists, should work through the Indian National Congress. The policy of the Communist Party was different. They regarded the Congress as a bourgeois Party and denounced Mahatma Gandhi as a bourgeois leader. The Communist Party stayed away from the great civil disobedience campaign of the years 1930-34 although many individual comrades joined this movement.

But by 1936 a change had come in the policy and outlook of the communists and they decided to work with the Indian National Congress. After this change JP felt that the main difference that divided the Communist Party and the Congress Socialist Party had disappeared. So he suggested that there should be a united front between the Congress Socialist Party and the Communist Party which was then a proscribed political organisation. As a first step towards unification, JP opened the doors of the Congress Socialist Party for Communist Party members and many members joined the Congress Socialist Party and also became members of the AICC. The socialists and communists also worked together in the AITUC. JP played a leading role in restoring unity to the trade union movement and he also played a prominent part in organising the Kisan Sabha. Both the socialists and the communists pressed for collective affiliation of these class organisations with the Indian National Congress. The issue was discussed at the working committee from time to time and in spite of the deep sympathy which Jawaharlal Nehru felt for the viewpoint of the socialists and communists, the Congress never accepted the principle of collective affiliation.

Jayaprakash Narayan was an opponent of the federal scheme under the Government of India Act of 1935 and he believed that a mass struggle would have to be organised to fight this reactionary scheme and achieve complete independence. Since Subhas Bose was also a strong critic of the Government of India Act, and had decided to contest the election for Congress presidentship, Subhas solicited the support of the socialists. At that time there was a division in the socialist ranks. Men like Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia were sceptical. They felt it was only under the

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leadership of Mahatma Gandhi that a mass struggle could be launched. "We should not pursue any policy that would divide the Congress." At the same time Dr. Lohia felt that the socialists and communists should try to influence the policies of the Congress and try to make them more radical. Subhas Babu won the presidential election but Mahatma Gandhi treated it as a vote of no confidence in his leadership. At the AICC meeting in Tripuri a resolution was introduced by Gobind Ballabh Pant reiterating faith in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and directing the new president to appoint the working committee in consultation with Mahatma Gandhi.

Mahatma Gandhi had then undertaken a fast at Rajkot and Subhas Babu had taken ill. We young people, I distinctly remember, were very angry with Mahatma Gandhi for using the Rajkot fast to create an opinion in the Congress Party against Subhas Bose. We expected our Congress Socialist leaders to back Subhas Bose to the hilt although we all felt the preserving of the unity of the Congress was also essential. After Tripuri, because JP had excellent relations both with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose, at the Calcutta AICC meeting JP played the role of mediator and tried to bring about unity not only between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose, but also between the conservative wing of the Congress and the radical wing, of which Subhas Bose and he himself were the acknowledged leaders. However, JP did not succeed and Subhas Bose and the Indian National Congress drifted apart. Subhas Babu organised anti-compromise conferences and attacked the official leadership of the Congress for which action was taken against Subhas Bose and he was expelled from the Congress Party. We were naturally very unhappy about these developments and I remember the heated discussions we had with the Congress Socialist Party leaders in Pune. However all these controversies were pushed to the background because of the outbreak of the World War II.

It was after the outbreak of the war that JP came to Pune. I remember that JP's main concern at that time was to organise mass resistance against the war effort. He continued to press Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leaders not to cooperate with the war effort and hence launch a mass struggle against Britain's effort to drag India into the war. He went round the country making anti-war speeches and rousing the people against the British Government. The British Government took action and arrested Jayaprakash Narayan under the Defence of India Rules and sentenced Dr. Lohia to two years' imprisonment. In spite of the differences between Gandhiji and JP, gradually Jayaprakash was coming under the influence of Mahatmaji. But it was not a one way relationship. After the war JP had several discussions with

If JP and Lohia had not drifted apart after the 1952 elections, I do feel they together would have been able to forge a really progressive and formidable alternative to the Indian National Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi and wrote him a letter on the eve of the Ramgarh Congress. Mahatma Gandhi responded in the columns of the *Harijan* and said that if the Socialists accepted the creed of non-violence, he would go along with them. In subsequent years, not only did Mahatma Gandhi influence socialist leaders like JP, but leaders like JP, Lohia and others also influenced the thinking of Mahatma Gandhi.

If you read Pyarelal's memoirs of that period—*The Last Phase*—this will become clear. During the 1942 movement JP made a daring escape from Hazaribagh jail with colleagues like Ram Nandan Misra and joined the ranks of the freedom fighters. At that time Achut Patwardhan, Aruna Asaf Ali, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Sucheta Kripalani and others were operating under the name of the underground AICC and trying to widen the scope of the mass struggle. They stuck to the position of non-killing and non-injury. When JP came out, I remember that JP differed from these leaders and felt that only armed resistance could achieve the objectives. He organised squads which operated in Bihar. Nepal was used as a base of operations.

However, the British were able to arrest both JP and Dr. Lohia and gradually both the peaceful and the armed resistance collapsed except in areas like Satara where a parallel Government was set up. JP's thinking underwent a basic change during 1943-46 and when he came out of jail, he had renounced his faith in Marxism, although he continued to subscribe to the ideal of an egalitarian society. However, the Soviet experience and the role of the Communist Party in the 1942 movement alienated JP both from Marxism and from the Communist Party. He increasingly fell under Gandhiji's influence, especially after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. So JP came to accept Gandhiji's creed of non-violence.

JP was the founder of the Socialist movement. As the general secretary of the Party, it was he who organised the Party units. After the socialists left the Congress in 1948, JP played an outstanding role in making the Socialist Party a mass Party. He also prepared for the first general election held on the basis of adult franchise. The election results came as a shock not only to other Socialist leaders but also to JP who had played a large part in organising the Party. Although the Socialists polled more than 10 per cent of the popular votes, they won very few seats in the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies. JP never reconciled himself to this result. Gradually he felt that electoral politics would not bring salvation to the country. More and more he began to explore the potentialities of the Gandhian method and came very close to Vinoba Bhave. Vinoba Bhave at that time launched his Bhoodan movement and JP enthusiastically joined him. Sometimes he went to the other extreme. From his early Marxism he swung to enthusiastic championing of the Sarvodaya cause. JP thought that Bhoodan and Sarvodaya would bring about a basic social transformation; it would solve the land problem, the agrarian problem and it would also bring about a basic change in the social order.

By 1954 JP had practically withdrawn from active participation in the socialist movement. In 1952, the Socialist Party and the KMPP had merged to form the Praja Socialist Party. After the formation of the Praja Socialist Party a discussion and dialogue had been held between Jawaharlal Nehru on the one hand and JP on the other. Jawaharlal had made vague suggestions about co-operation between the Indian National Congress and the PSP. He had not defined the scope of this co-operation, whether he meant co-operation at the governmental level or co-operation in non-governmental work. In the course of this dialogue JP formulated his 14-point programme and this became very controversial among the ranks of the PSP. Leaders like Dr. Lohia felt that the Congress Party enjoyed more than two-thirds majority in Parliament and there was no point in an opposition Party which didn't have a large representation in Parliament in offering co-operation to the ruling Party. These controversies also affected JP deeply, and it strengthened his resolve to retire from Party politics.

I remember Dr. Lohia was very unhappy about JP's drift into Sarvodaya. In 1954 he wrote a very moving letter to JP. In fact, Dr. Lohia was prophetic as he wrote: "Only you can move the country, provided you do not vacillate." Discussions were held subsequently between JP, Dr. Lohia and several of us. Till his death, Dr. Lohia made several efforts to persuade JP to return to active politics. By active politics, Dr. Lohia of course did not mean power politics because both Dr Lohia and JP had never been after power. They have been mass leaders and revolutionaries whose goal was not to win power somehow but to bring about a basic change in the social system. Both of them felt a deep affinity for young people. I have not come across any other

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JP felt a deep affinity for young people. He encouraged them and put them to the fore. That is why when the Nav Nirman movement broke out in Gujarat and the Bihar students started a movement they naturally turned to JP for guidance and leadership.

leaders who have shown such sympathy for younger people. JP encouraged several young people to play an active part in politics. In fact he pushed them to the fore. I am myself a reserved type and I am not pushy by nature but JP reposed great confidence in young people. In 1947, one day S. M. Joshi received a telegram from JP saying that he had chosen a young man of 25 to represent the Indian socialists at the International Socialist Congress. When JP was general secretary of the Party after he left the Congress, he not only forced me to become secretary of the foreign relations department with Dr Lohia as chairman but also made me a joint-secretary of the Party. This affection for young people was a distinctive feature of JP's life. That is why when the Nav Nirman movement broke out in Gujarat and (when) the Bihar students also started a movement they naturally turned to JP for guidance, for leadership.

BETWEEN 1954 and 1971 JP played an active part in the Sarvodaya movement but gradually he began to realise that the Bhoodan movement or the Sarvodaya movement was not the answer for the country's needs. He felt that Vinoba's movement was a status quoist movement, leaned heavily on the ruling classes and powers that be, and that Sarvodaya in its existing form could not become a potent instrument for change. In 1969 the Congress Party split, and Mrs Gandhi established her ascendancy both in the Government and in the new Congress and the drift towards authoritarianism began. Between 1969 and 1971, Mrs Gandhi introduced a number of radical measures like bank nationalisation and abolition of the Privy Purses. But soon we had begun to have doubts whether she did it out of conviction or whether she did it to whip up mass support for her authoritarian type of functioning. The CPI held a contrary view and they cooperated with Mrs Gandhi during this period, but the socialists and even the CPI(M) came to the conclusion in 1969-70 that Mrs Gandhi's radicalism was a gimmick, that all she was interested in was establishing her dynastic rule in this country.

I used to meet JP from time to time and exchange ideas. What JP did subsequently, I know, was not a sudden development but a gradual evolution of his thinking. Some leaders lay great store by consistency; but really great leaders are not consistent as far as details or tactics or secondary things are concerned. JP travelled from Marxism to Sarvodaya and back to the leadership of the struggle for democracy, struggle against the Emergency, struggle for civil liberties. Throughout this period he was inconsistent as far as secondary things were concerned, as far as the details or the tactics employed were concerned. But I make bold to assert that as far as adherences to fundamental principles were concerned, JP had been consistent throughout. JP accepted Marxism because he was totally against foreign rule, he was against the iniquitous social order and he wanted to establish a society based on social and economic justice. As far as these principles were concerned JP had been absolutely consistent. JP was a great believer in national independence as well as in the cause of suffering humanity.

That is why he was moved by the sufferings of the common people in Bangladesh when that country suffered under Yahya's military dictatorship and I persuaded JP to come out of his Sarvodaya shell and take the lead in organising world opinion in favour of Bangladesh's liberation. JP not only undertook a world tour in support of the cause of Bangladesh's liberation, he also organised an important international conference in Delhi. JP's effort played a big part in persuading liberal, progressive, democratic socialist world opinion to support the cause of Bangladesh. JP was also a great believer in national unity and he fervently held the belief that only Mahatma Gandhi's belief in communal harmony and secularism could hold the country together. It was because of his belief in national unity and the cause of secularism, that he supported Sheikh Abdullah in his efforts to make use of his services to bring about the integration of Kashmir with the rest of India. He supported the Sheikh's cause because he believed that as Kashmir was a part of India, India would remain a non-denominational secular State.

He also championed the cause of the Naga people and played a big role in organising a peace mission. JP was aware that Nagaland was a Christian majority area. JP was aware that the tribal people were fiercely independent and he wanted the people of Nagaland to enjoy their freedom as part of the Indian Union. I remember during the communal holocaust in Bihar of 1946 following the riots in Calcutta and Noakhali, JP and Badshah Khan (Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan) risked their own lives in order to reestablish communal peace in Bihar. JP continued to work for communal harmony — during the last days of Mahatma Gandhi and thereafter. Those who hold Jayaprakashji in great esteem must remember that Jayaprakashji was an ardent supporter of the ideals of communal harmony and secularism. To talk of loyalty for JP and to work against communal harmony — these two things cannot go together.

But to revert to the point that I was making, after 1971 JP felt increasingly concerned over two problems — the country's growing drift towards authoritarianism and the failure of the Sarvodaya method to solve the agrarian problem or bring about a revolutionary change in the country's social structure. He was seeking a way out and while he continued to shun power, he felt that he could not keep away from the political structure. That is the reason why he extended his sympathy and support to the Gujarat Nav Nirman agitation and advised students to leave their colleges and universities to devote themselves at least for one year to constructive work. "Go to the villages and organise the people." Then in his own State of Bihar, a struggle broke out and the Bihar Government tried to suppress it. JP finally came out of his shell, so to say, to lead the Bihar movement. Although the Congress Government rapidly lost public support, it was kept in office by applying force. The whole power of the State, the power of the Central Government besides the para-military forces like the Central Reserve Police and the Border Security Force, Industrial Security Force and so on were diverted to Bihar and ordered to suppress the agitation.

At that point of time I remember I had an interesting meeting with him in Allahabad. I asked him a direct question — If he succeeds in getting the Bihar Assembly dissolved and a fresh election was ordered, what would be his role in the ensuing electoral struggle? To that he said : "I cannot keep out because the Assembly would be dissolved because of my insistence, because of my movement. It would be my duty to provide an alternative Government." I said if you are going to take part in the electoral battle, what would be the instrument, who would be the candidates, how would they be selected? Then he said: "We shall have to bring the Opposition Parties together. But the candidates must be sponsored by the popular committees." They may be candidates belonging to the Opposition Parties but they must win the approval of the people's committees which he proposed to set up. I said if your candidates win a majority, will you form a Government? He said yes. I said a Government will imply formation of a United Legislative Party. He said yes, it will have to be done, there will have to be a common programme, there will have to be discipline. Then I asked him that means you are going to form a Party. JP was taken aback and he told me

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"you are asking me too many questions. I'll answer them. I'll cross the bridge when I come to it." I remember this conversation because after that JP decided to extend the Bihar movement to other areas and organised a convention in Delhi in 1974 and a national committee for peoples' struggle was formed. Out of these discussions came the idea of a great march on Parliament. A drafting committee was set up to formulate the demands and I remember one discussion where I raised th question of Emergency, the Bangladesh Emergency. I said Mrs Gandhi had not withdrawn her that Emergency as yet and it was very likely that she would use the Emergency powers, clamp down authoritarian rule so we must include the demand for the revoking of the Emergency in our charter of demands, and this demand was finally included. The march was a big success and thereafter, JP took an active part in the discussions centering around Opposition unity. Then came the dissolution of the Gujarat Assembly and the Gujarat election and JP persuaded the Opposition Parties to come together and the Janata Morcha was formed. JP actively campaigned for this. All these developments finally led to the decision to bring about Opposition unity. As far as we people were concerned we were not prepared to go beyond a federal Party; in fact, some of the socialists were not even prepared to have a federal Party. They were not prepared to go beyond a United Front. They wanted to preserve their identity.

It was Chaudhury Charan Singh, fully backed by Jayaprakash Narayan, who continued to insist on the formation of a united Party. However the other Parties were not prepared to accept this and after the Allahabad judgments and the Gujarat elections a joint meeting of the National Executive of the four Opposition Parties was held in Delhi. JP attended that meeting and it was at this meeting that a decision was taken to start a civil disobedience campaign. Mrs Gandhi made this her pretext for her massive attack against democracy and popular freedom. JP and others were arrested at midnight and packed off to prisons. Large scale arrests were made and for several months we lost all contact with JP.

JP travelled from Marxism to Sarvodaya and back to the leadership of the struggle for democracy. He was inconsistent as far as secondary things were concerned but as far as fundamental principles were concerned he was consistent throughout.

AS soon as elections to the Lok Sabha were announced on January 18, JP took the lead in organising the electoral struggle and the true sign of greatness is that great men always simplify complex situations into simple slogans. Lenin talked of peace and land to the peasants, and bought about a revolution in Czarist Russia. Similarly JP simplified the issue and said that the issue was democracy versus dictatorship. This slogan so powerfully influenced the people, who had suffered during the Emergency months that they splendidly rallied round the banner of the Janata Party and its allies and a crushing defeat was inflicted on Mrs Gandhi.

JP came to Delhi and administered an oath to the newly elected members of the Janata Party at Rajghat. It is well to remember what oath was administered by JP. JP asked us to work for a fundamental transformation of political, economic and social relations. He wanted us to defend popular liberties. He wanted us to work for the upliftment of the lowly and the oppressed. In the 27 months that the Janata Party was in power did we fulfil the pledge that we took at Rajghat? Any honest person will have to admit that the Janata Party did not carry out the pledge which it had taken at Rajghat.

I was saying that any honest person will have to admit that we have badly let down the people. Everybody knows that JP was extremely unhappy about the performance of the Government, but many times he said that since he was tied down to this dialysis machine and could not play an active part he would not like to say much about what was happening in the country. Attempts were made by some people to exploit his name or to involve him in controversies which in the perspecetive of history have no significance whatsover. I used to have long discussions with him but I always desisted from using his name in current controversies.

Apart from Mahatma Gandhi whom I never knew intimately at the personal level, the two leaders who profoundly influenced my thinking and my life are Jayaprakash Narayan and Dr Lohia. I always feel that if the two of them had not drifted apart after the 1952 elections, if JP had not left the socialist movement, if he had not drifted into Sarvodaya, if he had continued to organise the socialist movement and the mass organisation and the organisation of youth and women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes,I do feel JP and Lohia together would have been able to forge a really progressive and formidable alternative to the Indian National Congress.

I am acutely aware that Dr Lohia's tactical line of electoral adjustments among non-Congress Parties or JP's policy of uniting the Opposition Parties — disparate Opposition Parties with their conflicting ideologies — these tactics have arisen out of a fundamental weakness. The absence of a strong socialist movement backed by a powerful organisation of the peasants, industrial workers, agricultural labourers, students and youth.

I am not saying that JP should have taken an active role in power politics. Neither Dr Lohia nor JP, as I said at the very outset, were after power. But one question needs to be squarely faced. What is the role of State power in social transformation? What is the role of Raj Shakti and Lok Shakti ? Ultimately the use of State power is an important ingredient in bringing about a social revolution. I know that there is great danger of this State power, of this coercive power, becoming an unfettered tyranny. That danger has always been there in all revolutionary changes. The problem to my mind was how to use State power for bringing about fundamental social changes and at the same time tame that State power in the interests of the people through organisations of popular will or popular strength.

I don't know what the solution is. to this problem. If JP had not been paralysed by ill health, maybe he would have been able to organise the popular will and to take the Janata Government and the State power and would have compelled it to implement the promises made in the election manifesto. Maybe I am only dreaming. But if I have learnt anything from JP and from Dr Lohia and Mahatma Gandhi, it is this lesson that you cannot be indifferent to the question of State power. To run away from this question would be tantamount to escapism. At the same time by having recourse to Parliament, parliamentary methods, and electoral majorities and formation of governments, we are not going to achieve much. After all, people have to be organised. Their desires and aspirations have to be articulated. And pressure of popular opinion has to be generated to force the weilders of power to implement their promises. This is an unfinished task that JP has left behind. And those of us who agree with this fundamental proposition have to accept the challenge.

We are all small men confronted with great problems. With humility and faith in the ideals which JP held dear to his heart we should try to contribute our mite in the necessary task of bringing about social transformation in this country. For more than 3,000 years large numbers of our people have been denied even the basic rights. More than 40 per cent of our population continues to live below the poverty line. Unless we create a new social order, where the common people would occupy the centre of the stage, we cannot be said to have paid a real tribute to JP. I feel that all of us should re-dedicate our selves to the ideals of Jayaprakash Narayan which were also the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, the ideals of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. ■

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JP the Revolutionary

His thoughts live on

By BHOLA CHATTERJI

THE curtain has been rung down on the century's most controversial Indian who for nearly five decades occupied a unique place in the life of the country. No Indian in the post-Independence era, with the obvious exceptions of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, came anywhere near to stirring the feelings of the people as Jayaprakash Narayan did. But after the homages and the tributes are over and myth and reality start their interplay with the memory of his life, the crucial assessment will have to follow. But what do we make of him? Whatever may be the final verdict of history — one may not agree with his ideas, dialectically one may make mincemeat of his concept of the total revolution, one might even be tempted to conclude that his thoughts and ideas were woolly and he was a muddle-headed theoriser who often deserted what he had earlier considered the only path that could lead to the promised land of peace, progress and prosperity — that would not detract from the fact that through his intensely lived and eventful political life, this man had consistently been in search of an idea that might trace a new path for the country.

First, how did the man himself look at the result of his life's work? When in his last days he contemplated the impending failure of his most cherished creation — the Janata Party — was he at peace with himself? He told me in July 1978, "Well, I don't claim to be entirely at peace with myself. In a personal sense, I am. But when I look at what is happening around me I feel very unhappy, then I am surely not at peace with myself. I would like to do something about what I think is going wrong, but, unfortunately, partly because of my illness and partly because of other limitations I am unable to do very much. That adds to my dissatisfaction with myself and the situation that obtains over which I can't have complete control."

Was this the same man who had only the other day, so to speak, raised the nation from the dead? Quite so, said the Janata Party president, Chandrashekhar, when I asked him what his assessment was of Jayaprakash's role in rescuing India from authoritarianism. "Bhola, you know my opinion about Jayaprakash Narayan. His role in saving democracy in this country was assessed by me as early as in 1974. It was for the first time after 1947, if I may say so, after Mahatma Gandhi, Jayaprakash was the only person who enthused the masses to assert certain values in our public life. At that time the prestige of our parliamentary institutions, our democratic institutions were slowly being eroded and Jayaprakash tried to draw the attention of the nation to that problem. Corruption in high places, favouritism, nepotism, in fighting for power — these were some of the maladies eating into the very vitals of our democracy. Jayaprakash started his movement on these issues.

"I feel that if JP had not started the movement at that time perhaps we would have been caught in the trap of authoritarianism. Though I was in the Congress, I tried my best to save the country and the Congress from being driven to the wall. I have no hesitation in admitting, however, that it was of little avail. Most of the time it was just a cry in the wilderness. But when JP took the lead in the movement people were enthused, they were involved.

"No sooner had we come out of jail than we saw what JP had done during 1974 and 1975 did not go to waste. People remembered all that was responsible for the demoralization in the nation; and they also remembered the sacrifice JP had made. I think that the Janata Party could win the elections only because JP had sown the seeds of courage and determination among the people. That contribution cannot be forgotten. Mahatma Gandhi gave us freedom, JP gave us the will to survive as a democratic nation."

In reply to my question during the same interview in July, 1979 as to what he thought of the accusation that he had often gone off at a tangent, Jayaprakash said: "Going off at a tangent would suggest that doing something which is completely different from what one had been doing before or trying to achieve. In my case it is not going off at a tangent but making various kinds of experiments. When one did not succeed I tried to find something better which could answer the needs of the situation. Because of frequent breaks in the journey due to either my health or imprisonment or something else there has not been a continuous thread. But I have never felt that I am going off at a tangent. I am pursuing something which is a fixed and worthwhile objective; and if one path to it ends up nowhere, then another path has to be found". This evidently overlooked the point that a claim could not be substituted for logical exposition. It would therefore be necessary to go into his long and complex political life to find a satisfactory answer.

THE concept of democratic socialism, unlike communism, appeared rather late on the Indian political scene. Consequent upon the failure of the 1932 civil disobedience movement, a sizable section of Congressmen looked askance at Gandhi's leadership, convinced that he had left them in the lurch. If some Congressmen were eager for some form of constitutional politics, some others, numerically small though, emphasised the need for a left of centre orientation of the freedom struggle. Foremost among them were Yusuf Meherally, Rammanohar Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan, Asoka Mehta and S. M. Joshi, and Narendra Deva and Jayaprakash, the Indian socialist movement's two confirmed Marxists. In a manner of speaking, Nasik Road, Central Prison, where they had been lodged after their arrest for participation in the civil disobedience movement, was the birth-place of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP). In this Jayaprakash acted the part of a midwife. The CSP was formally established as a group within the Congress in 1934 with Jayaprakash as its secretary.

It is during his stay in the USA that JP took to communism. The Marxist Jayaprakash was "persuaded" by M. N. Roy's "writings of those days ... to believe that Gandhiji was against the social revolution and would at a moment of crisis hasten to uphold the system of exploitation and inequality". On his return to India in November 1929 Jayaprakash met Jawaharlal Nehru at Sabarmati Ashram. Common interests formed a bond between the two men and Nehru invited him to join the AICC (All India Congress Committee) Labour Research Department as its secretary. He accepted the offer. For two months in 1930 he also worked as private secertary to G. D. Birla, the Marwari businessman who had shot into prominence as one of Gandhi's hosts. Two things that marked him out were, on the one hand, his affectionate relationship with Nehru and dislike of Gandhi and, on the other, complete disillusionment with the Moscow-oriented communist movement, in this case the Communist Party of India (CPI).

He gave a wide berth to the CPI as it dissociated itself from the mainstream of the nationalist struggle. His argument was that "the communists in India were only following, of course, the policy laid down by the Third Communist International which by then had come completely under the leadership of Stalin. The patently mistaken policy that the Comintern had been following since 1928 and which had resulted in the division of the labour and the socialist movements throughout the world and in the isolation of the communists from the national movements in all the colonial countries, appeared to me, as indeed it was later acknowledged to be, contrary to Marxist theory generally and specifically to the famous colonial policy enunciated by Lenin. "My differences with the CPI thus marked the beginning of my ideological alienation from

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Soviet Russia itself, which to me was till then the paragon and exemplar of all communist virtues ..... I naturally kept away from the CPI and joined the ranks of the soldiers of freedom".

It was generally recognised at that time that Jayaprakash was the moving spirit behind the Party's emblazoning "Marxism" on its banner. Carried away as he was by his idealistic faith in Marxism, he failed to take cognisance of the basic contradictions in his approach to the question either of unity with the CPI or of relations with the Congress. Elaborating the policy and programme the CSP should adhere to, Jayaprakash said: "The immediate task is to develop the national movement into a real anti-imperialist movement aiming at freedom from the foreign power and the native system of exploitation. For that it is necessary to wean the anti-imperialist elements in the Congress away from its bourgeois leadership and to bring them under the leadership of revolutionary socialism ... The party's own programme must be Marxist, otherwise it will fail to fulfil its task and leadership. Marxism alone can guide the anti-imperialist forces to their ultimate destiny. Party members must, therefore, fully understand the technique of revolution, the theory and practice of class struggle, the nature of the State and processes leading to socialist society."

Since Subhas Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru were at that time generally looked upon as the most devoted champions of "leftism" in the Congress, an appraisal of their attitude toward the socialists would be in order here. Not long after the formation of the CSP Subhas Bose stated that "though the Congress Socialist Party has, in some respects, been barking back to the ideas and shibboleths that were popular forty or fifty years ago, it does stand for a radical tendency in the nationalist movement and the formation of such a party is a very hopeful feature of the times".

This was not greatly comforting to the socialists, nor did they have reason to appreciate Subhas's comments on the observation Nehru had made on December 18, 1933: "I do believe that fundamentally the choice before the world today is one between some form of communism and some form of fascism, and am all for the former, that is communism." This prompted Subhas to say that "the view ... is ... fundamentally wrong. Unless we are at the end of the process of evolution or unless we deny evolution altogether, there is no reason to hold that our choice is restricted to two alternatives Considering everyhing, one is inclined to hold that the next phase in world-history will produce a synthesis between communism and fascism. And will it be a surprise if that synthesis is produced in India?"

Jayaprakash's attitude toward Gandhi changed distinctly well before the Gandhi-Subhas conflict came to a head. The defence of his neutral stand on the Gandhi-Subhas dispute at the Tripuri Congress was that since "a grave situation has arisen" threatening Congress unity, "no effort should be spared to maintain that unity". And he assured "Mahatma Gandhi of the fullest support of the Party in maintaining this unity". Refuting the accusation that the CSP had surrendered to Gandhi, Jayaprakash said that "the effective leadership of the Congress is in the hands of Gandhiji ... If a national struggle as opposed to a sectional, factional or partial, can be launched by Mahatma Gandhi alone, it is suicidal to fight him. It is necessary to lend him our fullest support". In this it would be hard to detect even a faint trace of the acerbic anti-Gandhi idiom that until recently had been an inseparable item of Jayaprakash's ideological baggage. Yesterday's crusading "Marxist" had already come quite close to someone he once called "a bourgeois reformist". The change in his thinking could be traced to a combination of factors — his growing disenchantment with Marxism; opposition from his non-Marxist colleagues in the Party; Nehru's influence and, last but not the least, Prabhavati, who was both a friend of Nehru's wife Kamala and a devout Gandhian.

If the socialist movement spent the pre-Independence years in persistent endeavours to get itself simultaneously accepted as a Marxist critic of the Communist Party and a radical challenge to the Congress, its efforts since Independence were to project itself both as the Party of socialism with an Indian face and as a viable alternative to the Congress. Jayaprakash had already started casting himself in the Gandhian mould. Notwithstanding his reference to Marxism, he made it clear at the 1949 Patna conference of the Party that "when I talk about the principles Gandhiji stood for, his teaching and practice and the lessons these have for the socialist movement, I am quite serious". He did not consider this incompatible with his eagerness to render all assistance, from cladestine arms procurement to collection of money, to the Party-sponsored anti-Razakar armed resistance movement in the then Nizam's Hyderabad. He also gave unreserved support, in terms of weapons as well as money, to the Nepali Congress-led 1950-51 armed struggle against Rana autocracy. And he defended this in the name of Gandhi.

By the time the Socialst Party and the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) merged, in 1953 to form the Praja Socialist Party (PSP) (a section of the Subhasist Forward Bloc joined it subsequently) sharp differences of opinion between Jayaprakash and Lohia had surfaced. They differed on a wide range of issues — the Party's ideological foundation, relation with Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement (with which Jayaprakash had already identified himself) and the attitude toward Nehru. If Jayaprakash brusquely dismissed Lohia's opposition to his talks with Nehru, in early 1953, in order to explore the possibilities of Congress-PSP cooperation at both Party and Government levels, he also emphasised that Vinoba had picked up the threads where Gandhi had left them. The announcement of his "final break with Marxism" in 1952 was soon followed by his decision "to give up politics" in late 1953. Of course he retained his formal membership of the PSP until the intra Party conflict split it down the middle, compelling Lohia to establish his own Socialist Party in early January 1956.

Jayaprakash plunged himself into the Bhoodan-Sarvodaya movement, being convinced that "the philosophy of Bhoodan ... the noblest of ideas ... is the first step toward a total revolution — social, political and economic". He had also come to believe that "the Party system ... was seeking to reduce the people to the position of sheep ... the Parties ... rule in the name of the people and create the illusion of democracy and self-government ... For my part, it is not the Party system that is the main culprit, but parliamentary democracy itself, which gives rise to it".

The emphasis was on *Lokaneeti* (politics of the people) as opposed to *Rajaneeti* (politics of Party and power), on *Lokashakti* (people's power) as distinct from *Rajashakti* (State power). In all this the guiding spirit was Gandhi who, in the words of Jayaprakash, "did not take power into his own hands, which was a very extraordinary thing for a leader to do. After every successful revolution, the leader takes power into his hands. Washington became the first US President, Lenin became the first Prime Minister of Soviet Russia. But Gandhiji neither became the first President nor the first Prime Minister of Free India. Why? Because he was thinking of grassroots democracy, of going to the people and showing them how to run their affairs themselves".

BETWEEN then and June 25, 1975 some 30 years had rolled by. On the following morning India woke up to be told by Mrs Gandhi that democracy had been put in the deep-freeze in order to foil "an attempt by Fascist forces to subvert the democratic system". And she had no use for euphemism when it came to identifying the source that gave sap to the evil forces — Jayaprakash Narayan. That doubtless was one of life's great ironies.

The forces of authoritarianism had seemingly been made to bite the dust and the Janata Party was installed in office with the 82-year-old Morarji Desai as Prime Minister, thanks once again to Jayaprakash. We can depend on him to testify to this. In his own words, "I helped them to come to power because I had hoped they would yet write a new chapter of India's history". But Morarji Desai did not particularly care for JP. Prime Minister Desai not only

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took umbrage at Jayaprakash's criticism of the Government, he also insisted on rubbing the point in that it was his job to determine how the show should be managed.

That was not all. Lest anyone should get ideas into his head Prime Minister Desai made it clearly understood, particularly when infighting had almost made the Janata Party a caricature of itself, that "Jayaprakash Narayan is not the arbiter in Party affairs". For that matter, Premier Desai emphasised, "Mr Narayan may tell many things, but that does not mean I am going to accept them". Maybe that was why Prime Minister Desai, in reply to my request last July for his assessment of Jayaprakash's role in rescuing India from authoritarianism said : "I do not think it is a task which I can perform. It is not fair to assess a living personality and measure it because it can lead to all kinds of interpretations which are never meant. I therefore refrain from doing it. And that's why I am sorry I can't give you any assessment about it beyond saying that he did perform a significant part in that movement. Beyond that I won't say anything." The conclusion may not be wide off the mark that Jayaprakash, who had been branded as a rebel by both the colonial and the indigenous rulers, had also become a thorn in the flesh of the men (one of the notable exceptions being the Janata Party president Chandrashekhar) whom he had lent a helping hand to climb up the ladder of power.

According to Jayaprakash, he "had always believed that Mrs Gandhi had no faith in democracy, that she was by inclination and conviction a dictator". If this is taken at its face value the question naturally would arise : What did he do to meet the situation?

Even as late as December 1973 Jayaprakash stated in the course of his inaugural address to the All India Radical Humanist Conference in Calcutta that "Party democracy, that is, democracy based on and manipulated by political Parties is a most unsatisfactory and defective system of democracy. The people, by and large, are fed up with all political parties and the present form and practice of democracy." Five months later he said, on June 5, 1974, that "the Bihar movement was no longer a students' movement restricted to the 12 original demands plus the few others that had been added since 18th March ... but that the movement's or struggle's ultimate aims were nothing less than total revolution." Before another five months passed he stated on November 5, 1974 that the Bihar movement was no longer "between the people of Bihar and the Gafoor Ministry but between the people of India and the Prime Minister." In between he had come to the conclusion that "if the (Bihar) movement had been confined to the Sarvodaya workers alone and its principle was to keep away all political Parties including the ruling Party, it would have been possible to keep them away. But, then, there would have been no people's movement." Raising the question, "is the involvement of the political Parties in a Bihar-type people's movement an unmixed evil?" he said : "My unhesitating answer is No. Its first result, too obvious to be argued is that it lends strength to the movement."

If Jayaprakash had reasons to believe that democracy had all along been an anathema to Indira Gandhi (an entry dated July 22, 1975 in his *Prison Diary* would confirm this), he also recorded (entry dated August 28, 1975) that "from all that she has been doing since 1971 at least, it appears that she is afraid of democracy because then she is not sure if she would remain in power." But why was he hesitant to speak out against Mrs Gandhi before 1974? First, he had not yet ruled out the possibility of achieving "a politics of consensus" that might facilitate certain radical socio-political changes without damaging the basic democratic structure. Also, he still believed that "whatever might be Mrs Gandhi's personal inclination, it would not be possible for her to become a dictator ... that the people would not allow it and she would have no courage to go ahead ... that the Congress Party ... would not let that happen." Then, although he realised that the Bhoodan-Sarvodaya movement, with which he had completely identified himself, was not the instrument that could serve his purpose. he had still to make up his mind to abandon it. Thirdly, he was in search of an instrument that could meet the challenge of the Indira regime. In the given context he settled on a course of limited struggle- compromise- concession- consolidation and the same process all over again until he was able to muster the "leadership and organization ... necessary to bring out of the revolutionary situation a revolutionary movement" which could "complete the revolution that Gandhiji's assassination had abruptly left unfinished," that is, the unfinished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. And this was absolutely necessary (it might have been his argument) in order to realise the objective of "total revolution" — "revolution in every sphere and aspect of society" and thus pave the way for the establishment of "a casteless and classless" society.

Fourthly, there were his personal relations with the Nehru family. It is well known that he had enjoyed a special rapport with Nehru, even though he opposed the latter on many issues. As Jayaprakash put it some days after Indira Gandhi's meeting with him in August 1977, "I always regarded Panditji (Nehru) as my brother and he also treated me like that. My wife Prabhavati regarded Kamala Nehru as her closest friend. We always treated Mrs Indira Gandhi as our daughter and that relationship exists even now" Indeed it was inconceivable that Prabhavati would be happy to see Jayaprakash and Kamala's only daughter Indira locked together in a mortal combat.

Be that as it may, it did not take him long to realise that the Janata Party with which he had identified himself was not the instrument that could be depended upon to realise even a minimum of the much needed basic changes in society, not to speak of the concept of "total revolution". Much to his regret, he found out that it was not commitment to an ideology but a combination of other factors, such as personal prejudices, caste and personality equations, that determined the Janata Government's approach to men and events. And he did not elect to be silent about it.

It is certainly not an easy job to knit the various threads of JP's life into a picture that can shine in all its hues and colours. But the foundation of his life was his sincerity; he meant it when he said that "a fire has been continuously burning in my heart. I have always felt a great urge to change the present society which is based on injustice and exploitation. We will have to build up a new society where there would be equality and fullest freedom."

The hard-core of his philosophy remained constant — to create a society where man would be the measure of everything, where the right to dissent and to protest, if necessary to raise the standard of revolt against oppression and injustice would not send a man to jail. He was not an escapist, whatever else he might have been. If he stayed away from *Rajashakti* it was because he realised early enough the limitations of State power. However, he was aware that even Gandhi's "own high authority", as Louis Fischer succinctly put it, "was no match for the power of a Government born of his efforts and whose members touched his feet in obeisance". That is why his emphasis was on building up mass power which alone could compel State power to act in the right direction. He was convinced that the build-up and exercise of mass power became necessary whether for abolishing laws and institutions that would refuse to respond to the legitimate grievances of the people, for changing what was felt to be an immoral law (even if that law enjoyed the authorities' sanction), or for implementing declared programmes of the Government. More important, mass power was necessary to initiate basic changes in society. This could not be accomplished alone on the basis of politics of Party and power. For this politics of the people would have to be cultivated. He firmly believed that "the people cannot move unless there is a catalytic agent and this catalytic agent is the selfless servant who goes to the people, not for any reward or return not with the idea that the people will vote for him, but to create revolution in the minds and hearts of the people". That was precisely what he kept on doing even as his life was fast ebbing away. ■

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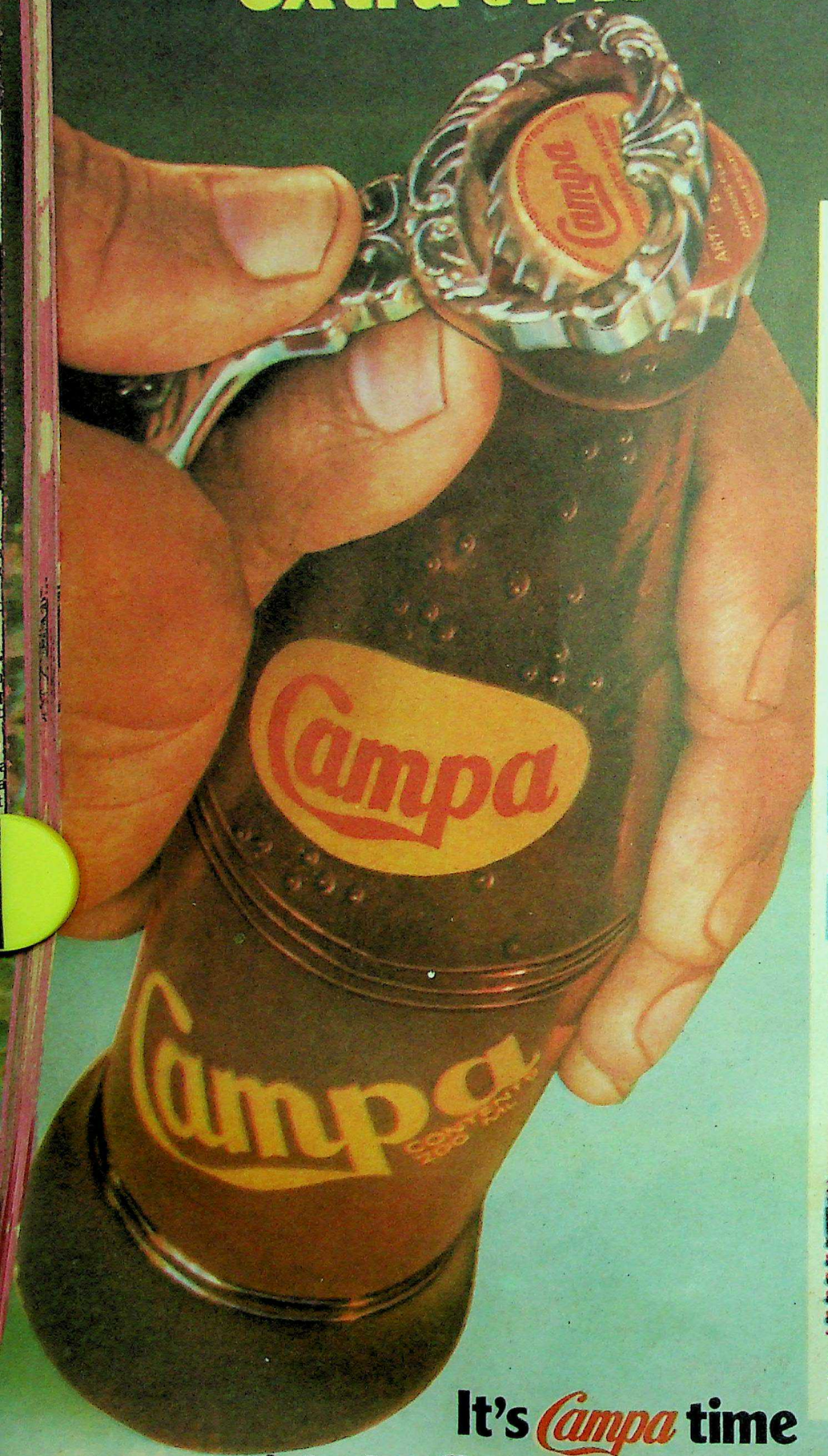

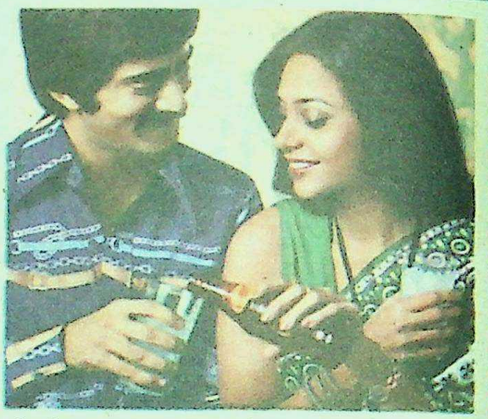

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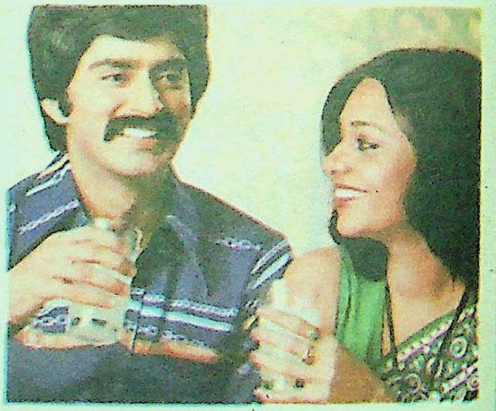

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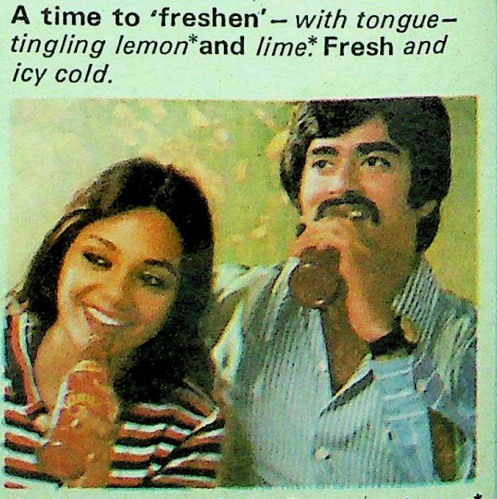

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JP the politician

Unlike so many others he showed no appetite for power

By RANAJIT ROY

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN devoted nearly 50 of his 77 years to the service of the nation and endeavoured to promote the cause of the poor and the downtrodden. The first 18 of these 50 years he spent in the Congress, fighting for Independence and at the same time trying to turn it into a Party for socialist transformation of the country. During the last five years of his life he was the most powerful enemy of the Congress, as led by Indira Gandhi. He succeeded in bringing down her dictatorial and cruel regime, thus making the Congress lose the monopoly of power it had enjoyed since Independence. This was the most significant achievement of his long political career.

The instrument he forged for this was the Janata Party. Whether as a Congressman or as a Congress socialist or, after Independence, as a plain Socialist outside the Congress, he never made a mark as a Party organiser. Those were his younger days, and he was physically fit to do hard work and move up and down the country for the cause he espoused. If he failed to make of the Socialist Party and, later, the Praja Socialist Party, powerful political organisations in those days, it stands to reason that, even if his health had not failed him, he would not have been able to hammer out of the Janata's five disparate constituents a solidly united Party working for a set goal.

Because of grave illness, he could not even make the attempt. He was ailing when he was arrested by Indira Gandhi in June 1975 even before the country had known that she had imposed on the country a second Emergency on top of the one that had been in force since December 1971. In detention his health broke down completely. He developed kidney trouble from which he never recovered and which ultimately caused his death. Even though seriously ill, he exerted himself and was able to bring the five Janata constituents on a platform to give fight to the Congress in 1977. His health deteriorated further. Over a long period he hovered between life and death. In March this year the rumour spread that he was dead. Parliament made a fool of itself by passing a condolence resolution on the basis of this rumour.

There were conflicts within the Janata even when the Party was formally inaugurated at Mahatma Gandhi's samadhi in 1977. These flared up publicly in June 1978 but were partially patched up. The end of the Janata, as JP had forged it, came in July 79. The political edifice he had built in his old age crashed, and this at a time when Indira Gandhi was again on the scene, bidding for a return to power. What could be greater mortification for him than that a section of the Janata, out to capture power, colluded with her to break the Party and its Government? His death may have been hastened by this turn of events.

JP himself had a wholesome dislike for office and parliamentary life. He never chose to become a legislator or a Minister. In this he was so different from the general run of Congressmen and leaders and, as events later showed, many of his one-time Socialist colleagues and followers. By 1936, when he was 34, he had acquired such fame as a political worker that Jawaharlal Nehru included him in his working committee. The year before the British Parliament had passed the Government of India Act, providing for provincial autonomy. In 1937 the Congress formed Governments in several provinces. If JP had so desired, he could easily have become a legislator and a Minister in Bihar or UP. He not only kept himself aloof from legislatures and Ministries, but also clashed with Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru on the issue of acceptance of office. In the years after the first general election, Nehru tried to draft him into his Government, but JP spurned his offers. He proposed a 14-point programme which Nehru was not in a position to accept. Even if the programme had been accepted, it is doubtful if JP would have joined the Government.

JP was by then under the pressure of the Bhoodan movement which Vinoba Bhave, the 'nakal Gandhi', had begun in Telengana, and the Congress had begun beating Bhave's drum. The Socialists, JP included, had exaggerated ideas of their hold on the people, especially in UP and Bihar. They believed that they were a match for the Congress. The General Election of 1952 shattered their illusion. In the Lok Sabha election the Socialists put up 295 candidates among whom no more than 12 won. Its future mate, the KMPP, won even less—10 seats. On the other hand, the Congress got no fewer than 363 seats. Even the Communists, then hated by nationalist opinion because of their opposition to the Quit India movement of 1942 and their collaboration with the British during the war after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, did better. With 70 candidates in the field, they won 27 seats, five more than the combined strength of the Socialist Party and the KMPP. In the assemblies also, even in Bihar and UP, these two Parties fared very poorly. Neither the Socialist Party nor the KMPP ever got over this shock, not even after jointly forming the PSP.

NEHRU, more than any other senior Congress leader, had before Independence propagated the need for land reforms. In power he was face to face with the truth that his Party itself was the biggest stumbling block to these reforms. He did not fight it out with his reactionary opponents in this vital sphere, as in so many other fields, but yielded to them. The reforms were stalled. In the late Sixties, a Planning Commission team recorded that "lack of political will" stood in the way of these reforms. This lack of will was a legacy of Nehru's days. About the time of Independence the Communists began a movement to force land reforms which caught the imagination of the poor and the landless on a wide scale in Telengana in Andhra. Landlords, backed by governmental power, marshalled their forces to frustrate this movement. Clashes occurred at many places. In the name of restoration of law and order the Government let loose a reign of terror on the Communists and people hungry for land. The movement was crushed.

At this stage the old frame of Vinoba Bhave with his slogan of bhoodan (gift of land) appeared on the scene. Since the Congress would not carry out the promised reforms, an illusion had to be created that the avaricious landlords could be made to undergo a change of heart and give land to those who did not have it. JP, shocked by the failure of his Party in the General Election, now began seeing in bhoodan the "revolution beautiful." By 1954 he had fallen so much under the spell of the bhoodan movement that he decided to devote himself entirely to it and quit politics altogether. In course of time, bhoodan spawned gramdan, shramdan, and jivandan. It is now beyond dispute that the bhoodan movement was a colossal failure. It was indeed a hoax perpetrated on the country.

There came a time when Bhave and JP quarrelled, and quarrelled publicly. The quarrel took the shape of Bhave's opposition to JP's frequent forays into politics. JP, essentially a political being, could not ignore the effect of political activities of the conventional Parties, particularly of the Congress under Indira Gandhi.

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By 1974, the breach between JP and Bhave over the former's anti-Government agitation in Gujarat and Bihar became unbridgeable. JP was back in politics with a vengeance against Indira Gandhi and the Congress while Bhave, sitting in the comfortable Paunar Ashram, continued to back obscurantist causes. Bhave is now propping up Indira Gandhi and all she stands for. JP's two decades with Bhave were a total waste. Indeed, the objective outcome of bhoodan was reactionary. It enabled the Congress, as a Government, to ignore responsibility for honouring its promise in so vital a sphere. More, it gave the Congress a weapon with which to assail the radical forces which continued to agitate and mobilise the masses for land reforms.

JP was drawn to Marxism while he was a student in the United States, but he never became a full-fledged communist himself. Back in India in 1929, he joined the Congress as secretary to its labour research department at Jawaharlal Nehru's request. During the civil disobedience movement, he, along with several others who became prominent as socialist leaders in the years to come, was in the Nasik jail. There, in 1932, the idea of forming a socialist bloc within the Congress was mooted. Such a bloc, named the Congress Socialist Party, was formally inaugurated in 1934. The CSP, with JP as its leader, and Nehru made great contributions to popularising socialist ideals. The communists were then a tiny group trying to organise small pockets of resistance among labour, peasants and students outside the pale of the Congress which they characterised as a bourgeois reactionary Party which had to be fought. This policy underwent a change in 1935 when the communists began campaigning for a national front. JP was now prepared for cooperation with the communists and invited them to join the CSP individually, which many did. The war that began in 1939 brought this cooperation to an end. Almost the entire CSP group south of the Vindhyas walked over to the CPI.

Even though he had done so much to popularise socialism during the Thirties and the Forties, during his involvement with Bhoodan, there was not much evidence of it in his speeches and writings. In 1974, to fight the Congress in general and Indira Gandhi in particular, he sought to forge an instrument more or less like the Congress itself and not a socialist organisation. Once the limited objective of ousting the Congress and Indira Gandhi from power was achieved, the instrument began disintegrating.

JP's fight against the Congress was occasioned not only by Indira Gandhi's dictatorial methods but also by the extent of corruption that had come to exist in the administration and the country under the Congress. As early as 1952, he had said that in the administration the British had "maintained a certain high standard of honesty and integrity which are absent, generally speaking, in the Congress administration." This was an attack on Nehru. At any rate, Nehru thought as much. He replied by saying that if JP's accusation was even partly true, "then surely I am the guilty party because I am more responsible than anyone else for the Government's activities during these four years." Nehru was of course personally honest, but it was under him that corruption on an increasing scale became a feature of the administration. Under his daughter, corruption not only engulfed the administration but entered the vitals of her family, too. Sanjay Gandhi is the product. JP sought to fight corruption with forces more or less analogous to the Congress, politically and socially, and that too within the parameters of parliamentary politics as defined by the Congress. Being in bhoodan he had lost the urge to break the system the British had built in this country and which had been ramified and strengthened over three decades under the Congress.

JP became a legend during the Quit India movement in 1942. When it began he was in the Hazaribagh jail as a detenu. The Congress Working Committee passed the Quit India rssolution and Mahatma Gandhi gave the call to "do or die." The Committee members thereafter quietly walked into jail without giving any concrete directive as to what the people should do. There was an outburst of mass anger following the arrest of the leaders, and violence broke out in several provinces. The Government suppressed the outburst with even greater violence.

By November that year the agitation had petered out. There had been no one to give it direction and people acted on their own volition. On November 8 JP with a few of his comrades escaped from prison. They tried to revive the movement. It was by way of reference to his activities during this period that he said "non-violence is not my creed." Ideological leadership of the movement at the stage was provided by JP whose letters from hiding found their way to the people occasionally. But it was too late for a massive all-India movement, violent or non-violent, to be organised by a few daredevil leaders from underground. For whatever he could do until his arrest in Lahore in September 1943, he became the hero of the movement. He was pained beyond measure when, in 1944, Mahatma Gandhi disowned the movement and some Congressmen called those who had secretly led it "enemies of India's freedom." Curiously, at the same time, the Congress leaders did not fail to make political capital for their Party of the activities of JP and his comrades during this movement.

These very Congress leaders had hounded Subhas Chandra Bose out of the Congress for his crime of unequivocal opposition to the federal scheme under the Government of of India Act, 1935, and denounced the activities of his Indian National Army while the war was on. If I remember right, some Congress leaders declared that if Bose entered Assam at the head of the Japanese army they would fight him with guns—obviously at the head of the British army. Once the war was over and the British began talks with Congress leaders for transfer of power, the Congress leaders took up the cause of the INA prisoners as if the INA was their own creation. No one, not even Bose's Forward Bloc, could make political capital of the INA. The Congress alone did.

Having been installed in power as a result of a compromise with the British, the Congress had no need for the Leftists any more, not even the Congress socialists. The socialists had become too critical of the Congress leadership for it to suffer. Early in 1948 Vallabhbhai Patel issued a public warning to the CSP to either accept Congress discipline, which meant acceptance of whatever the leadership did, or get out of the Congress. The formal parting of ways came in April 1948 when the CSP became an entity outside the Congress and named itself the Socialist Party. The communists had been driven out of the Congress in December 1946. This was supposed to be the punishment given to them by the Congress for their activities during the war. With the ouster of the CSP no solid Left bloc existed in the Congress. Nehru notwithstanding, the Party fell wholly into the grip of the Rightists with Patel at their head. It was at this stage that JP called Congressmen "carpetbaggers" and the Congress "the Kuomintang of India."

One undisputed fact of JP's life was his concern for the economically and socially exploited and depressed. He was a pilgrim in search of a way to achieve his objective. He moved from one path to another. For nearly two decades he thought he had found a way outside the realm of Party activity. This was his bhoodan phase. Even there he developed doubts pretty early. He gave the call for a Partyless democracy, a democracy of good, incorruptible people. Nothing produced the result he was looking for. In an atmosphere stinking with corruption and debasement of values, he kept himself free of such contamination. He thus acquired the moral right to give a call for a fight against corruption in the Congress and the administration it ran. The instruments he could lay his hands on were unfortunately not all pure.

His name will be invoked in future by diverse people for diverse and palpably contradictory purposes, just as Mahatma Gandhi's name is. When Indira Gandhi touched the feet of JP lying in state in Patna, was she praying to be forgiven by him for the crime she had committed by imprisoning him in 1975 or was she merely making a public show with the coming election in view? ■

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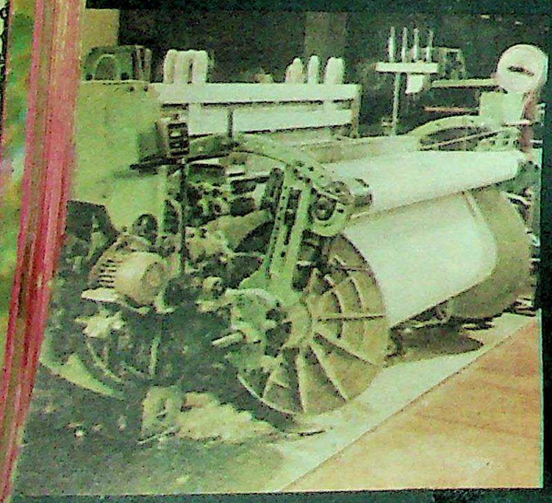

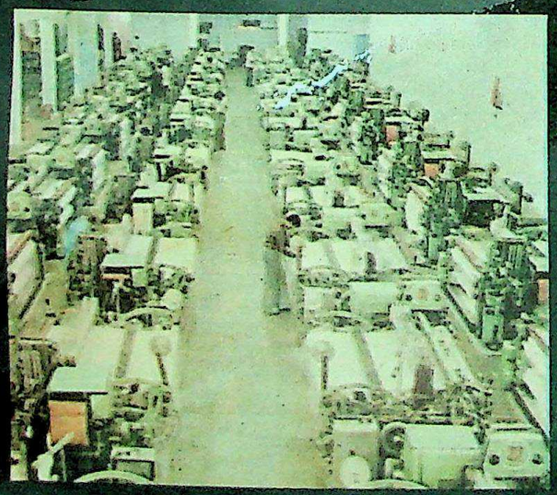

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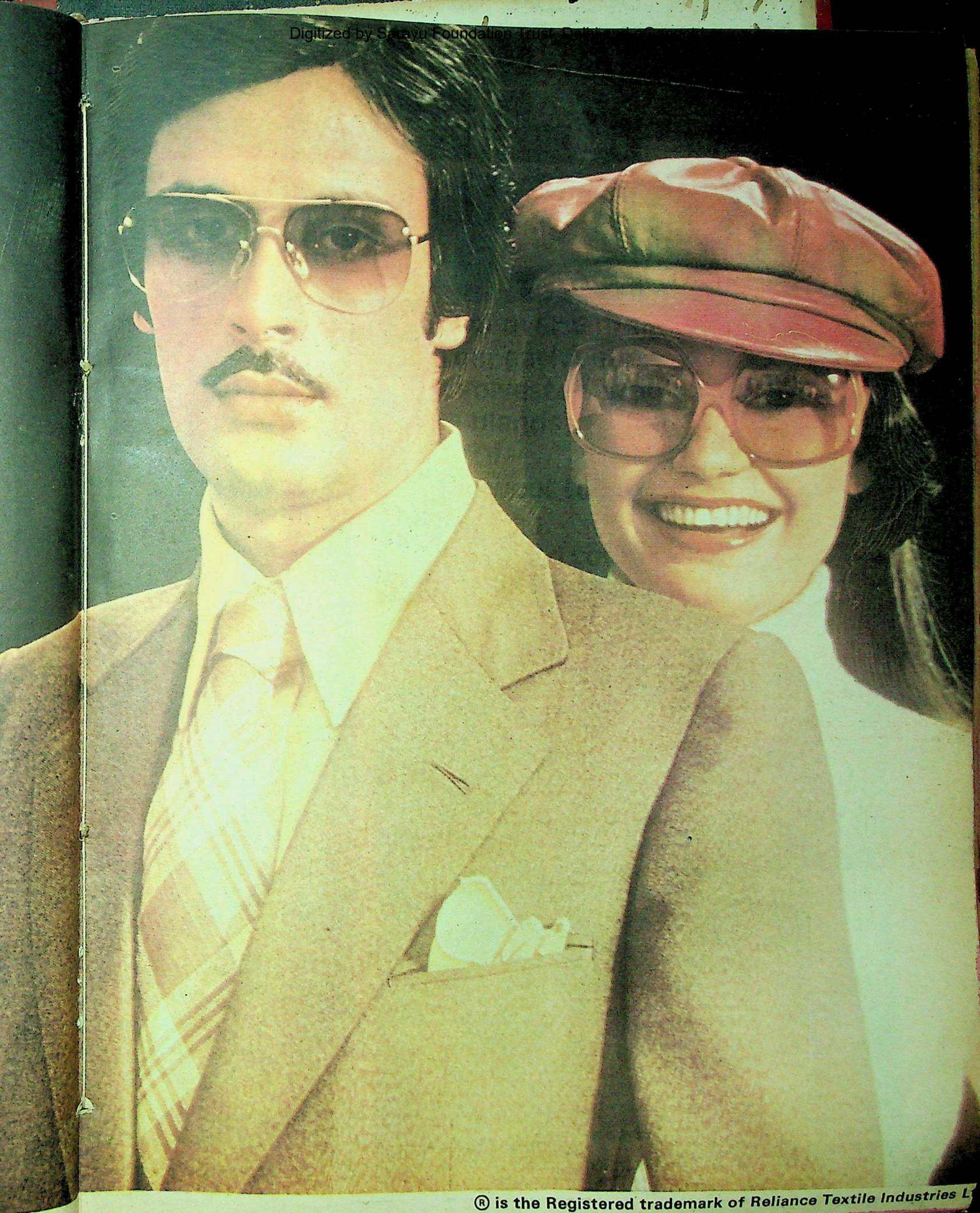

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JP's nearest and dearest

They feel orphaned today

By ARUN RANJAN

SACHIDANAND

SACHIDANAND, JP's personal political secretary first heard the Loknayak's name in 1942. "But I met him only in 1949 when JP visited Belhat during his tour of Bhagalpur district". He read out a welcome address for JP. He says: "I was not introduced to JP, but inspired by JP's personality. I decided to join the socialist movement. I remained a member of the Party for nine years. During this period I organised many meetings for JP, but we did not get to know each other. I was shy, and I never made an attempt to introduce myself. When JP turned to the Bhoodan movement, I did likewise. In 1953-54 when JP 'donated' his life (jivandan) to the Sarvodaya movement I decided to become an active worker. My first role was that of a journalist. Dhirendra Majumdar and Dada Dharmadhikari had started a weekly called *Bhoodan Yagya*. I was appointed as an Assistant Editor and I began to live in Patna. Here, though I did meet JP a few times on official work, we were yet to get close. That finally happened in Gaya district. Since then, 1956, I developed strong ties with him. In 1957 he had asked me to join him as his personal secretary. When I made myself available he said that for the time being another person had been appointed and he would call me later. He told me that in the meantime I could work in the Sarvodaya Mandal in Patna. I did exactly this. At that time, the Sarvodaya Mandal's office was situated where the Bhoodan Yagya Samiti is now housed. I would meet JP frequently, and receive instructions from him. After some time the Sarvodaya Mandal was dissolved. In its place, the Sarvodaya Prakashan Samiti was set up under JP's chairmanship. It was decided to bring out a weekly called *Gramoday*. I was made the Chief Editor.

JP with (left to right) T. Abraham, Sachidanand and Janaki

A Kumar

"For the next six or seven years, this publication successfully propagated JP's thoughts and the ideals of the Sarvodaya movement. In 1969, JP asked me to join him as his personal secretary. Since then I have remained in this post. At that time JP told me clearly that I would have to work as his "political secretary". During the 1974 movement I played a crucial role in bringing the students close to JP. When JP was arrested in Delhi during the Emergency I was also arrested in Patna. The Government knew that I had very close links with the students and this made my arrest necessary. Of course, I would rarely go out of my office at Kadam Kuan. From this office, I tried to direct the movement on JP's behalf. I am proud that during this movement I played the role of a political secretary with all the strength and intelligence at my command. After the Emergency I tried my best to bring together the different constituents of the Janata Party. My attempts in this direction made the leaders of various factions often misunderstand me. In view of JP's delicate physical condition I had to be careful.

"During the Lok Sabha elections JP did not interfere in any way with the distribution of tickets. He was not interested in any individual getting the nomination. All that he wanted was the victory of the Janata Party in the interests of democracy and liberty. During the elections I organised JP's rallies and tried my best to help all the Janata Party candidates. During the elections for the State Assemblies, JP fell ill and

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was flown to Seattle for treatment. In his absence I encouraged and helped the Janata Party candidates to the best of my ability.

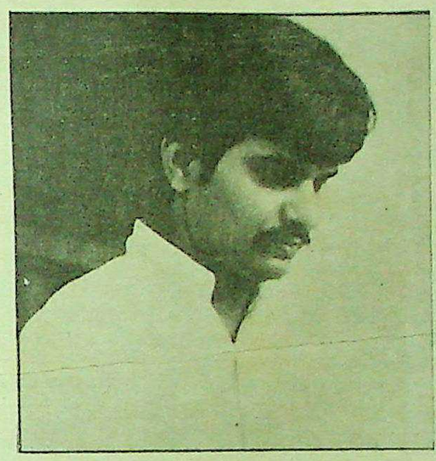
"Here I would like to mention that under the pressure of some friends and the requests of my family I had agreed to contest the Vidhan Sabha elections. My decision was influenced by the desire to see such men in the Bihar State Legislature who could carry out JP's total revolution. After all, the dissolution of the Bihar Legislature was one of the slogans of the Bihar movement. Now a new Assembly was about to be established and it was necessary that it had men who could translate JP's ideas into actions. For these reasons I expected that the Janata Party would let me contest from Patna or from my village but I did not approach any of the leaders. I simply filled up a candidature form and presumed that the Janata Party would surely accept my candidature. This did not happen. I am not a member of any group and as such I do not enjoy the support of any group. The constituency I had in mind in Patna was eventually given to a Jana Sangh candidate and the rural seat I had in mind went to the BLD. Some friends advised me to contest the elections from some constituency as an independent. But I said that would not be the right thing to do. I must add here that I had sent a telegram to JP informing him of my decision to contest the elections and JP had gladly permitted me to go ahead. He also wished me all the best for the elections. Today I realise that it has been good both for me and for JP that I did not become a member of the Vidhan Sabha. When the leaders of the Janata Party saw that I did not get a ticket, many of them began to say that I would be made an MLC. I was however not interested. Later, a prominent member of the Bihar Janata Legislature Party mentioned before JP that he wanted me to join the legislature. I immediately retorted that I did not want to become a member of the Parishad. I suggested that loyal workers like Mr Ahat Fatmi should be inducted into the Parishad. But this leader did nothing in that direction. I plan to devote the rest of my life to the propagation of JP's ideas."

T. ABRAHAM

MR ABRAHAM, JP's medical secretary who has stayed near JP all through the last few years, is short, wears spectacles and is a straight-forward person. He lives in a small flat in Rajendranagar. In his words : "In December 1965 I came to Patna. I went to sleep after dinner. Next morning the servant came with the tea. The sugar in the tea was exactly to my liking. Later I learnt that after dinner JP had enquired from the servant whether I had eaten the sweets. When he was told that I did not have the sweets he instructed the servant to put only a small amount of sugar in my tea next morning. This was something very small but it showed how JP cared for everyone around him. At Madras, some Sarvodaya workers expressed disapproval of the terelene clothes I used to wear. I replied saying this was my personal business. When JP heard about this he supported me saying : 'He is a hard working youth. I will not interfere in his personal life'. That very evening I changed to khadi clothes."

What are his plans for the future? He has served JP for the last 14 years. He says : "I will return to Kerala after a fortnight. What will I do here after this irrepairable loss?"

GULAB YADAV



GULAB, 24, has been JP's personal attendant since March, 1971. Gulab's father, Girdhari Yadav, was a Sarvodaya worker who went to jail with JP during the 1942 movement; he now lives in Barachatti in Bihar's Gaya district and gets a freedom fighter's pension. Gulab first used to stay at the Samanyavay ashram at Bodhgaya. In Gulab's own words: "Once, Didi (Prabhavati Devi) and Dada (JP) came to the ashram. They saw me there. My father was already well-known to them and when the Loknayak's personal attendant Shiv Shankar fell ill, Prabhavati ji sent word to the ashram to release me for a few days. The ashram's director, Dwarka Bhai agreed, and on March 18. 1971. I reached Patna. Didi showed me what I had to do, how to look after him ... From her deathbed, Didi asked me never to leave JP's side. There was no question of any salary. Whenever I went home Didi would give me some money, or sometimes send money to my parents. I was not a servant, but a member of the family. Now Dada is also dead. I don't know what I will do. If the Charkha Samiti is made into a memorial for JP, I might stay on if I am allowed to by these people. I would continue to serve JP. If this doesn't work out, I will be forced to think about earning a living in some other way".

Gulab remembered his days with JP : "I would live on the first floor which JP occupied. JP loved me like his son. Once my father fell ill and the doctors ordered an operation. I asked JP for 15 days leave. JP told me to call my father over to Patna and promised to get everything done he wouldn't let me go away from him. He told me, 'You are indispensable to me'. My father was operated upon in Patna and then sent home with him (JP). JP would take me along everywhere. When JP travelled by plane, I would accompany him to the airport. He would share his food with me. I generally accompanied JP on all his rallies and processions."

Gulab showed me a watch which Prabhavatiji had given him six months after he came to Kadam Kuan. Recently, JP had given him a transistor. Gulab's parents live in the village but his wife and children stayed with him in Patna. He has a baby son, Manoj. However, before JP returned from Jaslok this year, he sent his wife and son to the village so that he could serve JP without distraction. JP's younger sister in fact reprimanded him lightly because he had sent away the child even before JP had seen him.

The theft of JP's HMT wristwatch angered Gulab to no end. He said he had the keys to JP's room and the almirahs, but had decided to give them to Shivnath Babu, JP's brother-in-law. JP's personal effects, oil, soap and clothes were also lying with Gulab. Gulab's personal trunk is also lying in JP's room.

JANAKI

JANAKI, JP's adopted daughter, is now married to Kumar Prashant, one of the young men closest to JP during the movement. She comes from Patthorgarh on the Indo-Tibetan border. She first saw JP when working with Acharya Vinoba Bhave. She says : "At that time I did not realise how great JP was. Later, during the Sarvodaya movement in Saharsa district, five of us selected Radhopur village for our programme. On January 1, 1974, we invited JP to Radhopur. He spent a night with us in a small hut. I reminded JP that while escaping from Nepal he had taken refuge in Radhopur, and this was remembered by the people of Radhopur. I still recall the open meeting which we organised in Radhopur.

"My mother had died some time ago. JP was almost like a mother in his affection and care. Once I had a dream—JP, Prabhavatiji and I were climbing a mountain and Didi told me to take JP's hand in mine. I came really close to JP, and he gave me a lot of love. I don't know how to describe everything now.

"During the 1974 movement we met again. JP loved songs and bhajans. For this reason I would go to his meetings. When JP was released during the Emergency I was in Dal-

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tonganj jail. As soon as I was free I went to Bombay. There I learnt how to operate the dialysis machine. Everyone was against this, except JP. He tried explaining to me, though, that I was a young girl and might develop strong ties with an old, sick man. However, I did not budge and finally JP agreed".

JP later adopted Janaki as his daughter. People became jealous of her and spread rumours about her. When I asked her how she felt now, she broke down and said tearfully: "My mother has left me. Now it seems everything is finished. There is no one now who can keep a hand on my head. I don't know why I feel very afraid now, especially of the people here. In a way it is good that JP died. Dialysis was very painful. He was fed up with the dialysis machine and he would say : 'Why do you put in the needle, beti. It is very painful to me. I shudder at its sight'. One could not expect a more peaceful death. He would say that like pieces of wood floating on water, Prashant (my husband), I and he had come together to become a family. JP got me married. Even while hovering between life and death at Jaslok, he smiled when he heard that I had given birth to Pyoli. I don't intend to stay in Patna anymore. All my activities were devoted to JP. When JP was alive. I would feel the rush for time; today, time has become impossible to spend".

KUMAR PRASHANT

KUMAR PRASHANT, 29-year-old, is JP's adopted daughter Janaki's husband and the publisher of *Samagrata*. JP began this magazine when he was ill, but, according to Prashant, JP could not however put *Samagrata* to full use because of his illness.

Prashant says : "I was casually introduced to JP in 1960. My family was influenced by Sarvodaya. JP had appealed to the youth when the Musahari incident occurred in 1969 : a few of us responded. Then we laid the foundations of the Tarun Kranti Sena in Muzaffarpur.

"I again met JP at Saharsa during the Gram Swarajya campaign in 1973-74. At Radhopur village, Janaki, Subhmurti and myself worked hard for the success of this campaign. During this campaign, JP stayed with us for a night. Ever since, I came very close to JP. During the 1974 movement I came to Muzaffarpur from Saharsa. On March 19, I was arrested, and released on March 27-28. After that JP summoned me and said that he needed me in Patna. On April 15, 1974, I began to bring out the *Tarun Kranti Samagrata Patrika* and its publication continued even when I was underground."

What will you do now? Prashant replied ruefully : "It seems that the publication of *Samagrata* will have to be suspended. I will have to close it. As long as JP was alive. I had no worries. There were problems even earlier — allegations were raised against us — but we carried on. I don't think it is possible to publish the magazine any longer. We will take the final decision at the next sitting of the magazine trust. A great void has been creating by the passing away of JP and I don't know what to do."

SARJU BHAI

SARJU BHAI, 79, is from Siwan district. He has been in politics since he was 21. In 1934-35, he was in the Congress Socialist Party. JP wanted to bring about some changes in the methods of agriculture but his associates did not have any practical experience in this field. So. JP would take the advice of Sarju Bhai. In 1942, both of them were jailed. After JP was released he once came down to meet Saryu Bhai. In those days, the entire area was ravaged by floods. JP saw his condition and asked Sarju Bhai to look after his (JP's) land at Sitabdiara. Sarju Bhai did not agree then. JP met him again during a meeting at Fatua in 1953. Ever since, Saryu Bhai has been looking after JP's house, fields and garden at Sitabdiara. He does not take any fixed salary. Sarju Bhai told me: "I was jailed twice during the 1974 movement. I have no complaints against JP but I am not satisfied with his friends. His friends think of me as a servant and not a political colleague. JP never thought on these lines. I don't know what will happen now". ■

Krishna M. Sharma

The birthday after death

ACCORDING to the Hindu calendar, JP's birthday falls on Vijayadashami. This year JP celebrated his birthday on that day, and many people prayed for a long life for him. Exactly seven days later, JP died. On October 11, JP's birthday was again celebrated, this time in accordance with the Roman calendar.

On October 11, at 10.30 a.m. the Chatra Sangharsha Vahini took out a silent procession, which ended with an oath at the Shahid Samarak. The Vahini leaders did not permit outsiders to join the procession. The Vahini boys did not participate in the celebrations organised at JP's Kadam Kuan residence because bhajans and prayers were on the agenda. JP loved the Gita and the *Ramacharitmanas* and his favourite bhajan was Tulsidas' "Tu dyalu deen bandhu, tu dani hai bhikari". He would often hum this bhajan. Ironically , the Vahini which he founded, boycotted the function at Kadam Kuan because bhajans were sung there.

Another function was organised by the Chatra Sangharsha Samiti. Different political groups also celebrated JP's birthday by organising meetings in Gandhi maidan. At JP's house, a big shamiana was pitched in the compound and JP's portrait was placed on the right side of the stage. The prayer meeting here began exactly at 5 o'clock. Shanti Jain read out the shlokas from the 11th chapter of the Gita. When JP was alive, Shanti Jain would recite bhajans from the Gita and the Ramayana for JP every evening. The disciples of the Japanese guru, Fuji, also joined in and prayed for the peace of JP's soul.

Janaki, JP's adopted daughter tried to sing Kabir's bhajans but she was so overwhelmed with grief that she could not : she began to cry. After this, Vibha, one of JP's close disciples, sang "Tu dyalu deen bandhu, tu dani hai bhikari". Janaki tried to sing again and this time she rendered Kabir's "Kar le shringar chatur albeli, sajan ke ghar jana hoga". When she came to the last line she broke down once again and a section of the audience also wept with her. The last bhajan sung was "Raghupati Raghav Rajaram" and everyone joined in the chorus.

When the celebrations ended, I climbed up to JP's room on the first floor. His portrait was lying on his bed. On the table near the bed, lay two books which were with JP in his last moments. One of them was *Gulab ki pankhuriyan* and the other, Razi Ahmad's *Jayaprakash*. The other books lying there were Dinkar's *Rashim Rathi*, *Priya Prawas and Saket*. *Rashim Rathi* was one of JP's favourite volumes.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

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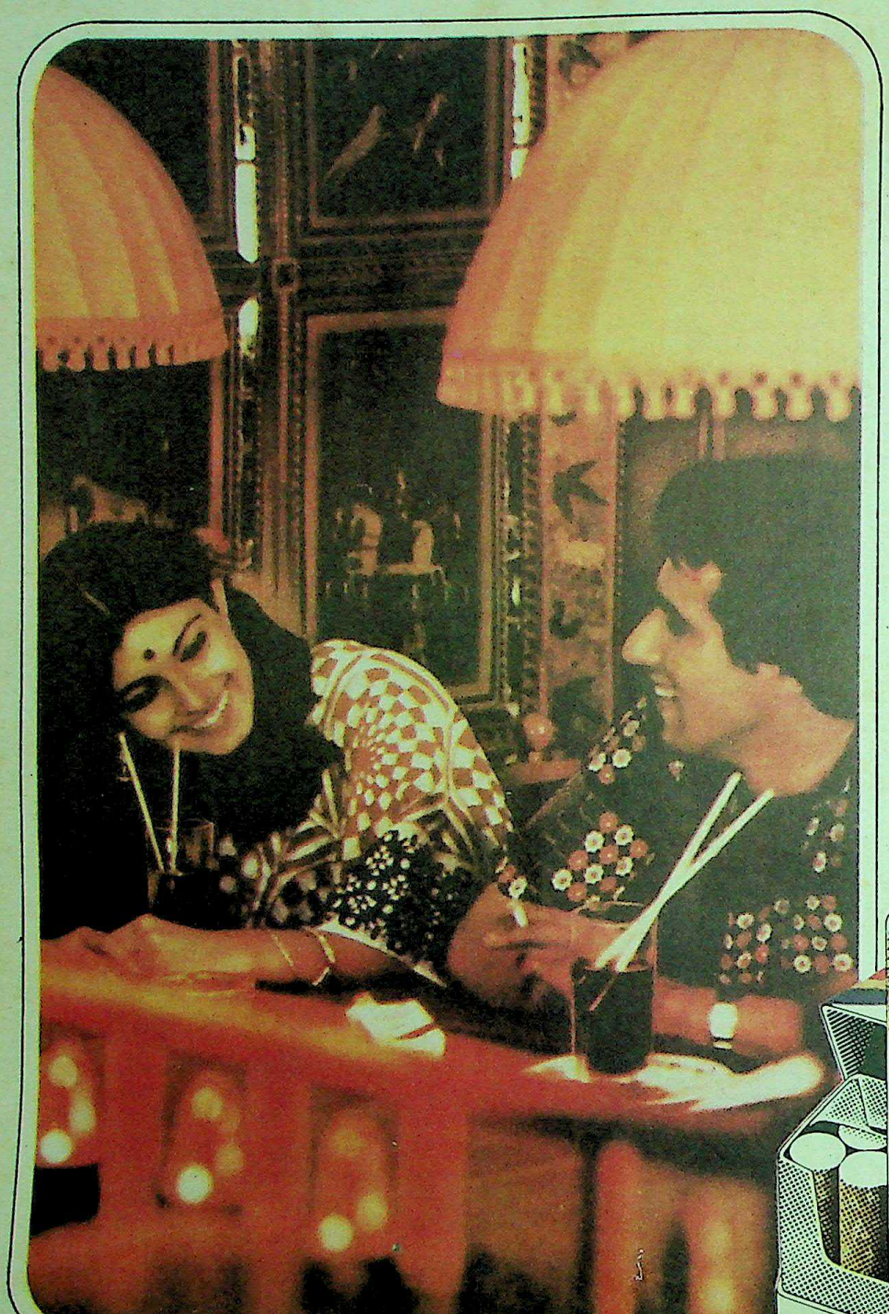

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Morarji: "Nothing came out of JP's movement"

Wearing his inevitable beautifully starched khadi, and accompanied (inevitably) by his middle-aged son Kanti (wearing a glistening white kurta and pyjama, his eyes shaded by square dark glasses), Morarji Desai was among the first top-level leaders to come to Bansghat: a little after 12.30 p.m. Babu Jagjivan Ram came almost simultaneously. Morarji and Babuji sat beside each other, and while Babuji was flanked by Morarji on his right, he had Kanti Desai on his left. To the right of Morarji sat Raghukul Tilak, a friend and contemporary of JP. Soon, Kanti Desai would have very interesting companions beside him in that very special row: just to the left of him would sit Satyendra Narain Sinha, the Bihar Janata chief, and beside Satyendra Babu would sit Mrs Indira Gandhi. Right behind Mrs Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi would take a chair. It was an interesting sight : made even more interesting by the fact that Satyendra Babu (who has been the subject of continuing rumours that he will join Mrs Gandhi), Mrs Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi and Babu Jagjivan Ram had met only a couple of hours ago for twenty minutes at the Bihar State Guest House in Babu Jagjivan Ram's room.

Morarji Desai did not seem sad on this occasion; he looked his normal self. SANTOSH BHARTIYA went up to him with a taperecorder and asked him some questions appropriate to the occasion. The former Prime Minister's answers were brutally honest. And if they sounded a trifle unfortunate at a moment when the five maunds of sandalwood were waiting on the bank of the holy Ganga to consume the physical body of a great man, at least they had the merit of honesty: Morarji was not going to be a hypocrite like so many of the other netas hanging around there with especially elongated faces.

> What was new in Jayaprakash Narayan's movement? After all it was only a copy of Gandhiji's movement...After all what did JP's movement achieve?

> Will the death of JP make such a difference? Whoever may die in this world, the world does not stop; we should n't give too much importance to anyone.

> Whatever change took place in the country was because of the Emergency and the zulum; if we say that it is because of us, then it is wrong.

Q: *The void that has been created in our politics by the death of JP—how do you think it will affect the nation?*

A: Will the death of JP make such a difference? Whoever may die in this world, the world does not stop; we should not give too much importance to anyone's death. The country will go ahead. Even if we all die, the country will progress. That is why, saying things of this sort is not good. What happened after Gandhiji left us? The country survived. Moreover, JP was not in a position by now to do anything. Indeed, many people had begun exploiting him; people were taking advantage of JP's condition, and (this) I think was not good at all.

Q: When you first heard the news about JP's death, how did you feel?

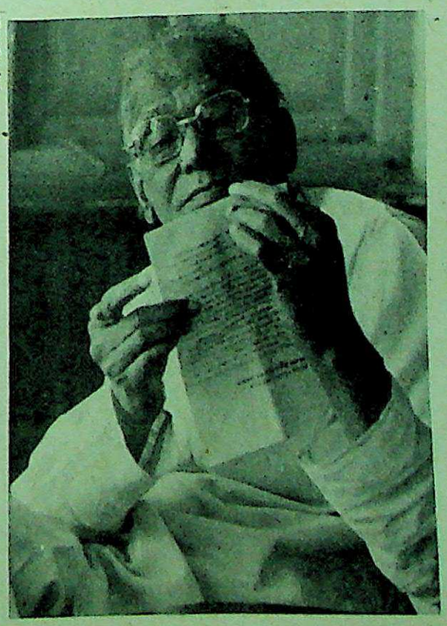
A: The news of anyone's death does not affect me. This is a command from God; we should accept it. I did not feel any shock (when I heard the news).

Q: I was there when JP told you, while you were taking the oath in March 1977, that he would leave the world before you, and you would have the responsibility of leadership...

A: Nahin, woh sab theek hai... (All that is all right...) Nobody is immortal. We should remember that anyone's death does not stop the world. Gandhiji left us. Now what Gandhiji said will not be forgotten. Chalta rahta hai (Things go on). But this country will now progress, that is my belief.

Q: How do you assess the historic importance of JP's movement?

A: What was new in Jayaprakash's movement? After all, it was only a copy of Gandhiji's movement. The JP movement will survive only if the people remember it. After all what did JP's movement achieve? Whenever there was a movement in Bihar what did it achieve? Nothing came out of (JP's movement). There was only a lot of publicity that the Bihar movement played a vital role, but if there had been no Emergency, then nothing would have happened. The Emergency came, and then only the country understood—understood much better than from our speeches. Whatever change took place in the country was because of the Emergency and the zulum; if we (Morarji included JP in this category) say that it was because of us, then it is wrong. And whatever has happened today, the impact of this too will be good. The people will understand better, they will have more courage and therefore I think that this (JP's passing away) will be of profit.



A. Kumar

Q: You were among the last major leaders to meet JP, during your recent tour of Bihar. What did you discuss?

A: We discussed ordinary things; we did not discuss politics. We discussed his health and other things. I was there for 15 or 20 minutes. He looked in good shape to me. His mind was clear. Just as a lamp burns brightest just before expiring...he looked much better than I had seen him before. He looked much improved, but in my mind I could not understand how this improvement had taken place. JP has now been rescued from his pain; he used to live in extreme pain—dialysis is a terrible thing. I am not saying that it is good that he was thus relieved of his pain, that would be wrong; but his end was peaceful. He had to face many disappointments in his life, but in his last days he found some happiness. All through his life he worked for the country, he never thought about himself; that is the greatest thing about him. If people can learn this from him, it will be good. ■

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JP and Marxists

They held him in high esteem

By TARUN GANGULY

TWO stalwarts of the CPI-(M), Mr E. M. S. Namboodiripad and Mr P. Ramamurti had long associations with Jayaprakash Narayan early in their careers. Both belonged to the Congress Socialist Party, and till 1945, they remained under the umbrella of the Congress along with JP. Mr Ramamurti, now a top trade union leader and a member of the CPI(M) politburo, has fond memories about JP. When I met Ramamurti in his Talkatora Road residence, he was reclining in his bed wearing a simple dhoti draped in the South Indian fashion.

Ramamurti, who is generally critical of all the leaders of the establishment, looked visibly moved. In a reminiscent mood, he started describing his association with JP, which started as early as in 1932. Along with the late C. D. Jagannath Das of the old Madras presidency, he looked after JP when he visited Madras in 1932 during the days of the civil disobedience movement. Ramamurti at that time was a member of the AICC and also a member of the working committee of the Madras Congress. His first reaction was strange. He said: "I still feel guilty for the arrest of JP in Madras Central Railway Station in 1932. The police were after me and I had gone to see JP off at the station. The police went to the station and they found JP there and arrested him. I can never forget this."

After the formation of the Congress Socialist Party at the Patna session of the Congress, JP toured Madras presidency. Ramamurti says, "I was JP's official translator. He would address the meetings in Hindi or English, and I would translate this into Tamil for the public." Now a sedate 71, Ramamurti chuckled when he remembered the ouster of the Communists from the Congress fold in 1945. He said, "We left the Congress at that time. JP was surprised to find out that we were cardholders of the undivided CPI. JP did not know that we were Communists."

What attracted him most about JP? Ramamurti thought for a while and then replied, "JP's humanism attracted me most. I feel he played a historic role in unifying all the forces opposed to the Emergency." Ramamurti has no rancour about the various twists and turns in JP's tumultuous political career. He said, "JP parted with us because he drifted from socialism and went over to the Sarvodaya movement." Even then, he clarified, "Our personal relations were exceptionally good. This much I can say about JP that he harboured no ill-will towards anybody." Ramamurti did not want to go into the political differences. He said, "I

March : Morarji's obstinacy

BY March 22, this year the doctors of Bombay's Jaslok hospital had virtually given up any hope of JP's survival. In fact, people were being asked to take their "last looks". On the morning of October 23, Chandrashekhar, Madhu Limaye, Nanaji Deshmukh, along with their friend Ramnath Goenka and other Janata leaders, decided that Prime Minister Morarji Desai should be told that if the worst came, then he should declare national mourning in the country. Chandrashekhar himself refused to talk to Morarji Desai as he was very angry that despite JP's health being in such a bad shape, the Prime Minister had still not found time to see JP in Bombay.

George Fernandes, who among this lot, had the best relations with Morarji, was asked to convey this view of the group to the Prime Minister. George duly met Morarji and reported the view, adding that he too was in full agreement with this sentiment. Morarji Desai got angry upon hearing this. He said that he refused to create a bad precedent by declaring national mourning for JP, as he had no official status. He asked what was so special about JP, anyway. And if he had to declare national mourning for JP then he would have to do the same when Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Acharya Kripalani died.

Upset, Fernandes left Morarji's presence without a word. He phoned Bombay to convey to the younger Janata leaders what Morarji had said—the immediate reaction of Chandrashekhar, Madhu Limaye and Goenka when they heard this was tears of shock and anger. Chandrashekhar immediately asked Nanaji Deshmukh to send a message to all the Chief Ministers and executive heads of union territories whether they belonged to the Janata Party or not, in his name, requesting them to declare mourning in their areas. Nanaji began phoning around the country, and everywhere the response was the same: the regional leaders would take the initiative and declare a period of mourning.

On March 24, Madhu Limaye wrote an official letter to the Prime Minister (reproduced below) pleading that there be national mourning. Of course, JP stayed alive; Morarji's Prime Ministership, which was a gift from JP to Morarji, went, and Morarji was never tested on this issue—though it will be recalled that although Morarji had told Parliament about JP's death in that shocking mistake, he had not declared national mourning, or given any indication that national mourning would be declared.

15-AB Pandara Road,
New Delhi—110003.
24th March 1979.

Dear Morarjibhai,

JP's condition is still grave. We all hope that he will pull through. But—God forbid — if anything untoward happens?

All sorts of nasty stories are being circulated by the Press. I ignore them, but I am disturbed to know that you have told some of your Cabinet colleagues that you would not set up a wrong precedent by ordering national mourning for JP.

I hope the information is false. I pray, please do not do anything that would hurt the feelings of our countrymen. Whatever be your private opinion of him, he has been our leader, and millions regard him as the last of the popular leaders in the line of our great national figures, (at whose head is, of course, the Father of the Nation, followed by Pandit Jawaharlal, Netaji Subhas, Sardar Vallabhbhai and so on).

With good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/ Madhu Limaye

Shri Morarji Desai,
Prime Minister,
New Delhi.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

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visited him when he was in Vellore Hospital and later when he was treated in Jaslok Hospital in Bombay. But then I never discussed all this with the Press before."

If Ramamurti is eager to pay respects to a departed fighter for human freedom, Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali, who had a legendary career of her own during the 1942 movement, was somewhat reticent when I asked her to recollect those times. She said, "Why delve into the past. In 1942, JP was in the vanguard of revolution, but then we parted company".

The hour that made the Janata Party

Raghu Rai

ON January 19, 1977, with the country still gloomy in the darkness of the Emergency, Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan received word in Patna that the leaders of the various Opposition Parties wanted to fight the coming elections in an alliance, and not under the flag and symbol of a single Party. JP got upset, and his dream of defeating dictatorship began to dim. Accidentally, S. M. Joshi, the veteran Socialist leader from Maharashtra, was in Patna on that day, and he came to see JP. JP told him and others there that he would remove himself from the electoral battle if the Opposition Parties were unable to form a single Party, and if Delhi's leaders continued to behave in this petty manner. S. M. Joshi pleaded with JP not to take any final decision until he went to Delhi and made a last effort to bring about a single Party.

The next day, S. M. Joshi went to Delhi and spoke to the various leaders. But after talking to all of them, even he became disappointed. He phoned JP to say that there seemed little chance of a single Party being created, but he was continuing his efforts. He again pleaded with JP not to make any statement yet.

But JP again became very upset. After thinking for a while, he called his secretary and prepared a statement in which he registered his anger with the leaders in Delhi, and expressed his wish of leaving the election scene. That night, around eight, the agencies released that statement.

That agency report reached the *Indian Express*, and such was the gravity of that report that *Express* owner Ramnath Goenka was immediately informed about it. Goenka got into his car at once and went to Morarji Desai's house; soon, he had met many leaders and told them about JP's decision. Everyone was stunned: they could see themselves losing once again in the elections if JP did not support them. Very quickly, the decision was taken to form the Janata Party, with Morarji Desai as the chairman.

The next day, newspaper readers saw both JP's statement and the announcement creating the Janata Party. When JP learnt about this in Patna that morning, he breathed a long sigh of relief and contentment.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

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Mrs Gandhi snubbed JP

And he destroyed her authoritarianism

EVENTS, men and the social situation, and their interplay make contemporary history. But their outcome is hedged about by so many 'ifs' and 'buts'. Such was the interaction between JP and Mrs Gandhi. There was always a certain coolness between them though, perhaps, no two public figures of India were better placed for a positive relationship. He, an elder statesman and she, a daughter of a friend, who was the Prime Minister of the country. JP had for long remained a personal friend to Pandit Nehru, his 'bhai', and JP's wife, Prabhavati, was that rare being with whom Kamalaji shared her confidences.

Mrs Gandhi did not receive the same affection from JP as did Panditji but there was a certain pride for her in both Prabhavati and JP. This was more so after the Bangladesh war. In 1971, on the morrow of the Parliamentary elections, the crisis in the erstwhile East Pakistan had begun to simmer dangerously, and JP was among the first to argue the case for the new Bangladesh Government in exile. Mrs Gandhi did not want her hands forced. But she went along when JP wanted to canvass support for its recognition: he travelled to various capitals of the world, met presidents and prime ministers but found little response forthcoming. This, coupled with the successful leadership provided by Mrs Gandhi during the crisis laid the basis of a cooperation which JP wanted to extend.

By late 1972 the national consensus built during the Indo-Pakistan war had broken down. This was, first, because the non-Congress Parties felt that Mrs Gandhi by forcing the Assembly elections, had shortchanged them. Added to this was her supersession of Supreme Court judges, the nationalisation of coal and the takeover of the foodgrains trade which provoked widespread resentment. Besides, the country's distressing economic situation following the burden of the war and refugees, had put the Government under great pressure. Coming out after a year of voluntary retirement, JP met Mrs Gandhi and offered to work for a national consensus, which she welcomed.

As was his wont, JP tried to repair the national consensus. He met all the country's top leaders and found a response from them which was favourable enough to continue his discussions with Mrs Gandhi. It was then that JP felt slighted by Mrs Gandhi—perhaps due to no fault of her own, or, perhaps, her deliberate doing. As was usual with him, JP met her by appointment, but on this occasion, even before they met, she informed JP that she was "very tired" and she had to be in Parliament. JP's last hopes of evolving a national consensus were dashed. But why did Mrs Gandhi ignore him? Even if her presence in Parliament was essential, she could have kept the line for further talks open. This she did not do. She did regret the lapse later, and the misunderstanding it had caused, but the opportunity was lost. JP took the incident as a rebuff and came away. This incident provided leaders like Nanaji Deshmukh the opportunity they were seeking when, week after week they tried to persuade JP to rise against Mrs Gandhi. The persuasion bore results: by December 1972 JP had taken a public stance and in early 1973 was persuaded to go to Ahmedabad to give sustenance and moral cover to a movement which had developed from a completely different motivation.

Prabhavati's influence on JP, however, prevented him from mounting a withering political attack against Mrs Gandhi. When Prabhavatiji was nearing her end, she and JP were in Delhi en route to Patna. They decided to stay back in Delhi for a few days. Knowing about her condition, Mrs Gandhi wanted to visit her but since they had put up with Ramnath Goenka instead of at the Gandhi Peace Foundation, their usual rendezvous, Mrs Gandhi could not see her. She could only make a telephone call, but this too not without hurting JP. Prabhavati and JP were together when the call came through and the two women spoke to each other. Mrs Gandhi, consciously or unconsciously, ignored JP. Coming after their previous encounter, the incident drew the two leaders further apart.

By April 14, the JP-inspired students' movement caught up in Bihar. In one of her speeches attacking the movement at Bhubaneswar, Mrs Gandhi made a scornful attack on JP which the latter took as aspersion on his personal integrity. Some people, who stood to gain from a confrontation between the two, incited them against each other. Soon the situation reached flashpoint. At this stage, some others tried to bring JP and Mrs Gandhi together and resolved their differences, but they failed. In June, 1974 Chandrashekhar wrote to Mrs Gandhi and JP requesting them to end their confrontation. He said it was damaging the entire edifice of the Indian State. Being close to JP and sharing an emotional involvement with him, Chandrashekhar, then a member of the Congress Working Committee, was in an excellent position to act as the bridge between the two. But for some reason or the other, Mrs Gandhi never trusted Chandrashekhar. The latter's efforts at bringing about a reconciliation thus failed. In May 1974, however, Mrs Gandhi wrote an affectionate letter to JP after a meeting with Chandrashekhar while he was at Vellore Hospital and Uma Shanker Dixit apologised on her behalf for the hurt caused to JP by her statement in Bhubaneswar. There seemed an outside chance of a compromise. But this was not to be. The same instigators who had misled JP earlier once again besieged him when he came back to Patna. Volunteers were methodically mustered to keep the movement going. The goals of the movement changed to direct confrontation.

Yet another attempt was made at arranging a compromise. In September-October 1974, talks were held at various stages. During the movement JP had called on all members of the Bihar Assembly to resign. With the confrontation between the two personalities starting to take its toll, the two sides were anxious for an honourable solution, if it could be found. JP was willing to settle for the dissolution of the Bihar Assembly and agree not to spread his movement, while Mrs Gandhi agreed to hold byelections for the resigned seats earlier. Once again the people around Mrs Gandhi dissuaded her from reacting favourably to an agreement. The point of no-return had been reached. On June 26, 1975, the infamous Emergency was promulgated. Free India sent one its most clamourous freedom-fighters to jail again. The promulgation of the Emergency and his arrest did not, of course, solve any problem for Mrs Gandhi. She took decisions, shrewdly, after considering JP's state of health. Elections to Parliament were due in March, '76, but in late 1975 and in early 1976, when JP was hovering between life and death at Jaslok Hospital, Mrs Gandhi did not want to take the risk of an election campaign. Hence the 1976 elections were postponed. Excuses were found to explain the postponement, but it was the overwhelming fear of JP's death which solely accounted for the decision.

Was it possible that JP and Mrs Gandhi could work together? Maybe. But essentially, JP and Mrs Gandhi both had different ideas. They were not only two different personalities but had different views of society. And that, perhaps, was the reason for their clash. But at what expense? ■

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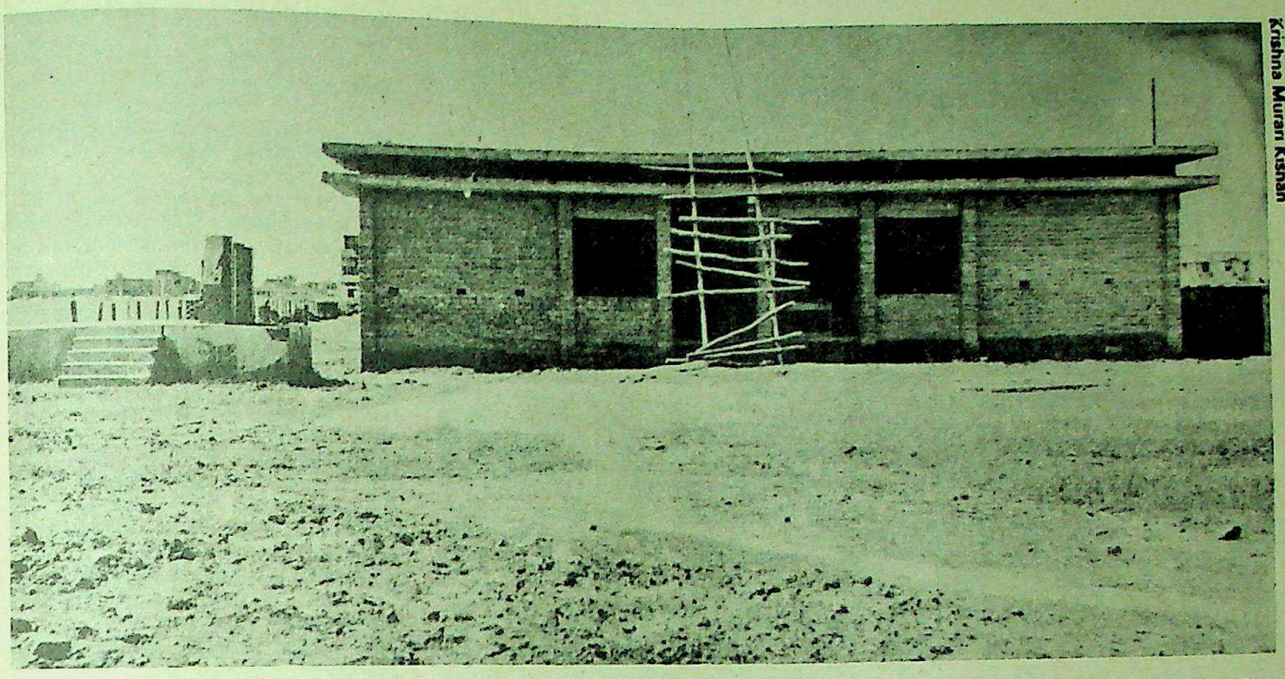
JP's last dream



Krishna Murari Kishan

BY THE main road in Kankarbagh Colony, to the south of Patna, is a plot of land on which is coming up a small house, with three or four rooms. If all goes well, the building should be the proud bearer of the banner "Jayaprabha Hospital", the construction of which was one of JP's last dreams which remained unfulfilled in his lifetime. JP's wife Prabhavati had died of cancer, and there was talk of setting up a centre for research on the dreaded disease. The result was Jayaprabha ('Jaya' from Jayaprakash and 'Prabha' from Prabhavati).

A hospital-cum-research centre on the lines of Bombay's Jaslok could be of great use in Patna, considering that Bihar and UP are both favourite hunting grounds of a number of dangerous diseases. Besides JP could be saved the trouble of flying to Bombay everytime he fell ill. Came the Janata Party, and the idea got a favourable backing. Thanks to the respect JP commanded, many leaders from Delhi were eager to associate themselves with giving the idea concrete shape. The project boasted of big names: On the board of trustees were such luminaries as Gangasharan Singh and Ram Nath Goenka; on the board of management were Chandrashekhar, Karpoori Thakur and Jabir Hussain; among its patrons were Jagjivan Ram, Raj Narain, Nani Palkhivala and Parkash Singh Badal; and the chief patron, Morarji Desai. The chairman was S. M. Joshi and the director and secretary Dr. R. V. P. Sinha and Dr. C. P. Thakur, two of JP's old physician-friends, respectively.

Jayaprabha was to be a nine-storeyed structure built at a total cost of Rs. 4.5 crores. Another Rs. 4.5 crores was to be spent on acquiring medical equipment, and a fixed deposit of Rs. one crore was to be made in a bank, the interest on which would be spent on free treatment for the poor. The Karpoori Thakur Government donated a plot of seven acres. About Rs. ten lakhs more came from various other State Governments and organisations. Appeals were made to the public for donations, to which the response was Rs. 5,000.

Soon, hopes that this was all good work began shrinking. On May 11, 1978 when the President inaugurated the hospital, the ceremony was accompanied by some ugly incidents. The police destroyed a number of huts in the Kankarbagh Colony, and members of JP's Yuva Vahini went into action immediately. One night the hospital's foundation stone was found missing. The rumour spread that residents of the neighbourhood who were angered at the recent incidents, or people opposed to JP had stolen the stone. But a clarification later followed that the management had itself removed the stone for safekeeping.

People opposed to JP began talking about the whole project as an all-too-ambitious plan that would never materialise. To prove their point, they could cite the attitude of persons like Morarji Desai. On a visit to Patna, Mr. Desai was handed a memorandum from the chief patron of the centre asking for central aid, but he refused to commit himself. He all along remained cold towards the idea, quite in keeping with his attitude to JP, though the original plan had envisaged central aid for the project to the extent of more than 50 per cent. To the Centre's unhelpful stance was added the hospital's own problems: A great deal of money was involved, and so, inevitably, corruption. The Amritkosh Trust, which was meant to collect funds for the centre collected as much as Rs. 90 lakhs, Not a paisa was spent on Jayaprabha. But others still tried to help: TELCO gave a mobile equipment car and an ambulance.

JP is now dead, and his idea of Jayaprabha may also be dying People and Governments have forgotten JP's last dream. Doubtless, some people are still keen to see the hospital built. Karpoori Thakur has now appealed to the Central and State Governments to shoulder at least a third of the hospital's costs. The hospital's chairman S. M. Joshi said that its outdoor clinic would start functioning from January, 1980. The small structure has not even been plastered and the doors and windows have not been set on the walls. The unfinished building, where labourers live and cook their meals and dogs bark and defecate, is a sad testimony to the people's and Government's unconcern for the wish of a man they should be grateful to.

ARUN RANJAN

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A sad Sitabdiara

A visit to JP's home village reveals he was one 'prophet' who was honoured by his own folk

By SAUMITRA BANERJEE

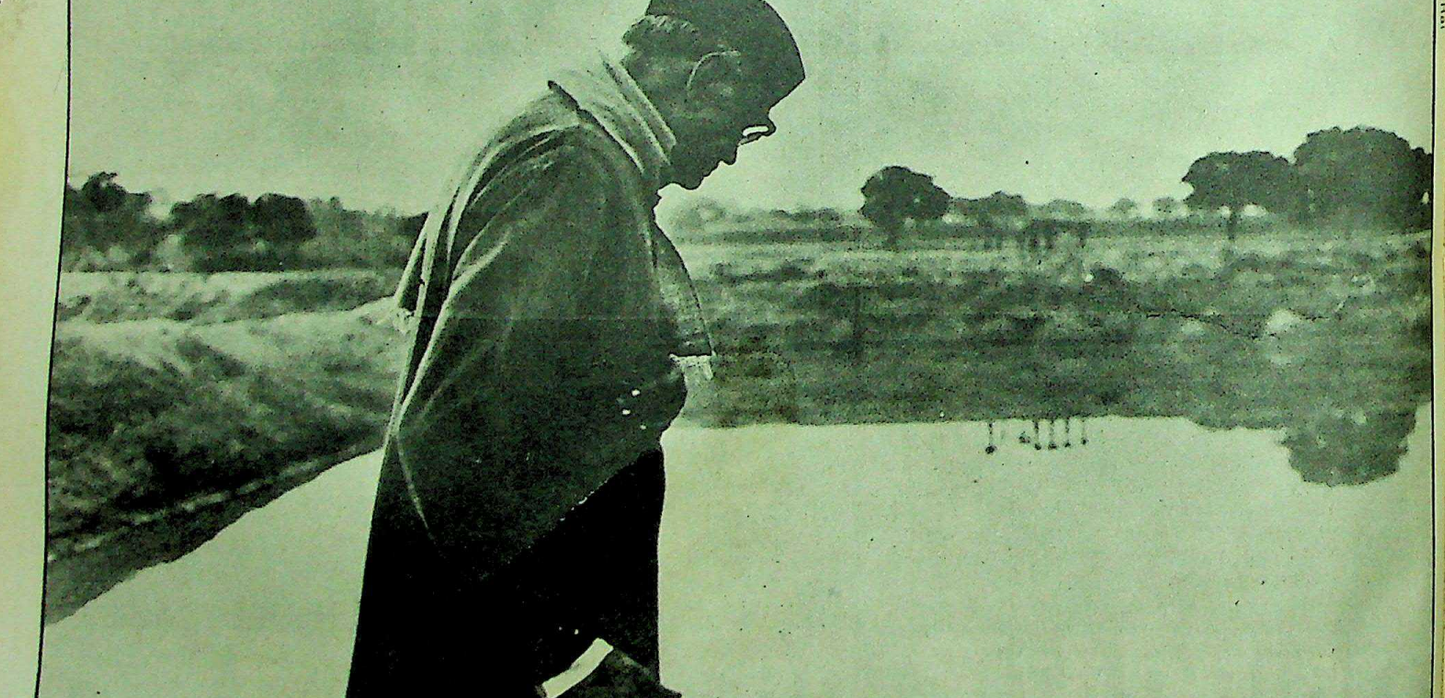
"ARE you going to JP's village?" a man asks us at Sinha Ghat in Arrah, from where we walk to Sitabdiara. All along the way we are asked the same question by anyone we meet. It is roughly a two-hour walk — through fields, a stretch of sand, a ferry ride across the Ganga and finally another stretch through the fields till we reach a small hamlet of about 600 people called Jaya Prakash Nagar in Sitabdiara, Ballia, UP, the place where JP was born.

The approach to the village is a small clearing — the site where the helicopter carrying JP on his last visit to his village on October 5, 1978, landed. From here JP's house is a short walk. It is a rectangular house with a courtyard at the centre and stands amidst a group of thatched huts. It wears a desolate and empty look. In one corner of the corridor are pictures of JP and his wife, Prabhavati Devi. A garland now hangs around JP's picture. The rooms are musty and covered with dust. Portraits of JP's parents hang in one of the rooms. In the middle of the corridor lies a table with a telephone on it. It had been installed at the time of JP's last visit to his village and is now disconnected. Sarju Ram, 79, popularly known as Sarju Bhai, the caretaker of JP's house since 1953, escorts us through the house. We are taken to his bedroom. An old uncovered wooden *takhat* lies there. There is no other furniture. On the wall hangs a picture of JP taken in his early thirties. The room faces the courtyard. In contrast with the rest of the house the courtyard looks bright; there are flowers growing there. Kamala Ram tells us that JP liked the sight of flowers outside his bedroom. "He told us that we should see to it that the flowers never die. The sight brought him peace," he says.

Sarju Bhai remembers JP as "my brother". "I am both sad and happy that JP has died," he tells us. "I am sad because I loved him and had been with him for so long. He was a true, sincere leader, not like the others. But in a way I am happy that he has died. Politicians had been exploiting him for too long. Especially with the coming elections, they had already started asking him for help. Now they cannot bother him any longer," he said and continues, "I was tilling the soil when I heard the news. It was about eight in the morning. Someone had heard the news over the radio and came over and informed me. I came home and quickly rushed to Patna. By the time I reached Patna, his body had been removed to the Sri Krishna Memorial Hall."

Along with him had left JP's younger brother, Rajeshwar Prasad's wife, and some 25 other villagers. As soon as the news of JP's death spread to Sitabdiara, all shops and schools were immediately shut down. Those who remained in the village huddled around the stray transistors, listening to every announcement being made about JP. And the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi decided to hold prayer meetings for seven days. Recalling his days with JP, Sarju Bhai says, "I had first met JP in Chapra after his return from America. I remember that during a kisan sammelan

JP in Sitabdiara



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meeting he said that anyone who could not plough the land had no right to be a leader. From then on he became an inspiration for me. JP used to stay in Sitabdiara only for short stretches, say for three or four days at a time. During the 1974 movement JP had come to this village and given speeches. He gathered people around this house and tried to arouse their conscience. On his last visit to Sitabdiara, he expressed the wish that he could come back again, but he said that the end of his time had come."

Next to JP's house is a temple, which had been built in memory of his mother, on the spot where JP's mother had prayed for his life, when, as a child, he was critically ill. Pointing to a well next to the temple Sarju Bhai says, "This is the spot where JP was born. This was a jungle then. But now things have improved." Near the well a few children are playing. I ask, a boy pointing to the house, if he knew whose house it was. "Jaya Prakash-ji's house," he replies. I ask if he knows who he was. "No," comes the reply.

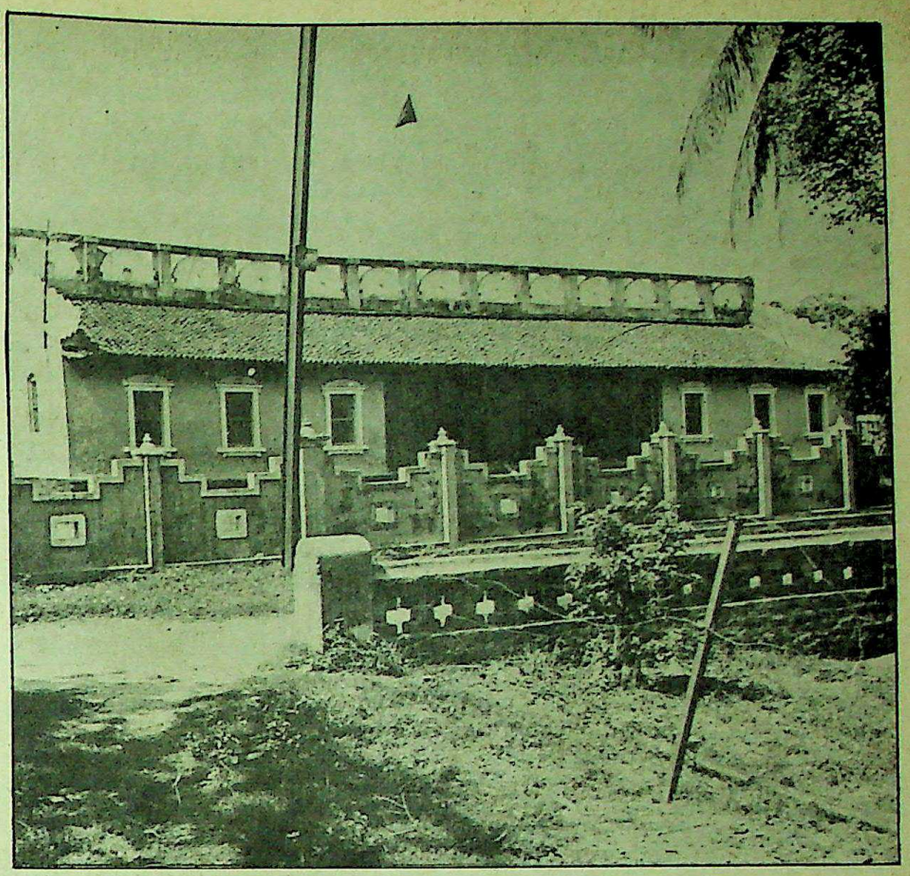
Under a tree sits Kailash Singh, 82, who has spent his entire life in Sitabdiara. In a broken voice he says, "When I heard of JP's death I wanted to take a last look at him. But that was not possible. I am so old and so weak that I just could not manage it. So I went home and thought of him, of the days when he was a child. Let me narrate one incident. When we were both children, JP's father took us to a baba in Lala Tola. As JP was about to touch his feet, the baba stopped him and said, 'Why do you touch my feet? One day the world will touch your feet.'

"I remember the last time he paid a visit to this village. There were so many people crowding him that I could only do *namaste* to him. This is one of my greatest regrets." Kailash Singh stops speaking and stares in front of him. Then without looking at us he says, "I wish I could have had one last look at JP."

A minute's walk from the temple is the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, built on land donated by JP. At the gate stands Sukhdeo Singh, watching us approach. "You have come to JP's land. But you should have come last year when he had come here, when he spoke to us. He was our leader. He has given us land, our food," he says. It is evident that JP is loved and respected here as much as anywhere else. Inside the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi we meet Baleswar Prasad Yadav, who looks after the place. "We are feeling his loss. Whenever he came here he visited this place. During his last visit a meeting had been held here. JP has set an example for all of us. It had been decided that a school for girls would be inaugurated here, on his birthday but now that has been postponed," he says.

Walking along the dust track we find a small group of people assembled around a man, narrating the events during JP's funeral. He has just returned from Patna and everyone is anxious to hear what he has to say. We wind our way past JP's house again, on our way back to the city. A man beckons to us. "Have you seen what JP has done for us? He has given us land and we even have schools here. Even though he is not there now, we will all remember him here in Jaya Prakash Nagar." We listen and then carry on. We walk to an embankment which marks the beginning of Jaya Prakash Nagar. Sarju Bhai, who has been walking with us, stops and says, "You go now. You have a long walk ahead of you." Then, as an afterthought, he mumbles to himself, "I wonder what is going to happen to JP's house now. Is it going to be placed under a trust? Is it going to be sold? I wonder if I will remain its caretaker..." ■

Krishna M Sharma



JP's house in Sitabdiara

How the people felt

MR A. G. NOORANI who met JP regularly during the dark days of the Emergency recalls vividly the scene of JP's hospitalisation at the Jaslok Hospital during the Emergency. On the balcony of the 16th floor just outside JP's room there were two typewriters, one telephone and a posse of policemen. Dr Shantilal Mehta, who was head of Jaslok at the time, was in constant touch with Mrs Gandhi about the state of JP's health. On the ground floor Rajni Patel, who was still Mrs Gandhi's right-hand man before Sanjay Gandhi took over, used to hold court in the Registrar's room that was specially vacated for him. His son was being treated at the hospital at the same time. The son of a Minister of Maharashtra was also there for an operation and commenting on the situation, the wife of the Minister with a gesture of her hand described the gathering in Rajni's room as the Diwan-e-Khas and pointing upwards

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to the 16th floor, where JP was, she said that it was the Diwan-e-Am. The reference was to friends and ordinary people, who came to see JP during the Emergency. JP was never alone, remembers Noorani, and people always came to see him. E.M.S. Namboodiripad came. And so did Sheikh Abdullah — the Sheikh had rung up in November 1975, and said he wanted to see JP. He came, kissed JP's hand and left in the evening. Mrs Gandhi never came though she was advised to do so.

GEORGE FERNANDES recalled how, though it was Peter Alvares who brought him into the Socialist movement, it was "JP who sustained me in the movement. And JP was a pillar of strength to me ever since. During my underground days, when even the Socialists attacked me, it was JP who gave me courage to go on. After the 1977 Elections were announced it was JP who sent me a note in prison insisting that I should be a candidate. He said the youth of the country was with me. During the railway strike when I was in Tihar Jail, JP who was then in Nellore Hospital for an operation, extended support to the strike. He even sent a telegram to Mrs Indira Gandhi asking her to come to some settlement with the striking railwaymen."

NAROTTAMBHAI of the Sarvodaya Mandal has seen JP in various stages of his political development. The first time was during the Bhoodan movement in 1962, then during the crisis of the Bihar famine and finally during the Bihar Andolan in 1973 when JP took an active role again. JP was very excited at that time, remembers the soft-spoken Narottambhai. "He told me during one of our evening walks: 'I see in people's eyes and people's minds a new awakening' In 1973 from the Paunar Ashram itself, he started the Youth for Democracy after which came the pulsating Nav Nirman movement in Gujarat followed by the Total Revolution movement in Bihar. JP treated everyone equally, says Narottambhai.

RAMNATH GOENKA, the newspaper tycoon, was too distraught for words. He was making preparations to go to Patna and when contacted he said: "My problem is I am leaving just now. And what can I say. Just leave me alone. I'm not up to the mark" and his voice trailed off in despair which one does not usually associate with the man-of-steel Goenka.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

AS AIR flashed the incorrect news of JP's death on March 22, 1979, restaurants on Mount Road, Madras, switched off their radios anticipating mournful music. Some played records. Others hoped that their jukeboxes would be kept busy. People standing in the queue to see *Mackenna's Gold* at the Devi cinema were worried that the show would be cancelled.

The reaction on October 8, was not very different. By ten in the morning as the news of JP's death was confirmed, moviehouses got frantic calls; book-sellers hastily displayed books by JP.

One of the persons who really made JP's name better known is Kumari Ananthan, sometime Janata MP, whose mustard-sharp sense of humour and wit had won a sizeable support for the Janata Party in the Kanyakumari district. "In November when we heard that JP was critically ill, some of us held a day's fast on the Congress grounds", Mrs Krishnamoorthy said. "And we invited the so-called friends of JP. Many of them didn't have the courtesy to say, no. They said, they'd come and didn't keep their word. On the other hand, around that time, many young people belonging to the now much-maligned RSS staged a satyagraha along with Sarvodaya and Congress (O) workers on Mount Road and were brutally treated by the police".

ARTHUR PAIS, Madras

"WE KNEW JP was going to leave us very soon, but we did not expect him to die so quickly. However, it is good that he died in his sleep peacefully and did not suffer any more", said Rashbehari Das, a young student.

"Amid all this talk about the Lok Sabha elections this news is shocking. It should be a lesson to our politicians. While they are fighting among themselves, the man who did so much to bring them together is no more" said an elderly gentleman.

Some cinema halls downed their shutters and this caused many, whose offices and institutions had declared a holiday, to grumble. Although there was an air of grief, the mourning was not universal. A young draughtsman, S. Ghosh, working in an engineering firm was vociferous about his lack of feeling: "What has JP done for us? Indeed, he made us realise what democracy means but what has he given us in return? A bunch of politicians who are even more corrupt than the past regime". "You're wrong" retorted a young student, Naren Chakrabarty. "What he gave us was not a bunch of corrupt politicians but a method of mass protest".

TIRTHANKAR GHOSH, Calcutta

PEOPLE in Punjab heard the news of JP's death for the first time over All India Radio's eight o'clock news bulletin.

October 8 was declared a holiday by the State Government and it turned out to be like any other holiday. Shops in Chandigarh pulled up their shutters after a few hours and did brisk business. Cinema houses continued with their routine shows. The civil secretariat hummed with activity with scores of people drafting condolence resolutions. Schools and colleges were declared closed after the students had observed silence and prayed briefly for the Loknayak's departed soul.

Jayaprakash Narayan had spent four months and 12 days during the Emergency in Chandigarh's Post Graduate Institute of Medicine. It was here that JP reportedly developed kidney trouble and later this ailment reached a chronic stage necessitating dialysis. JP's death was the topic of discussion among those doctors who had treated him at the PGI in 1975. After his release JP had admitted that he was well looked after at the PGI but was starved for company.

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandigarh

A Kumar

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THE Loknayak's death has shocked the people of Orissa. The shock was so profound that people put up JP's photographs in houses and shops and garlanded them profusely. Some people were seen weeping bitterly. Shops pulled down their shutters as a mark of respect. Indeed it was ironical that JP passed away only hours after the Orissa unit of the Janata Party merged into the Lok Dal at a convention in Bhubaneswar in which Mr Biju Patnaik had announced that the Lok Dal was the Party of the Loknayak.

The people of the State fondly remember JP's visit to Orissa on April 1, 1975 which coincidentally was the formation day of Orissa. About two-and-a-half months after his Orissa visit he was jailed by Mrs Indira Gandhi. Orissa hangs down her head in shame when the people remember the heinous attempt to assassinate him at Dhenkanal by those in power. Orissa also remembers with gratitude the young men who saved him from certain death at that time. Many of those young men are now MLAs and one of them left by road for Patna to have a last *darshan* of the departed leader.

All the events are history now. Perhaps, the saddest man in Orissa is Mr Biju Patnaik. On hearing the news he was stunned and it was only after he had overcome the initial shock that he blurted out: "A great soul has passed away". Dr H. K. Mahatab, the veteran leader, fumbled for words when he was informed by a news agency man of the death. He only said: "I am very sorry."

A CORRESPONDENT

WHEN at breakfast-time the news of JP's death was broadcast over radio, people accepted the news as sadly and resignedly as they endure the unchanging pattern of their own lives. Truly, there was none of the shock and disbelief which had given a dimension of near-desperate hysteria to the sorrow in evidence when Gandhi and later Nehru died. Demoralising as JP's death was, nonetheless, it was only expected. Indeed in the common man's reckoning it was a merciful end—not only because it brought to an end his harrowing dialysed survival but much more because to the minds of the frustrated proletariat, JP's greatest achievement—the Janata Party's victory in 1977—was brutally converted into the greatest ever betrayal of the people. "A good man died" was the honest if bland refrain in towns, villages and their marketplaces. Life went on perhaps a trifle more morosely than usual, with a sense of inexorability.

At bars and pubs which is the one place where the Goan mind uninhibitedly expresses itself, the common remark was "God might as well have spared JP and remembered other older men who have ruined us."

MARIO CABRAL E SA, Goa

DESPITE reacting unenthusiastically to JP's call for Total Revolution in the troubled times that preceded the Emergency, and giving him a none too pompous reception when he last visited Trivandrum the people of this palm-fringed State showed their feeling by joining other mourners throughout the country.

Sadness engulfed political circles as the news of his sudden demise broke soon after the Assembly had adjourned sine die in the wake of the resignation of the PKV Ministry. With spontaneous expressions of sorrow, leaders of various political Parties reacted emotionally to the news as K. Chandrashekharan of the Janata Party went around informing people. Formal condolences followed. The last time JP's "death" was erroneously announced, the Assembly was in session and did not care to call a condolence meeting. But this time the people of the State were themselves quick to react.

As for tributes, there were many: The Governor, Mrs Jothi Venkatachellum, hoped in a message that the "evergreen" memory of JP would continue to inspire the country; the void created by his death would remain unfilled, said the former CM, Mr P. K. Vasudevan Nair; he synthesised Gandhism with Socialism, said the new CM Mr C. H. Mohammad Koya of the Muslim League; free India would remember him with gratitude, was an unlikely remark from the Congress (I) leader and former CM, K. Karunakaran; a great karmayogi who gave moral and political leadership to the people, was how Chakkeri Ahmed Kutty described JP; his death removed the last of the national stalwarts, commented K. M. Chandy of the Congress (I); the greatest of Indian leaders after Gandhi, said K. Chandrashekaran of the Janata. The Marxist leader E. M. S. Namboodiripad recalled how the departed leader had reminded him on his last visit to the State, of the fact that they were the first socialists in the country, and how they had worked together and also in opposite camps. One particularly sad comment from an elderly person was. "JP was one of the few leaders who did not pursue power."

G. S. KARTHA, Trivandrum

The mysteries of JP's will

JP wrote his will thrice. By way of property, JP had a house and some land in Sitabdiara which he inherited. JP's younger brother, Rajeshwar Prasad, had sold his portion of the land and bought a house in Bombay. JP received the Magsaysay award and from this sum he had put aside Rs. 50,000 in the bank.

The first will had said that his properties in the village would go to his nephew, Anil, and the cash distributed among the various organisations which JP founded. This will should have come into effect immediately after Prabhavatiji's death because during her lifetime she exercised exclusive rights over the property. This will was prepared in the presence of his wife.

Time passed and Prabhavatiji died. Then came the Emergency and JP was sent to jail. During his detention at the Post Graduate Institute of Medicine at Chandigarh, JP wrote his second will. By this time he had given away Rs. 15,000 to different people as was his habit, and only Rs. 35,000 was left with JP. In this will he left some money for Gulab, his personal attendant, some for his sister and the rest for organisations he had started.

JP wrote his third and last will in 1978. By this time, his savings in the bank had earned some interest and on April 30, 1978, he received Rs. one lakh as an award from Chagla. This money was used for JP's treatment in Seattle. What remained was in the bank. The third will earmarked certain amounts in cash for Gulab, JP's sister, and the organisations which he began. A few bighas of land and the house at Sitabdiara are left to Anil, his nephew. JP's properties which are not mentioned in the document will be controlled by trustees named in the third will. They are- Ganga Singh, Jainarayan Sahay and Shivnath Babu.

Apart from the will, JP had written to the then Chief Minister of Bihar, Srikrishna Singh in 1957 saying that "no memorial should be built after my death". In 1972, on the occasion of JP's 70th birthday, Sarvodaya workers had planed to collect money for "Jayaprakash fund" and to use the money for the Sarvodaya movement. When Jainarayan Sahay communicated this plan to JP who was at that time resting in a guest house at Bangalore JP's reply was: "Please do not collect any fund in my name. If the fund is meant for good cause I can help with the collection. I am strongly opposed to collecting funds in my name".

The first two wills stand cancelled and only the will which JP wrote in 1978 is valid.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

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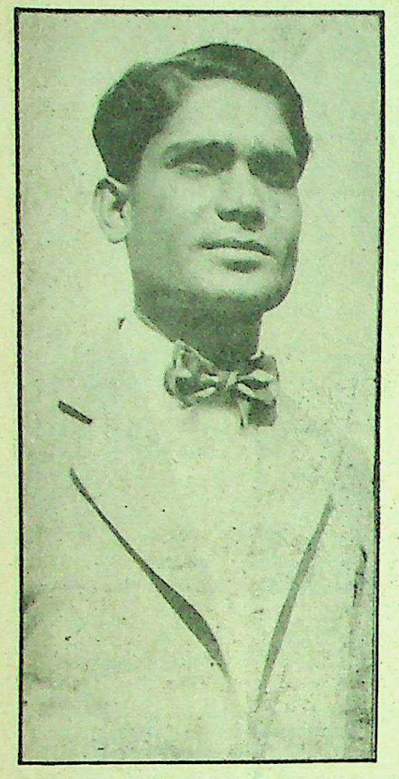
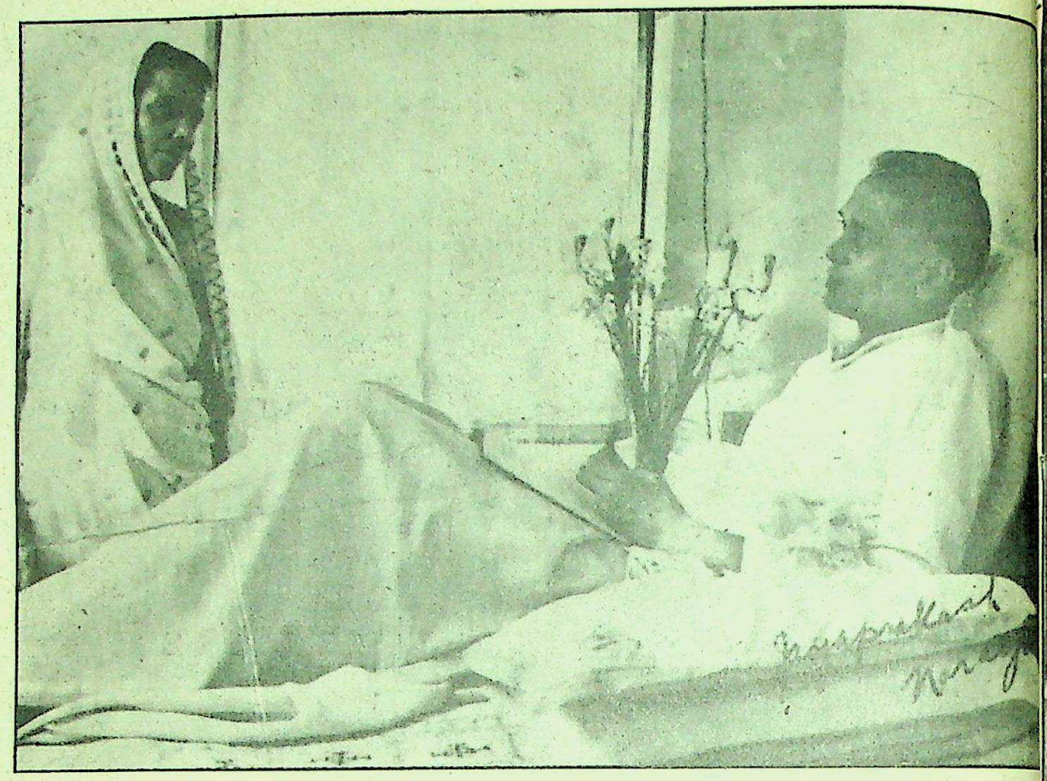
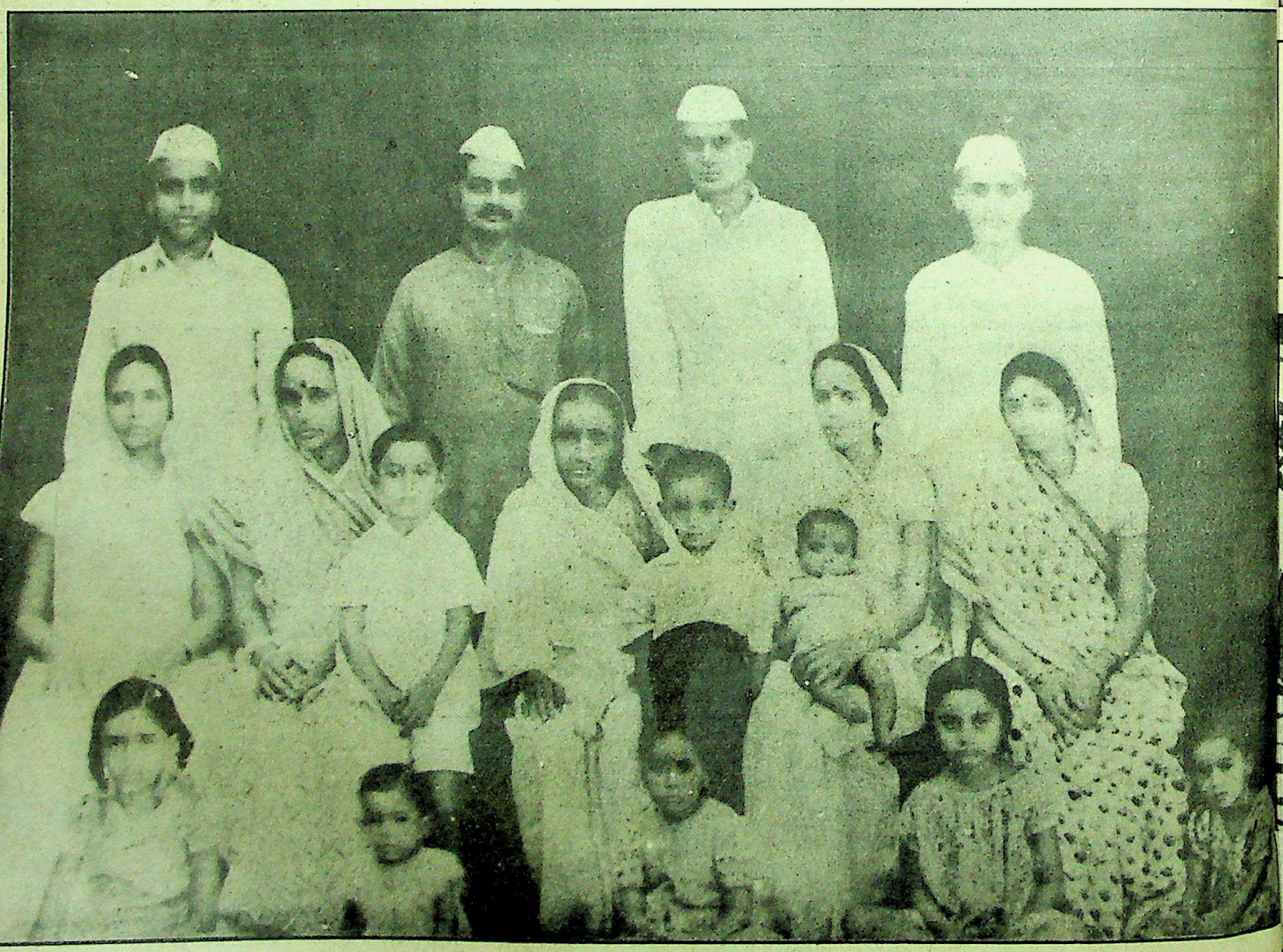
A great man's life







Krishna Murari Kishan

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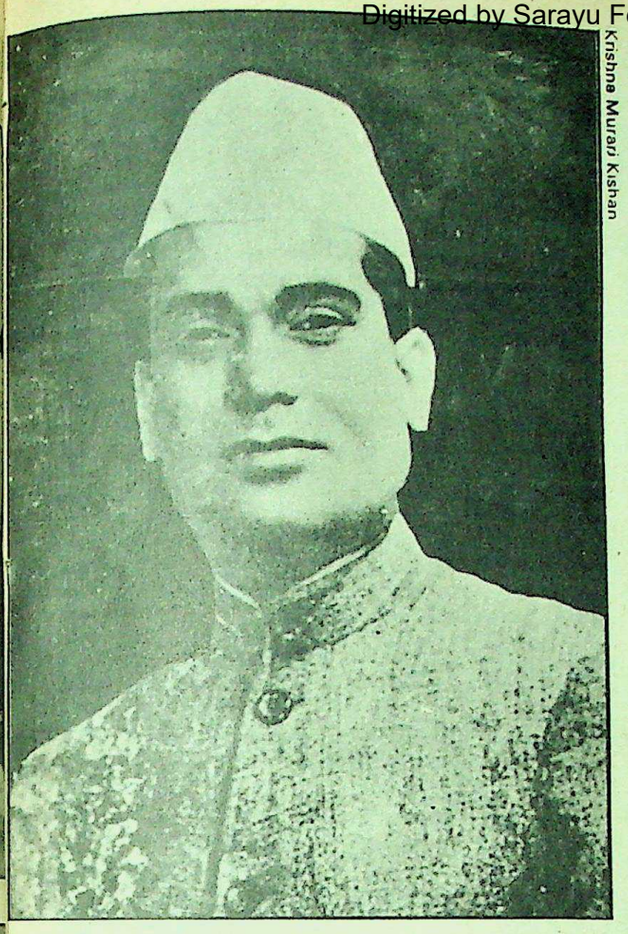
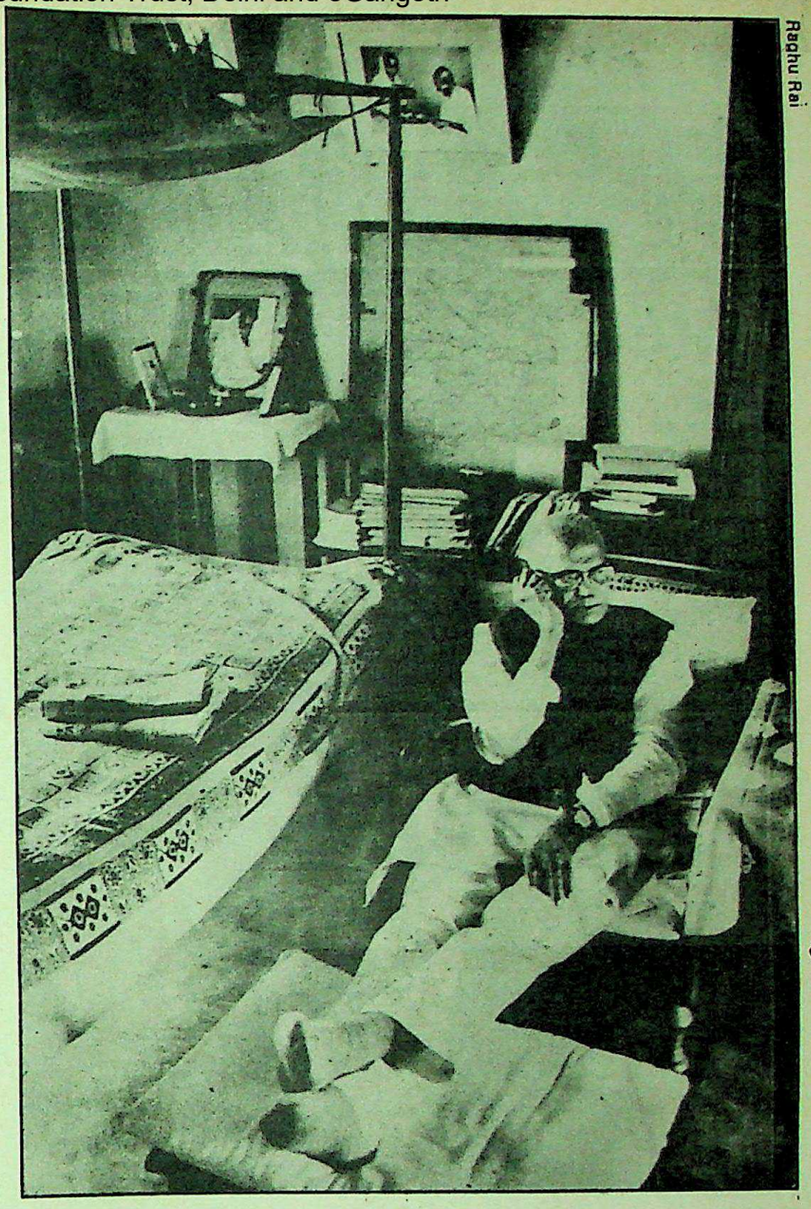
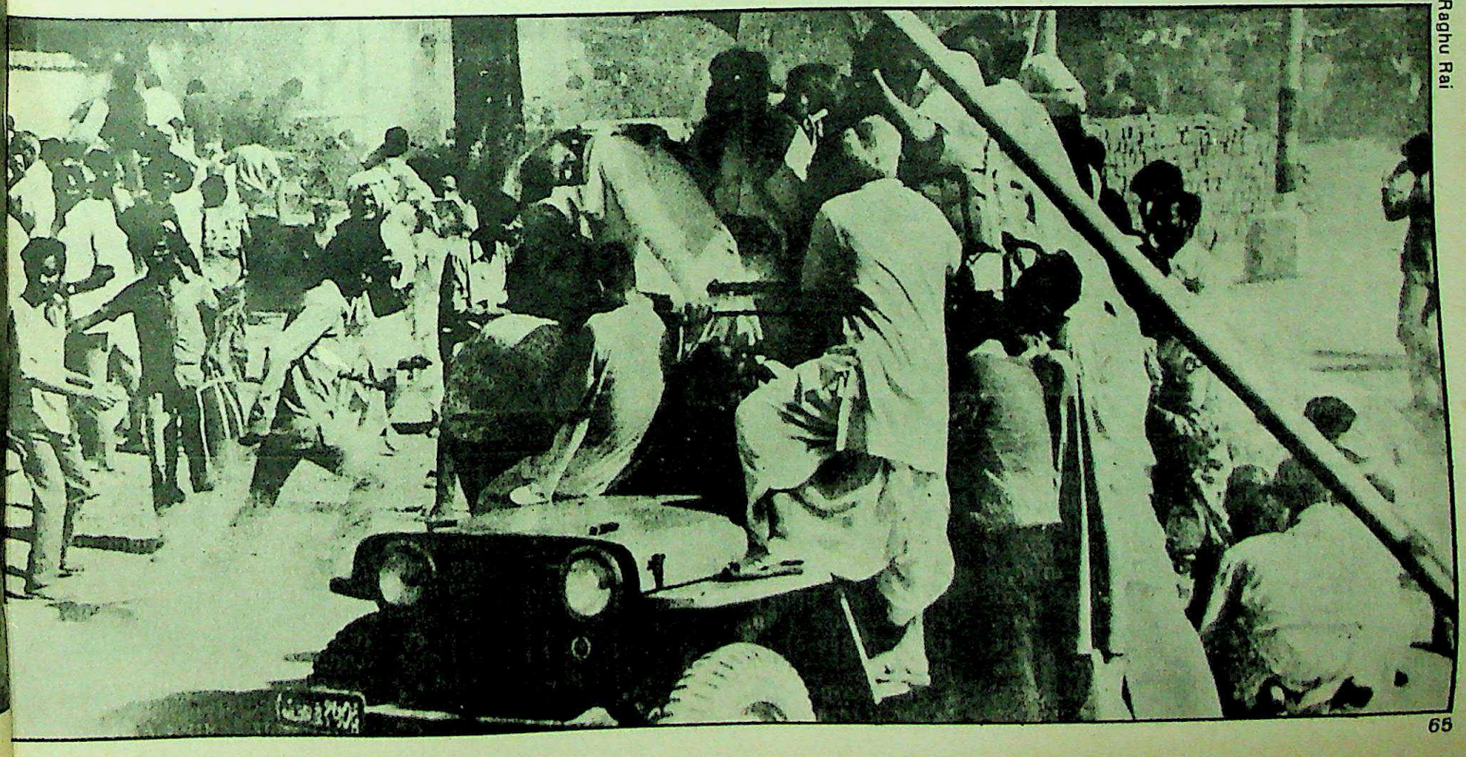


Krishna Murari Kishan



Raghu Rai

Clockwise (from far left, top): JP after his return from the USA; the final break from Marxism: at the end of the 21-day purification fast, 1952 with his wife in Poona; as a nationalist leader; in a pensive mood in his room in Kadam Kuan; covering his face after being teargassed during the 1974 Bihar movement; with his family.



Raghu Rai

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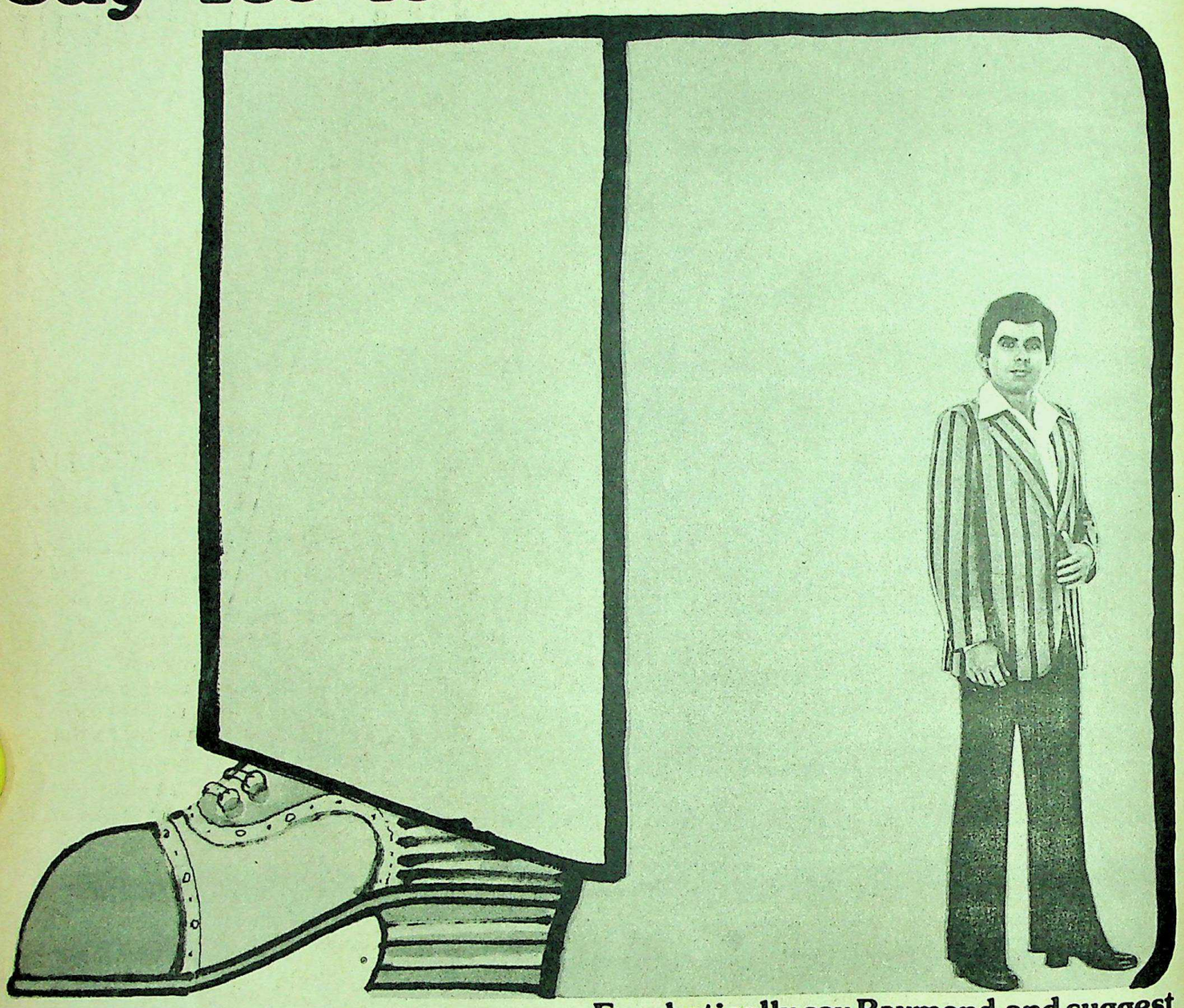
Should a short man say 'Yes' to a tall heel?



Emphatically, say Raymond, and suggest other areas where 'Yes' is right.

The high heel adds inches, but the world needn't know. Your trousers should be long enough to conceal the tall heel. Cut for slimness, shaped about the calf. The jacket distinctively striped . . . and the short man soars to imaginative new heights.

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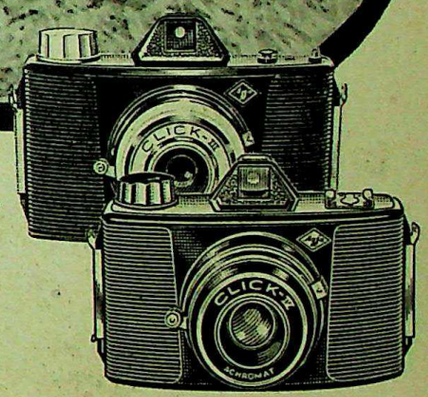

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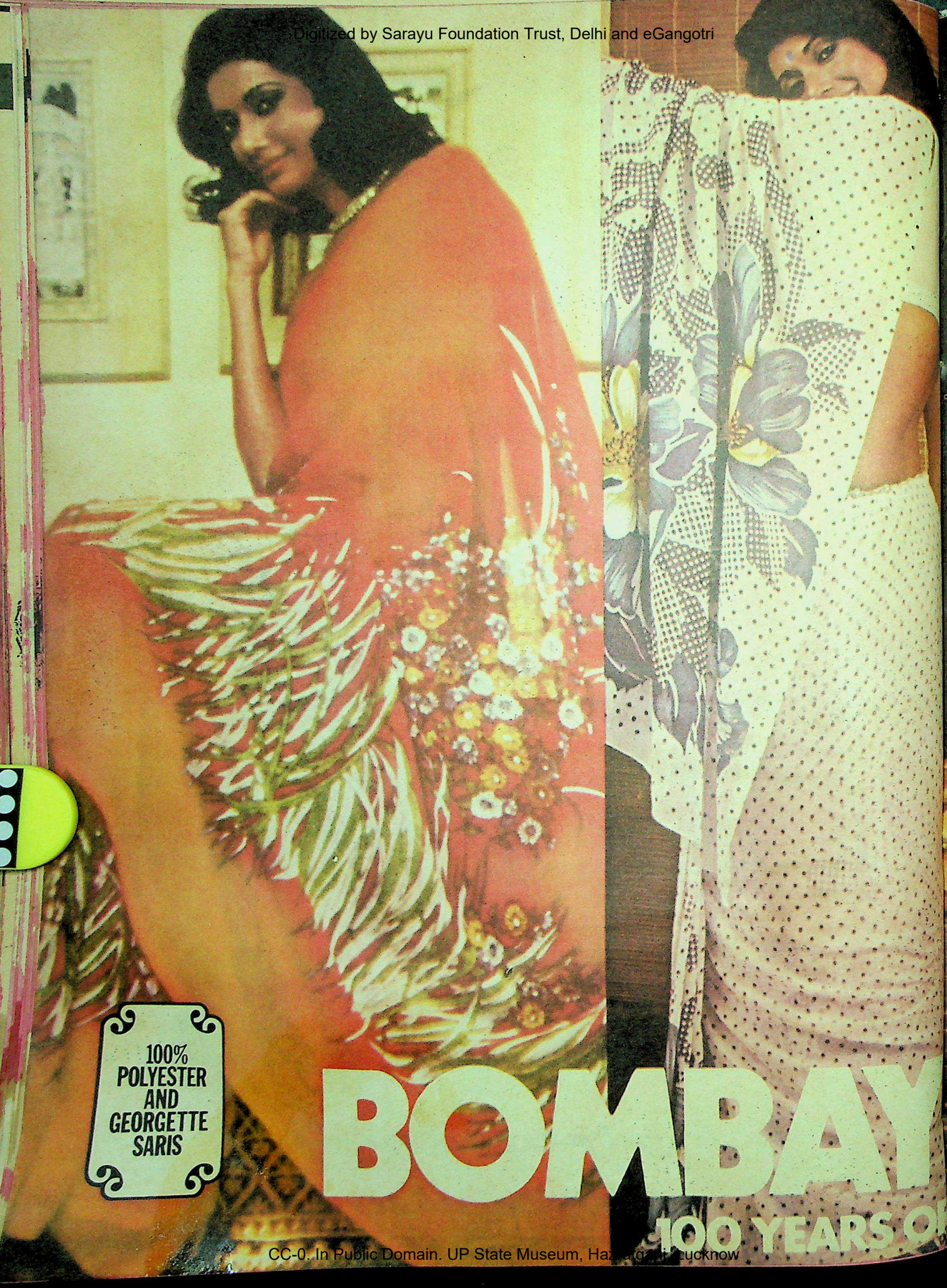

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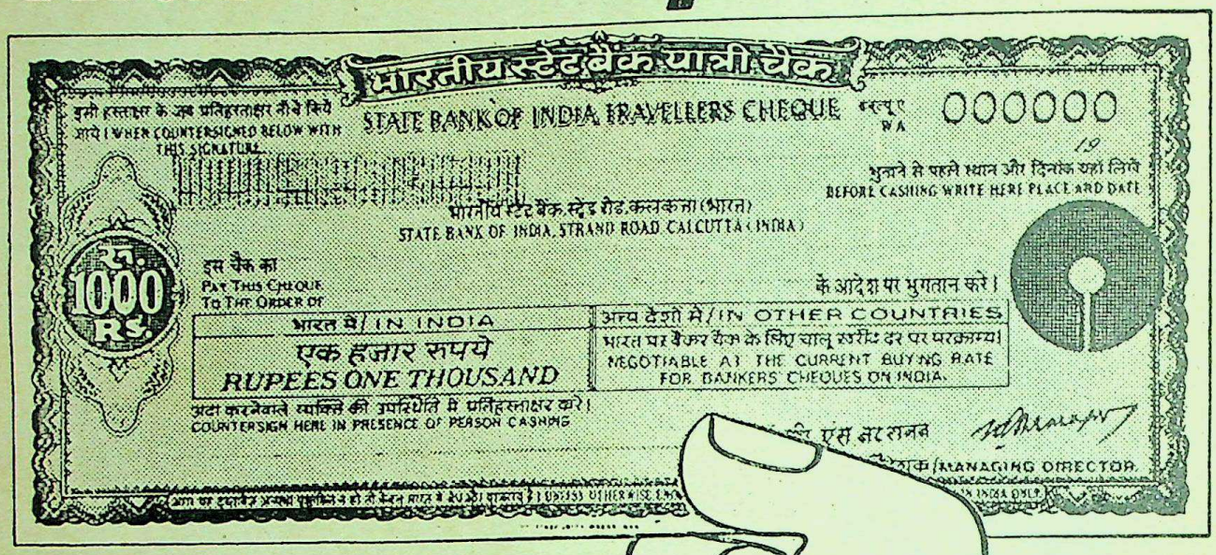

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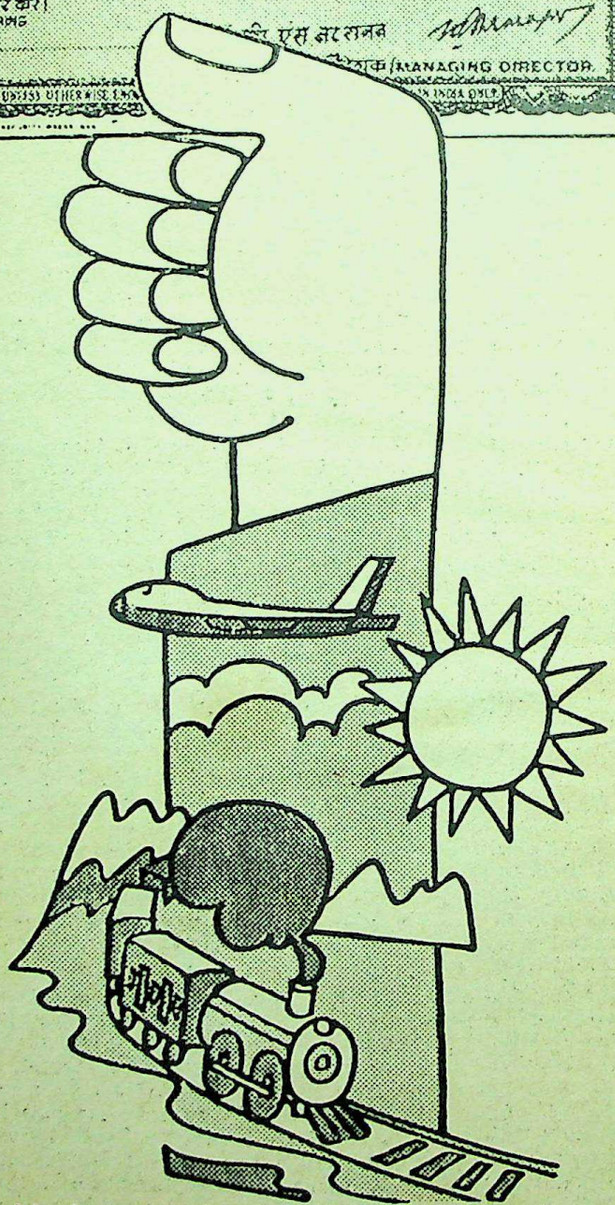

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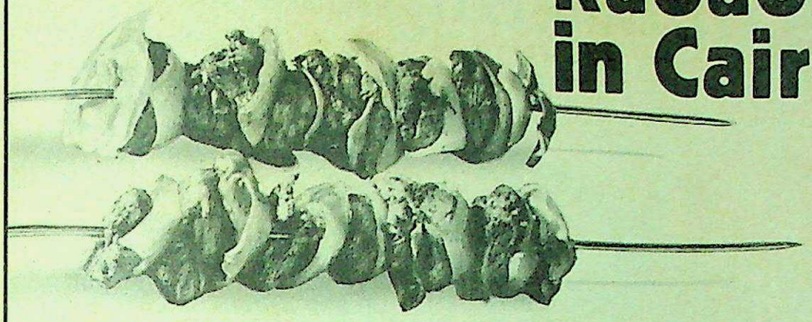

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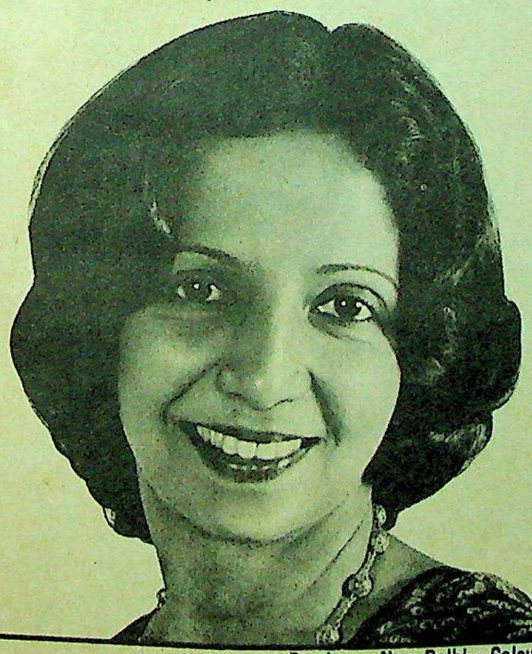

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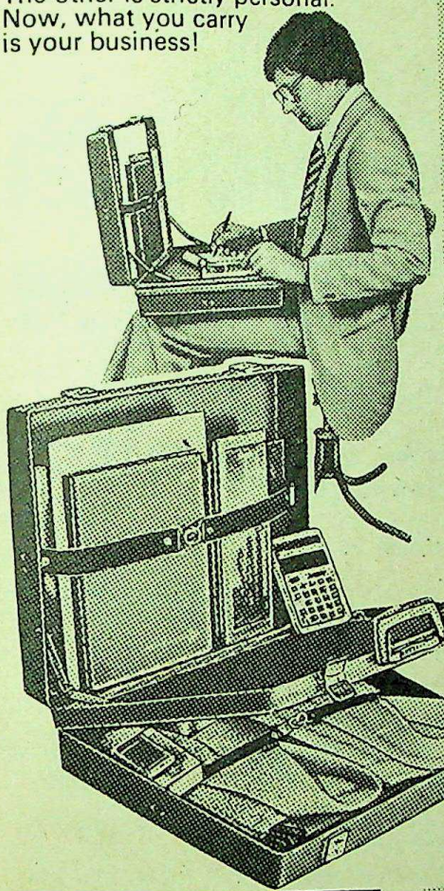

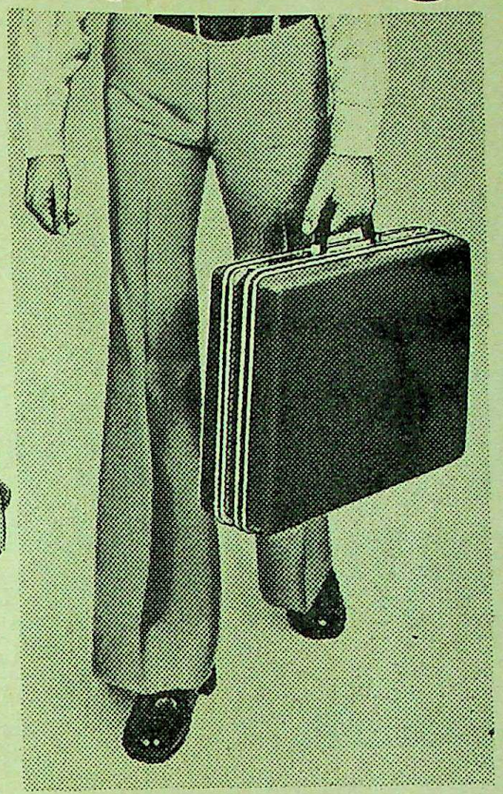

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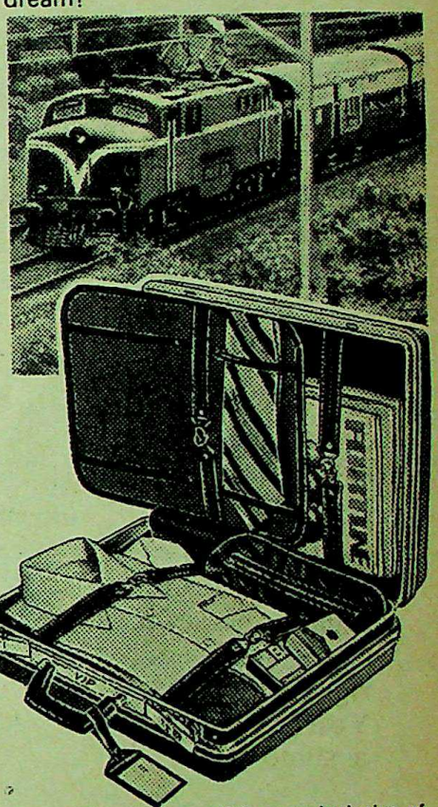

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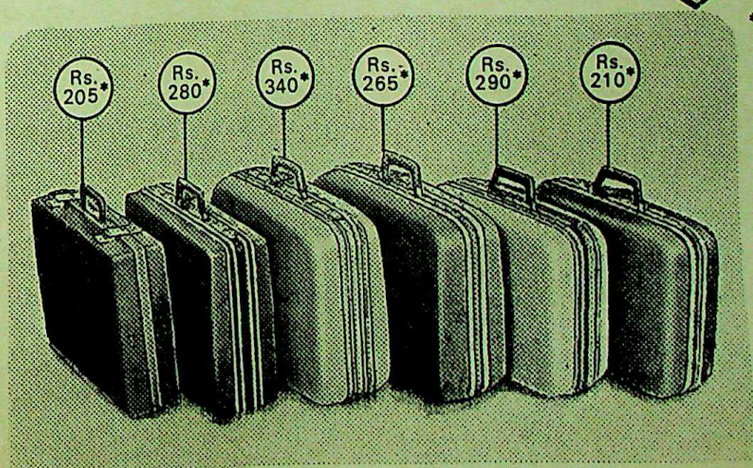

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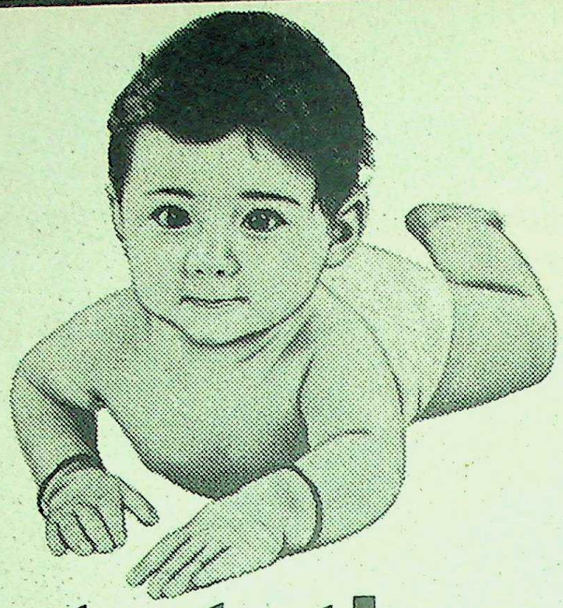

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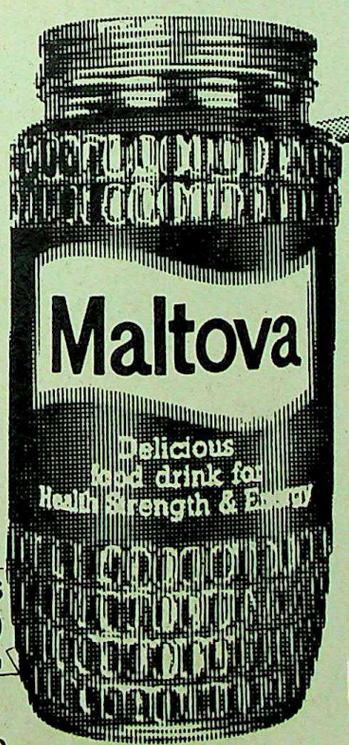

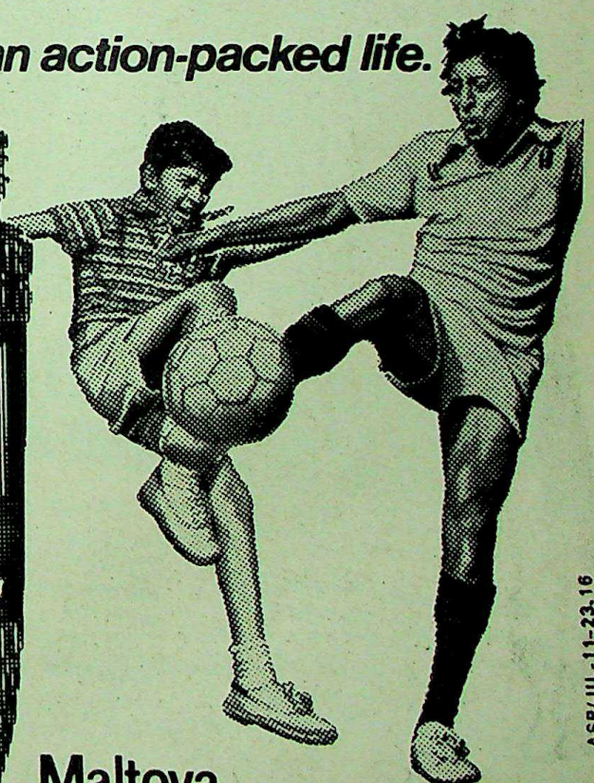

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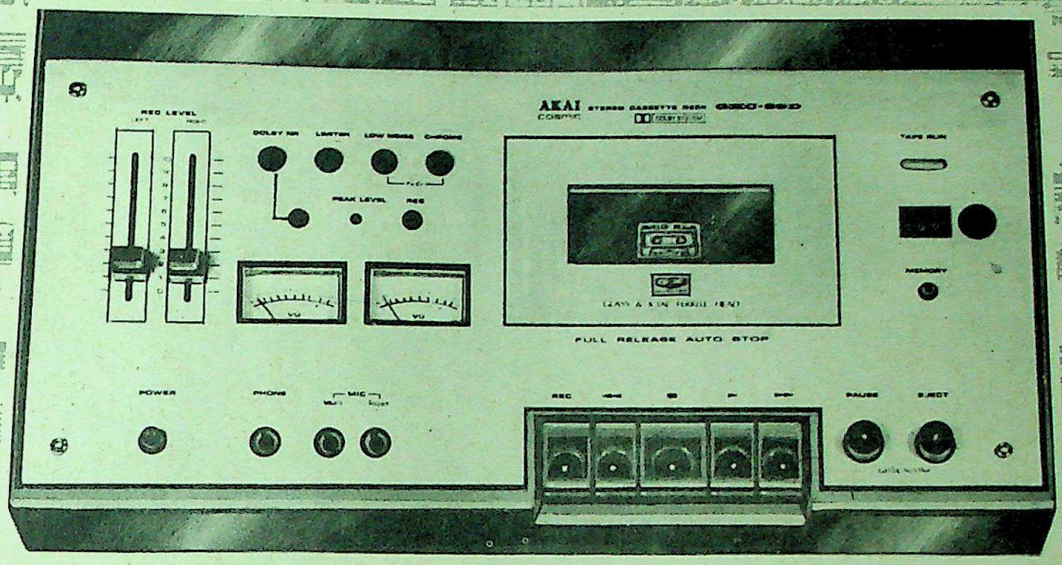

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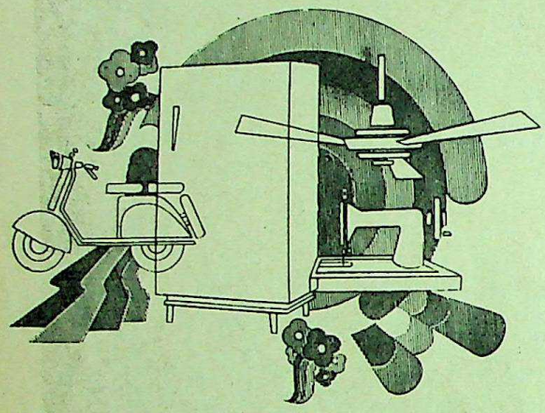

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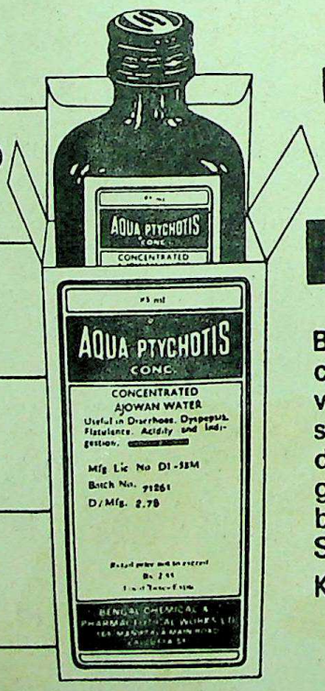

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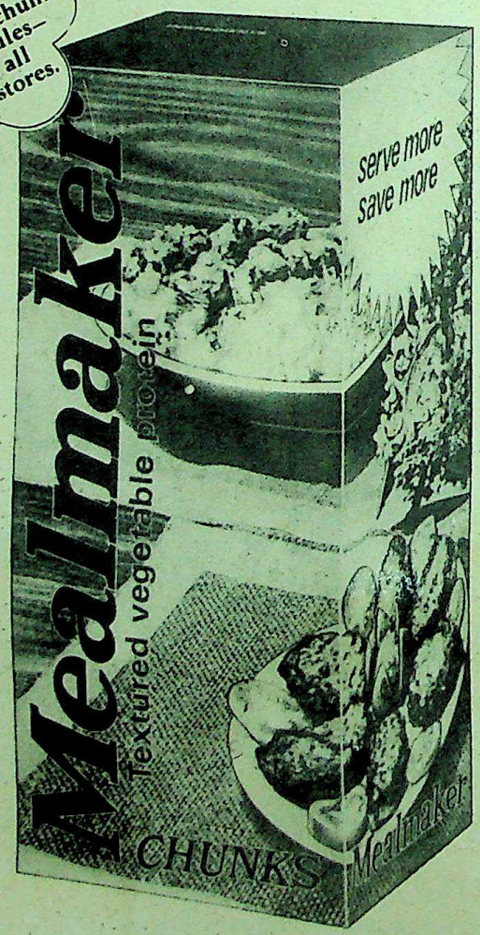

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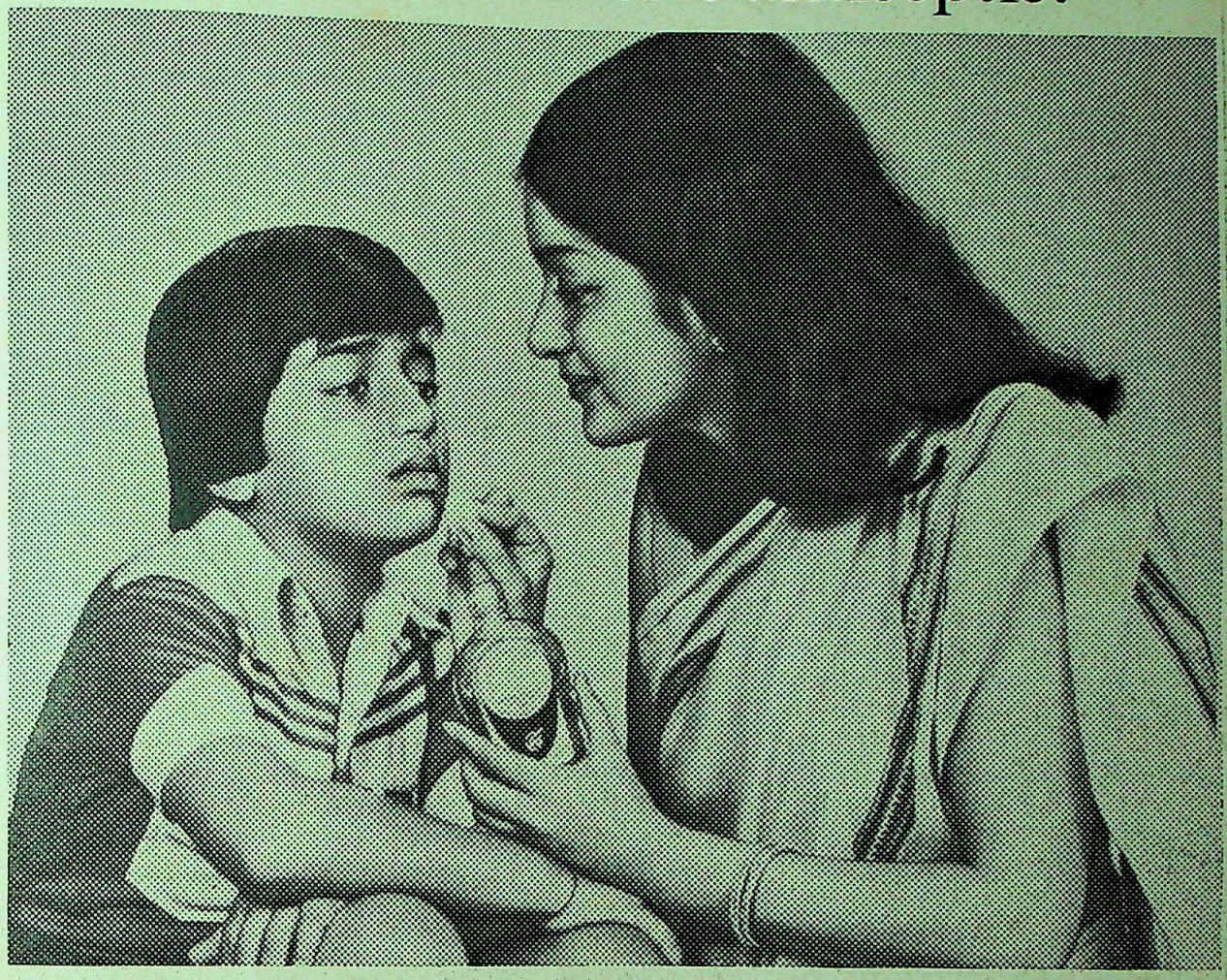

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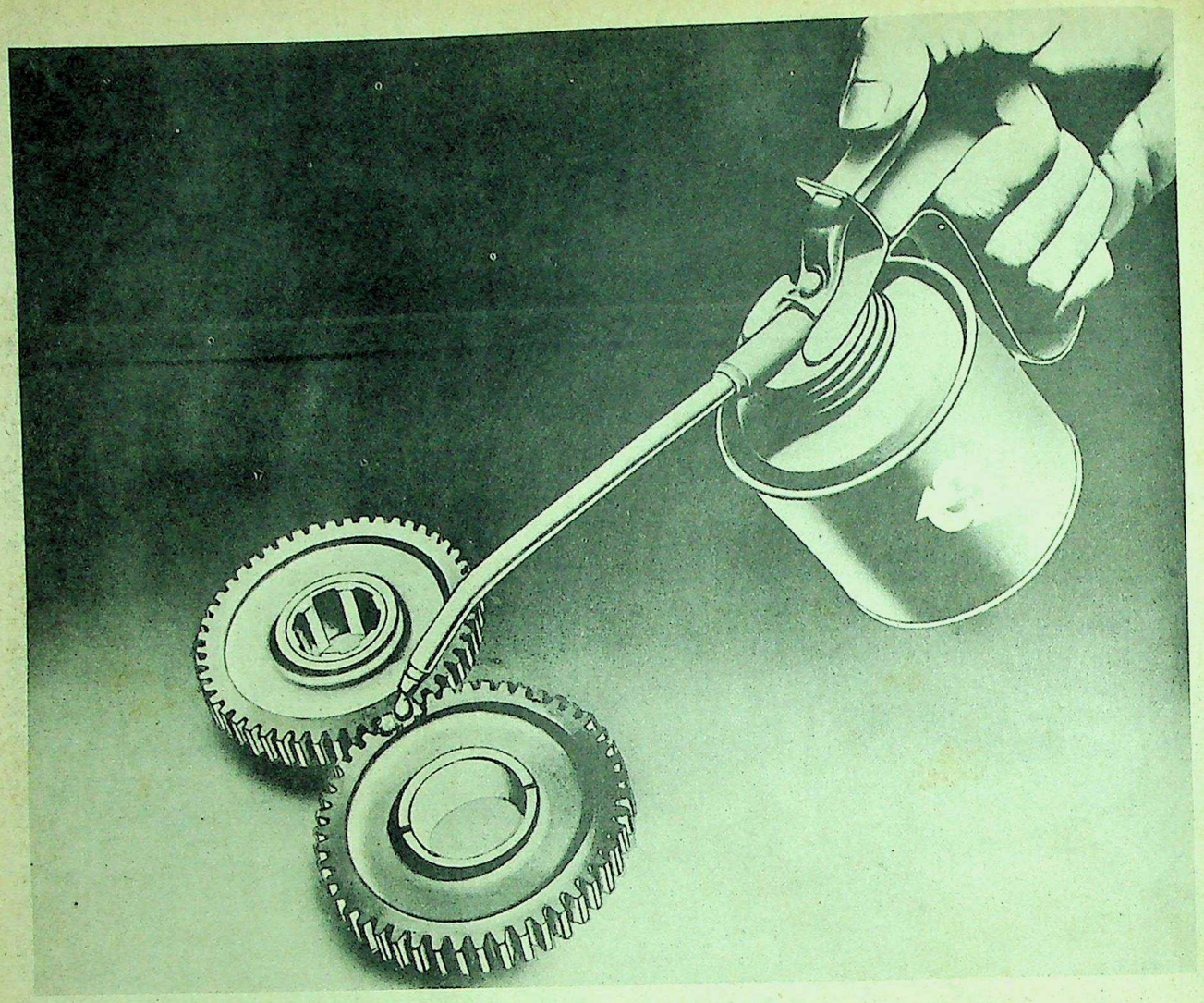

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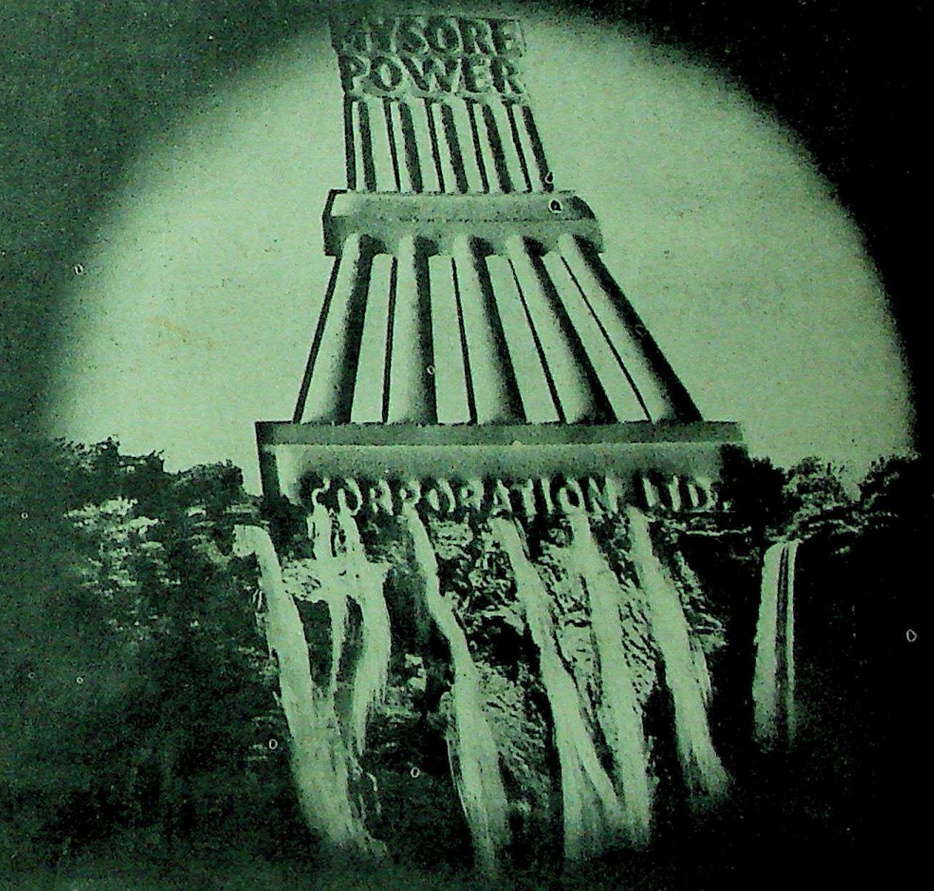

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Extracts from "Prison Diary"

MY world lies in a shambles all around me. I am afraid I shall not see it put together again in my lifetime. Maybe my nephews and nieces will see that. Maybe.

Here was I trying to widen the horizons of our democracy. Trying to do it mainly by involving the people more intimately and continuously in the processes of democracy. This in two ways. One, by creating some kind of machinery through which there could be a measure of consultation with the people in the setting up of candidates. Two, by providing a machinery—the same machinery as in One above would have done—through which the people could keep a watch on their representatives and demand good and honest performance from them. These were the two drops of essence that I wanted to distil out of all the clang and clamour of the Bihar movement. And here I am ending up with the death of democracy. Where have my calculations gone wrong? (I almost said "our" calculations, but that would be wrong. I must bear the full, the whole, responsibility.) I went wrong in assuming that a Prime Minister in a democracy would use all the normal and abnormal laws to defeat a peaceful democratic movement, but would not *destroy* democracy itself and substitute for it a totalitarian system. (July 21, 1975).

"TOTAL Revolution is our slogan; Future history belongs to us." Will this now remain an irony of history? All *jee huzurs*, cowards and sycophants must be laughing at us. "They dared to get at the stars but descended into hell", this is how they may be ridiculing us. But only those who sought to get at the stars have achieved anything in the world, maybe at the cost of their lives.

Instead of total revolution, we find today the dark clouds of total counter-revolution encircling us. It is a feast day for the owls and jackals whose hoots and growls we hear on all sides. But, howsoever dark the night may be, the dawn is bound to follow.

But will the dawn follow all by itself? And shall we simply wait, arms crossed? If social revolution were just to follow the revolutions of nature, there would have been no place for human effort, for social progress and change. What then are we to do? The answer is: "They who raised that slogan and sang that song must offer to sacrifice themselves. And the first to kiss the altar must be the one who was their leader." Doubts have been set at rest; the decision has been taken. (August 7, 1975)

IN one of her statements Mrs Gandhi, speaking obliquely about me and my colleagues in the movement, said that for us the students could do no wrong; they could burn down buses, commit other kinds of violence and scenes of rowdyism, but (for us) they were sacred, nothing could be said against them, etc. etc. Now I have decided not to comment any more on Mrs Gandhi's sayings, but on this point I must say something because the students have played a vital role in both the Gujarat and Bihar movements and they are likely to play a greater part in the future...In most cases of violence, police provocation, sometimes in extreme and indecent forms, was the spark. Be that as it may, the bulk of the students participating in the Gujarat movement believed in and adhered, to peaceful methods. (September 1, 1975)

IF India and the Indian people have to be put through totalitarian rigours in order to be taught the virtue of discipline, that virtue would be found at the first test to have been a mere veneer. Discipline is a quality of individual and group behaviour which has to be inculcated and nurtured in an atmosphere of freedom, i.e. in a condition in which there is a choice of action. In this process, especially in a society like ours in which political power and politics occupy such a dominant position (which is but a fact regrettable) the inculcation of discipline depends, more than on anything else, on the behaviour of those in power and Government. (October 1, 1975)

VINOBAJI did something miraculous for some years. It appeared as though a new Gandhian process of social change and reconstruction has emerged. But after his stormy Bhoodan experiment, not even mild breeze blew, not to speak of mighty "storm" of Gramdan, Gram-Swarajya or any other constructive experiment. Later, he withdrew into his inner self, and started the experiment of 'action' in the form of 'inaction'. To date this does not seem to have borne fruit. But what is a period of 10 or 20 years in history? Meanwhile, the country is heading for a downfall, not only moral but also the economic, social and cultural degradation of at least 40 per cent of the Indian people who live below the poverty line. One is reminded here of a statement of Bapu who, while defining democracy, had said that it did not only mean a Government established by the people's vote; it also meant that the people had the power to oust their rulers when found unworthy to rule. Democracy has almost ceased to exist in India today. The pyramid of the political structure still stands on its apex. The same is true of the educational and almost all other spheres of public activity. It is a tragic story that beggars description. (October 2, 1975)

I HAVE been saying that total revolution is a combination of seven revolutions — social, economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual. This number may be increased or decreased. For instance, the cultural revolution may include educational and ideological revolutions. And if culture is used in an anthropological sense, it can embrace all other revolutions. But what we understand by culture in the context of a primitive society is not generally the same as in the context of a civilised society. Likewise, social revolution in the Marxian context covers economic and political revolutions and even more than that. This is how we can reduce the number to less than seven. And we can add to this number by breaking up each of the seven revolutions into different categories. Economic revolution may be split up into industrial, agricultural, technological revolutions, etc. Similarly, intellectual revolution may be split up into two — scientific and philosophical. Even spiritual revolution can be looked upon as part of the cultural. And so on. The important thing is that the technical words that we use must be clearly defined. As we know, the main difficulty in understanding the Gita is semantic. The Gita has used certain words giving them its own meaning; for instance, the word 'Yajna'. (October 7, 1975)

WOULD you listen to the advice of such a man? Please do not destroy the foundations that the Fathers of the Nation, including your noble father, had laid down. There is nothing but strife and suffering along the path that you have taken. You inherited a great tradition, noble values and a working democracy. Do not leave behind a miserable wreck of all that. It would be put together again. I have no doubt. A people who fought British imperialism and humbled it cannot accept indefinitely the indignity and shame of totalitarianism. The spirit of man can never be vanquished no matter how deeply suppressed. In establishing your personal dictatorship you have buried it deep. But it will rise from the grave. Even in Russia it is slowly coming up. (From a letter to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, dated, July 21, 1975).

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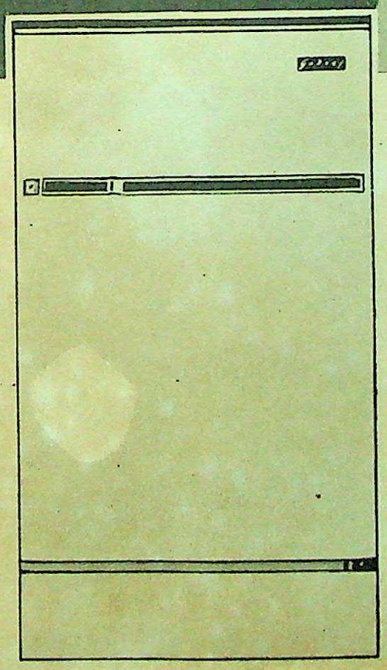

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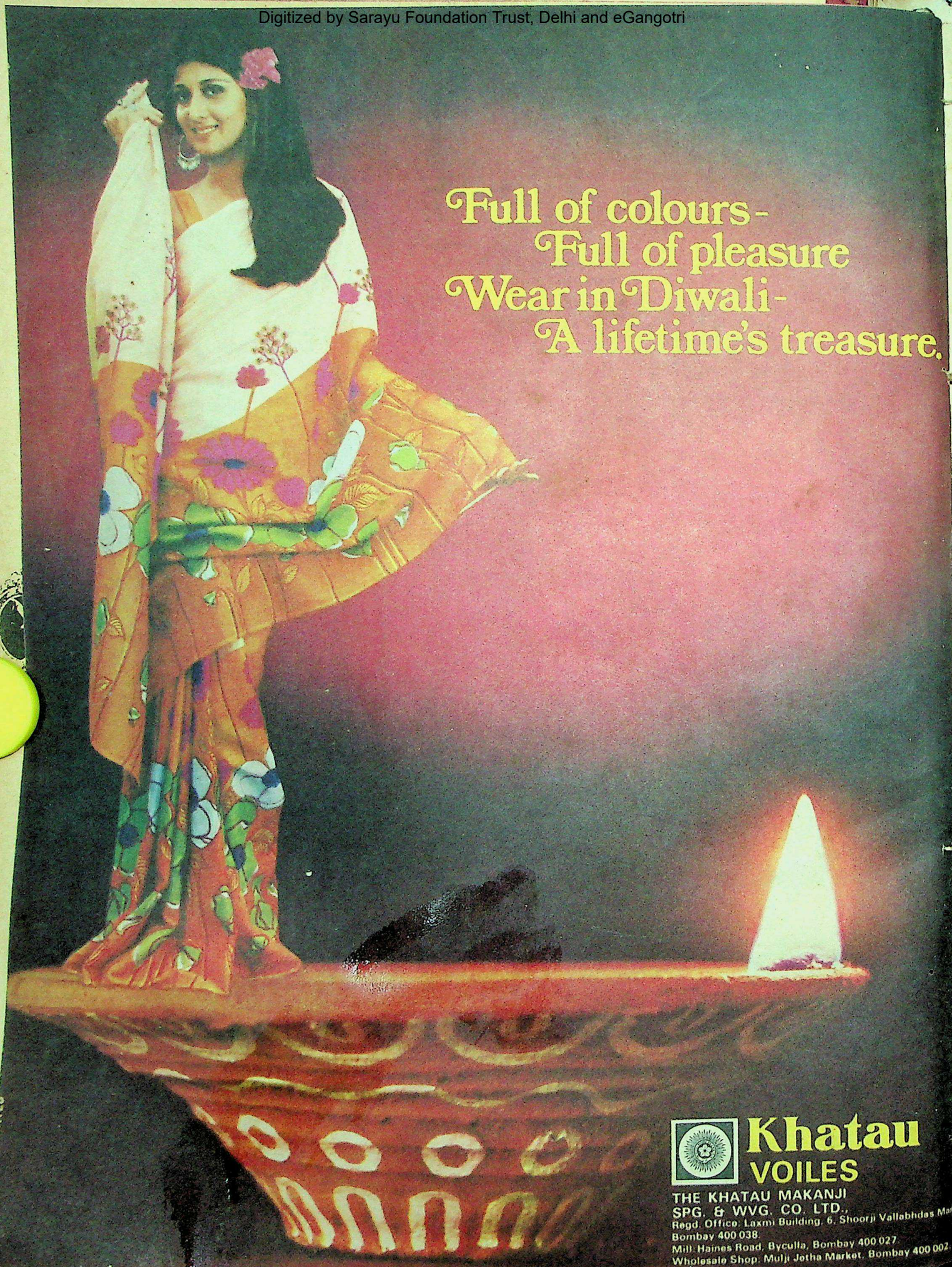

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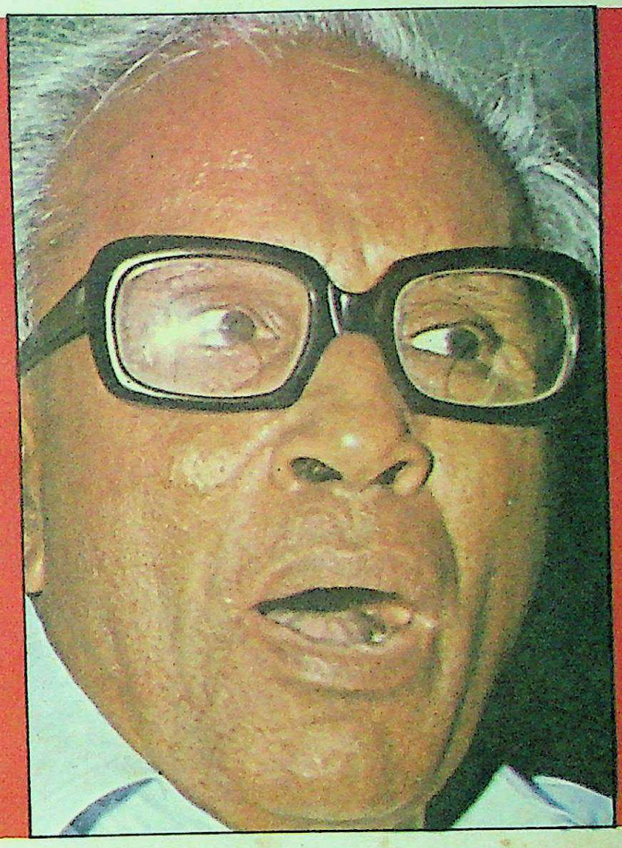

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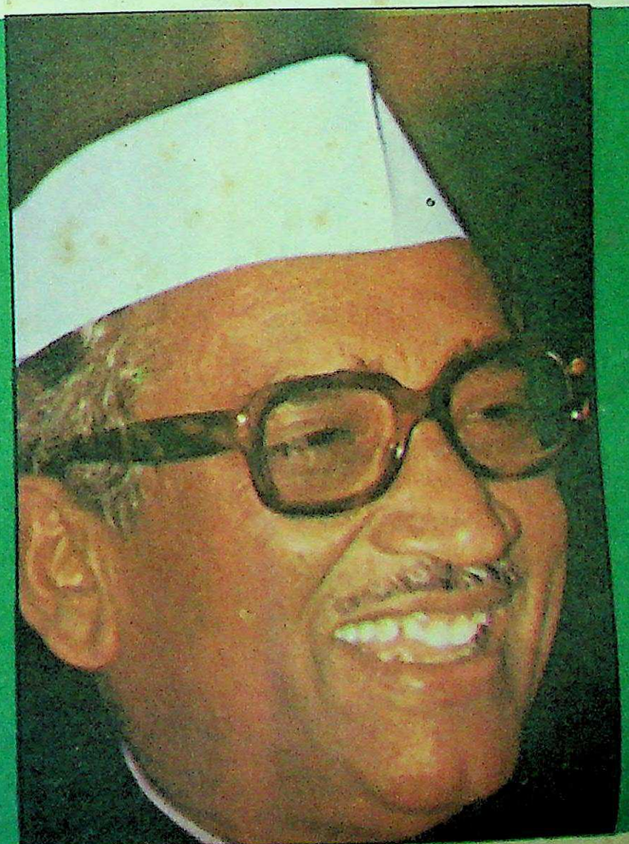
The Bahuguna story



H.N. Bahuguna

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Ah! TAJ

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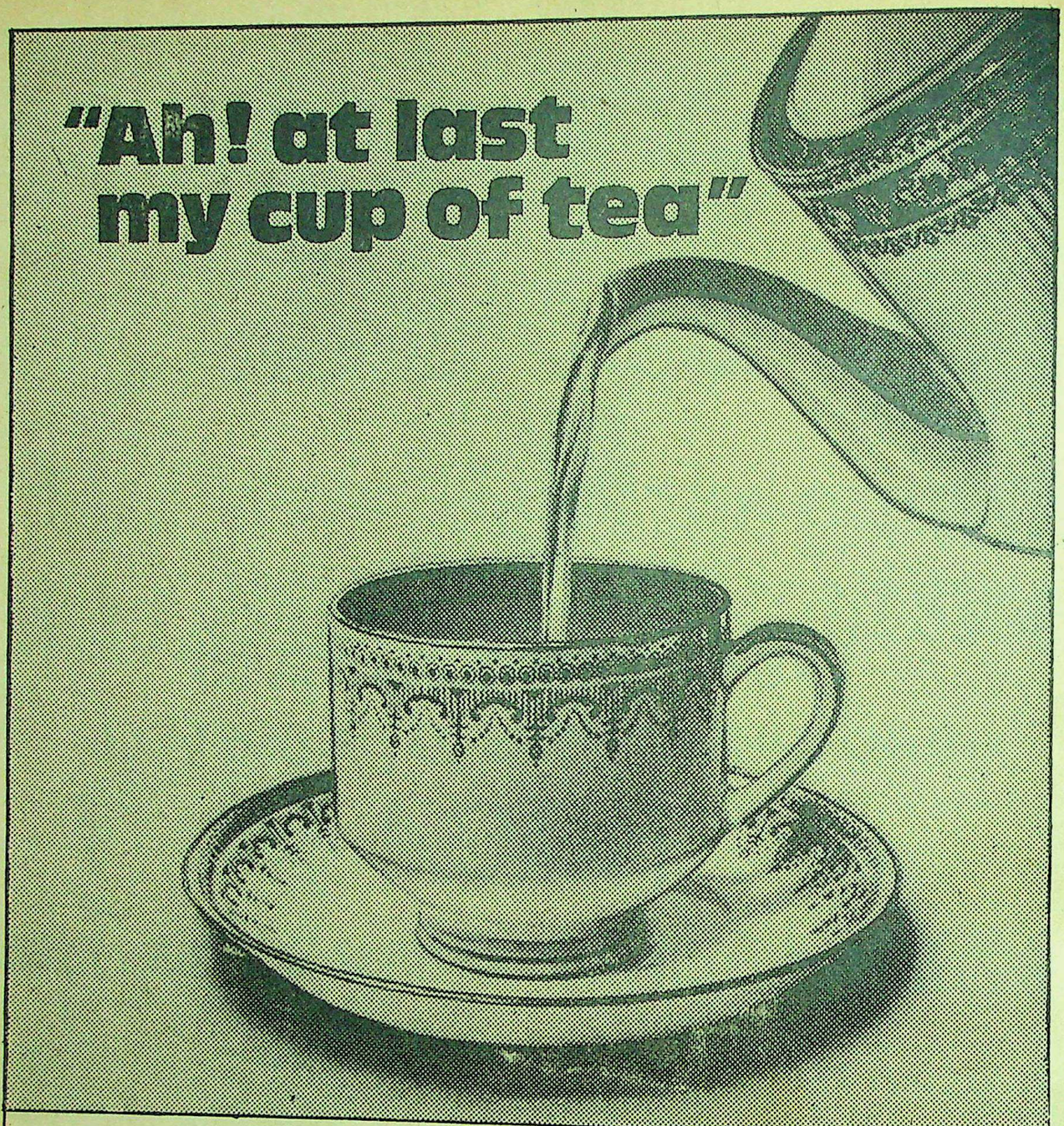

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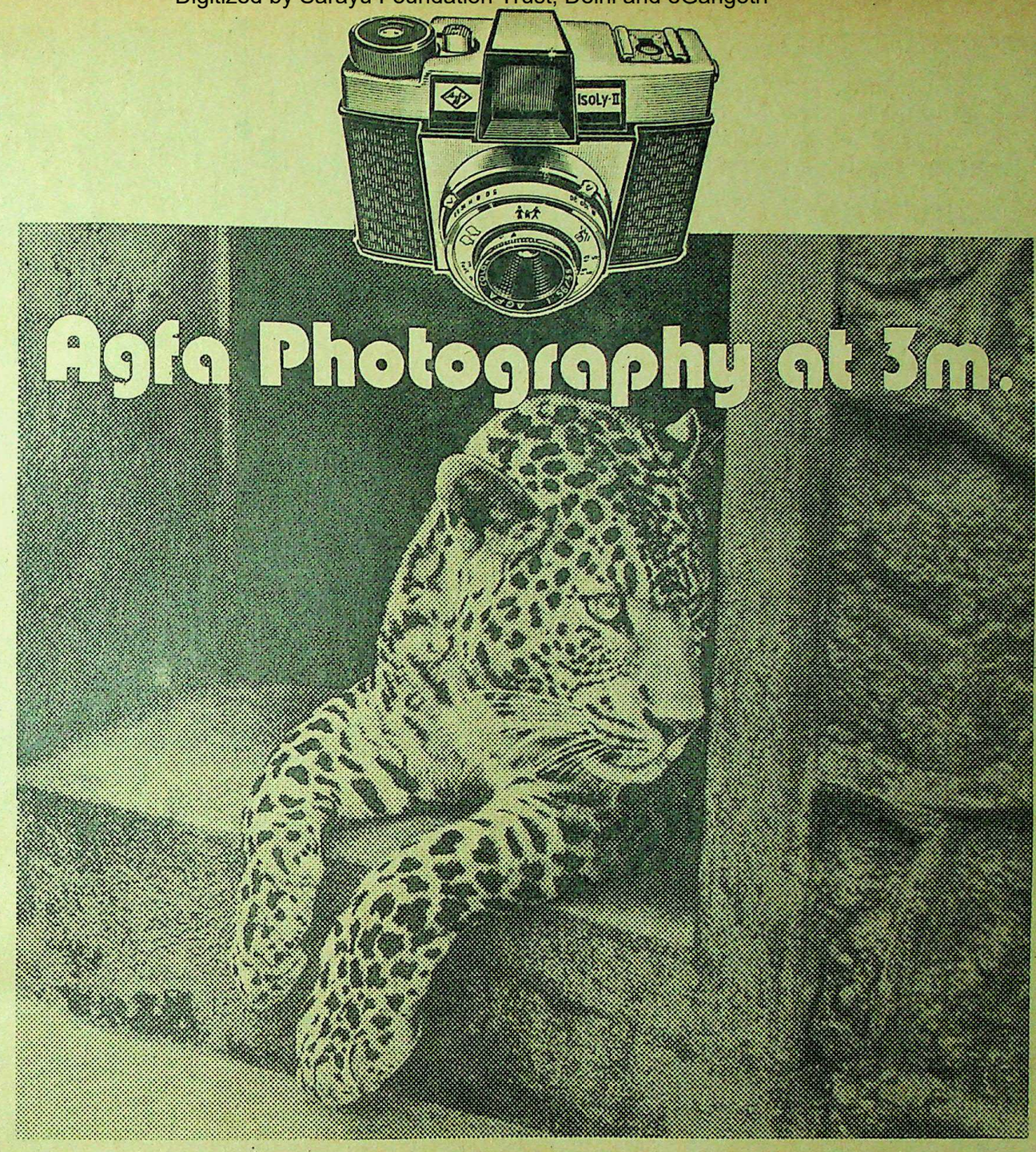

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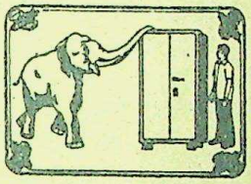

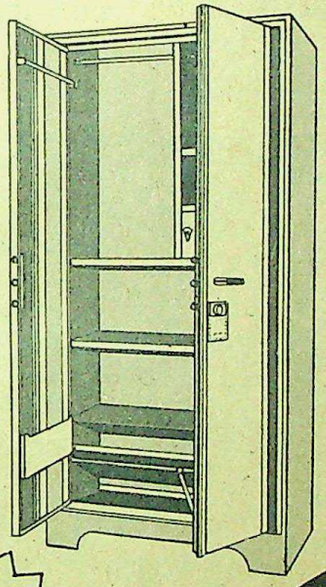

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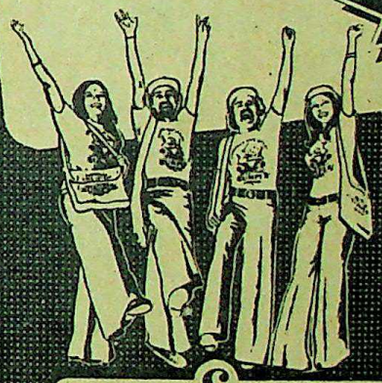

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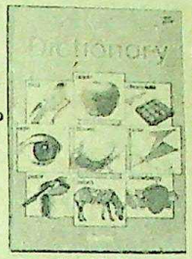

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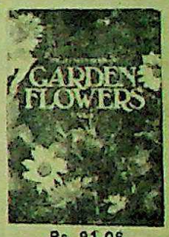

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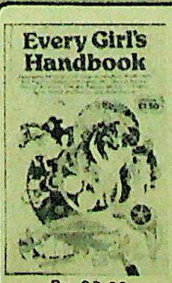

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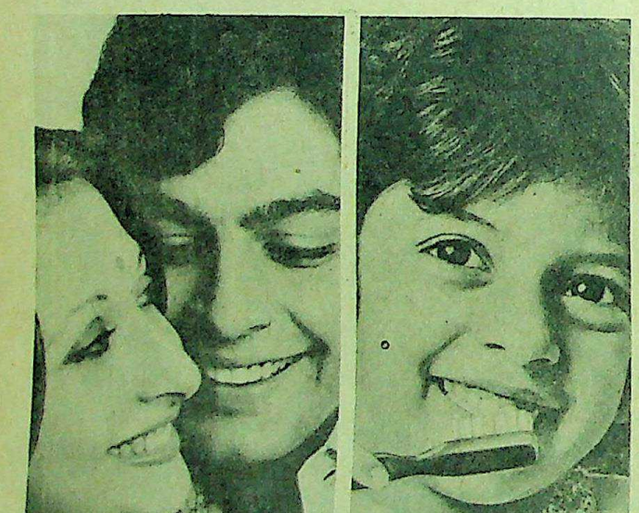

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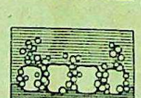

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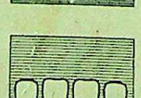

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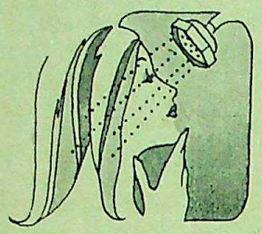
Must you suffer chapped skin and cracked lips every winter? Protect yourself these four ways!



1 All those hot, steamy baths you have every winter morning don't help a bit. You end up losing vital moisture and your skin becomes scaly and dry. Bathe in tepid water if you can't stand the thought of cold baths.

2 If you don't have the time to oil yourself, try this quick, simple alternative. After your bath, put in a few drops of olive oil—even coconut oil will do—into a mug of warm water and splash it all over your body. Then just pat yourself dry with a towel.

3 Those winter winds raise a lot of dust. And dirt and cracked skin are a dangerous combination. A good home remedy is a 'maida' and milk paste rubbed into the skin. Just see the dirt come out and your skin glow.

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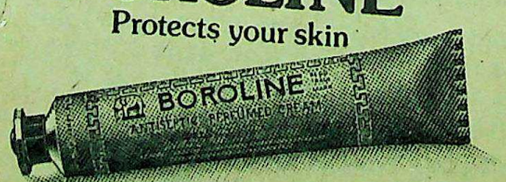

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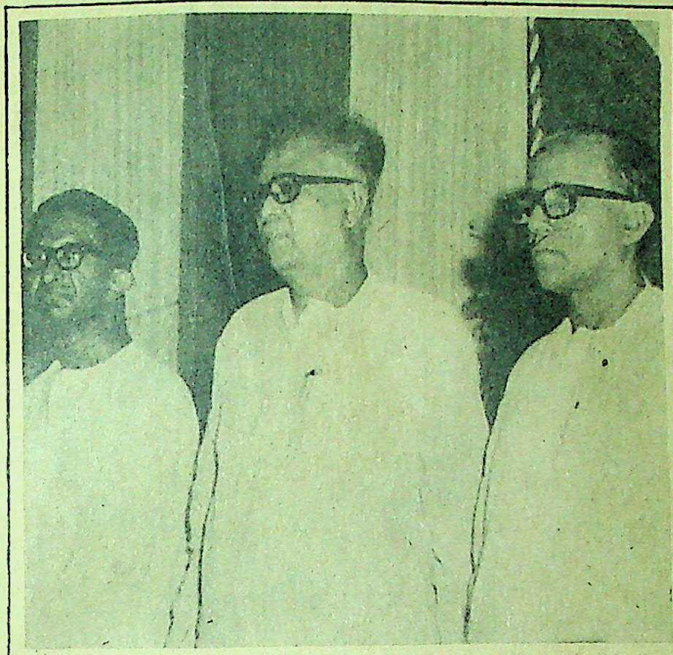
SUNDAY VOLUME 7 ISSUE 21 RUPEE ONE AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

November 4, 1979



These are crucial times for votaries of dialectical materialism. The Left movement in India having passed through some very difficult stages, often looking as though it would never survive, the unexpected change of circumstances following the announcement of mid-term elections must appear as a splendid opportunity to all Left Parties to improve their standing in national politics. SUNDAY correspondents assess their ratings in the national and regional arenas to find how they plan to tackle the elections, and how good their chances are.

The hope of a grand alliance of the Lok Dal, Congress and Left Parties received a severe jolt with the resignation of H. N. Bahuguna from the Government. In a detailed exclusive interview Bahuguna outlines his differences with Charan Singh. Also an assessment of Bahuguna the politician : Was he too clever ?

GUNTER GRASS, German novelist par excellence decided to give himself a novel present for his fiftieth birthday. He wrote : "The Flounder". We publish extracts describing his visit to Calcutta where he imagines himself as a Vasco da Gama reincarnate. He finds, he most wants to visit the goddess Kali and see her stick out her tongue. Destruction obsesses him; his only solution for Calcutta is to wipe it out.

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Uncovered

THE cover story "The Film Underworld" (September 16) was a wonderful expose of whatever goes on behind the scenes in the industry. It is true that the Hindi film environment is polluted by unscrupulous people to the extent that it cannot maintain a high standard. In helplessness, we have been forced to accept this as something that will never be changed. And we are in no position even to hope for changes until the luminaries of the industry do a quick bit of revaluation.
Shirsanka, Calcutta.

THE article was an eye opener, literally and metaphorically.
C. Jagannatham, Hyderabad.

IT is really unfortunate that SUNDAY is losing its sophisticated flavour by switching over to the style adopted by some of the film magazines.
Ashish Saha, Calcutta.

THE story as well as the highly provocative cover just go to show that your moral depravity is unlimited. It was none of your business to delve into the quagmire of Indian cinema, which should be the exclusive prerogative of the film magazines. Although we know full well that your attitude towards the three W's (wine, women and wealth) cannot be changed, we persist in writing this even though we strongly suspect it will be consigned to the waste paper basket.
Jahar Das and Kartick Chandra Das, Calcutta.

YOUR cover picture was straight out of Khajuraho. I told my daughter that as she had seen the cover, she was lucky to have seen all of Khajuraho—at the concessional rate of just one rupee.
L. A. Ramanathan, Mysore.

I DO not think your cover pleased many people and I hope such obscenity will not be repeated. The cover would have been widely appreciated if you had shown Sunny executing his favourite stroke instead. However, the article made up for the lapse on the cover.
Disha Kartik, New Delhi.

I TORE up the cover in disgust. Couldn't you have put a less suggestive photo on the cover and shifted the one of Rajesh and Tina into an inconspicuous place inside the magazine where it would not have been so offensive? It is astonishing that an esteemed weekly like SUNDAY should publish such alluring covers. But I must add that I enjoyed reading the articles.
Mitrojeet Bose, Ranchi.

THE COVER smacked of vulgarism and vulgarity and bad taste. Why must you vie with other magazines on the subject of obscenity? SUNDAY has already established itself as a journal of very high standing and any attempt to increase your circulation by publishing such obscene pictures may even prove counter-productive.
N. N. Sen, Calcutta.

THANK YOU for publishing that photograph of Rajesh Khanna and Tina on the cover. I am sure that other Rajesh Khanna fans must have been equally delighted to see the photograph of their guru on the cover of such a popular magazine.
Samit Kumar, Calcutta.

Deserted, by George!

A GREAT deal of credit must go to Mr George Fernandes for organising a mass railwaymen's strike for the first time in India. But he should face the brickbats at the same time he receives the kudos.

Propriety demanded Mr Fernandes' taking charge as Railway Minister when the Janata Government was installed in 1977 but he not only skipped taking the railways portfolio, he also stripped himself of all responsibility to the P&T department as he was obviously not able to face the working class, whose champion he had once been. Perhaps he thought that by becoming the Industries Minister he could maintain his image of a popular leader instead of running the risk of incurring the dissatisfaction of the railway and P & T workers who were at loggerheads with him. Again, morality called for the resignation of Mr Fernandes from the Government in the event of his failure to give bonus to railwaymen or his failure to persuade the Union Cabinet to give them bonus. Yet he clung to power instead till he felt it was unsafe to do so on political grounds.

One feels that Mr Fernandes championed his own cause in 1974 rather than that of the railwaymen. He has rightly said that the Railway Trade Union leadership is corrupt, but it is no more corrupt than the railway administration itself. And Mr Fernandes has to admit that his contribution to the eradicaion of this evil was nil.

Mr Fernandes has also made some errors in his article. It was not at the insistence of the Railway Board that there was a mushrooming of category-wise trade unions as he argues. This was inevitable as the AIRF and NFIR, the two recognised federations, failed to deliver the goods. The firemen of Southern Railway, disgusted and disappointed about their working conditions, low salaries and the inhuman treatment meted out to them by the railways formed the Firemen's Council in 1966-67. It was afterwards that the drivers, motormen, assistant drivers, shunters etc. joined the bandwagon which later emerged as the All-India Loco Running Staff Association.

Likewise, Mr Fernandes' contention that the Loco Running Staff Association resisted the strike move due to a psychosis of dwindling militancy but joined later is also incorrect. Mr Fernandes should have honestly admitted the fact that had the CWC of the AILRSA at its meeting at Vijayawada on April 12, 1974 not decided to join the strike, things would have been different today.

There was no attempt by the AIRF for regrouping and maintaining the unity of railwaymen after the strike as Mr Fernandes says. Instead of keeping the NCCRS (National Co-ordination Committee for Railwaymen's Struggle) intact, the AIRF broke it. As a result of this there was no proper machinery to look after the victimised employees. Many of them starved; many lost their jobs permanently, many died or committed suicide.

The sincerity and good intentions of Mr Fernandes are at stake. The railwaymen have lost faith in his leadership as also in other political personalities. If at all he organises another strike, it will again be to champion his own cause and not theirs, the railwaymen think. And any other strike move with the leadership of any other political dignitary will evoke exactly the same feeling from them.
V. K. Srikumar, Palghat (Vice President, All India Loco Running Staff Association).

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What a letdown!

IN HIS long article "The fateful days" (September 16) George Fernandes, in the section entitled "Opposition unprepared", blasts the youth, students and general public for their lack of interest in the railwaymen's movement. He also chastises them for their lack of support but perhaps he is not aware of the hardships the general public suffer at the hands of railwaymen. With the image of the Indian railways as bad as it is, how does Mr Fernandes expect to get any public sympathy?

He also seems to be ignorant of the magic powers of railwaymen, who outdo Gogia Pasha and P. C. Sorcar Jr in sheer terms of magic. Apples change to bricks and pebbles enter stitched gunny bags containing rice during transportation by rail.
R. C. Goel, Solan.

ONE fails to understand the relevance of publishing an account of the railway strike of 1974 five years after it took place, except maybe to build up the image of Mr Fernandes, which has been tarnished recently.
Aditya, New Delhi.

THE ARTICLE made illuminating reading, although certain portions bring to mind the question "Is Mr George Fernandes loyal even to his trade union comrades with whom he has so sacredly associated himself in the past?"
Siddharth Chaturvedi, Pilani.

IN THE face of such inefficiency, negligence and mismanagement, the railways owe us, their customers, an explanation. Is this the manner in which they serve the public?
Dr S. K. Gupta, Kumardhubi.

AS A passenger who has a longstanding complaint against the railways —which the authorities have not had the courtesy to reply to—I stand convinced that inefficiency is the only criterion for an administrative post in the railways.
P. K. Mitra, Lucknow.

Vanishingtrix

IT WAS wonderful to hear that SUNDAY will be printed from Madras as well. Glad news indeed. It is a thoroughly enjoyable magazine which has become a habit, if not an addiction, with me. But why have you discontinued Asterix? The absence of this popular comic strip definitely dampens my enthusiasm, so won't you please resume Asterix?
Mohammed Nadukkandy, Calicut.

Asterix has in no way been banished from the pages of SUNDAY. The wait was just to ensure that our readers get a brand new adventure. Asterix returns with this issue. We are sure that the wait was worth it. Editor, SUNDAY.

Wool over your eyes

THE REPORT by S. N. Wagle on Fr. Bede D'Costa, "Smuggler or Blackmail Victim" (September 16) is so full of lies and mistakes that I wonder how it got past the editor. There is reference to me, as the father of Allwyn Fernandes, that says I am on the Committee for Truth, Justice and Peace "based in the ashram itself" and opposed to Fr Bede. That this is an utter lie will be evident from a pamphlet on which my name appears. A perusal of the pamphlet will make it obvious to anyone that this committee is opposed to the Agnel Ashram Fathers to whom Fr Bede is opposed. Further, this pamphlet was printed by Father Bede himself and given to me. It was he who put my name on it.

Fr Bede has either succeeded in fooling Mr Wagle who swallowed everything he said without asking for proof, or your correspondent got everything mixed up and produced the hotch-potch article he did that does not make sense to us here in Bombay who are better informed about these things. God save SUNDAY from such correspondents.

The least I would have expected of your correspondent is that he cross-check the malicious allegations and insinuations made. I have never been a devotee of the ashram at any time in my 63 years, nor have I stepped in there or met any of the priests who run the establishment, or been associated with it in any way. Your correspondent's claim therefore is simply absurd.

I hope you will print this letter in fairness to me.
Lawrence Fernandes, Bombay.

A denial

THE ITEM "Harijan Muslim riot in Bihar Cabinet" by Arun Ranjan (September 16) is purely a figment of the author's imagination. The reported fighting between me and my esteemed colleague, Mr Mohan Ram in the Department of Tourism is very far from the truth.

It is an open fact that can be verified from the records of the Bihar Department of Tourism up to the date of Mr Ranjan's report that there has been not even one Muslim appointed in the Department of Tourism, Government of Bihar, with the exception of one peon, in whose appointment I had absolutely no hand. In fact, not even a proposal for the appointment of a Muslim has been sent either by me or from my personnel office during this period. So, the charge that I am trying to pack the department with Muslims is entirely unfounded. After the date of this report, that is September 22, one more Muslim has been appointed as a cook in Bodhgaya, which appointment I only learnt about when I asked the Department's officers to clarify after seeing Mr Ranjan's report.

The report of the "open war" between my esteemed colleague and myself and the report of its spillover amongst the officers of the two communities are equally baseless. It is a fact that I wanted to charge the Director of Tourism who was appointed during the time of my esteemed colleague Mr Mohan Ram. However, this had neither to do with the caste of the incumbent nor with his having been appointed in the time of Mr Mohan Ram. Even before I became Minister for Tourism during the tenure of my esteemed colleague Mr Mohan Ram, Mr Ram himself had requested the Chief Secretary to take back the Director's services. The very fact that the replacement has been (a) by a non-Muslim and (b) by a person from outside the State of Bihar is sufficient to establish the falsehood of the allegations of Mr Ranjan's report.

May I also take the opportunity through the Opinion column of your esteemed magazine to contradict the above referred report sentence for sentence and place on record that relations between Mr Mohan Ram and myself are as deferential and cordial as befits two members of the Bihar Cabinet.
Md Sayeed, Patna (Minister of Tourism, Bihar)

Mountbatten reconsidered

THE INDIAN Press and leaders were over-enthusiastic about Lord Mountbatten's "place of honour" in Indian history (September 16). Lord Mountbatten was undoubtedly a charming personality but was he our true friend? He was a good friend to the Nehru family and also to all Gandhian politicians, but he was neither a friend to the late M. A. Jinnah to whom Mountbatten was forced to surrender. He cannot be treated as a true Indian patriot.

Lord Mountbatten's role during the transfer of power was most disastrous for the Indian subcontinent. Leonard Mosley, a British historian, had written in his book "The Last Days of the British Raj"—"within a month of Lord Mountbatten's arrival in India, Jawaharlal, the firm opponent of Partition, had become if not a supporter, at least acquiescent towards the idea". Azad added "I have often wondered how Jawaharlal was won over by Mountbatten". Mosley further wrote—"There are many who believe that they were victims of a salesman's trick which won them freedom but cost them the unity of the country. A little patience and all the troubles might have been avoided".
Bidyut K. Mukherjee, Calcutta.

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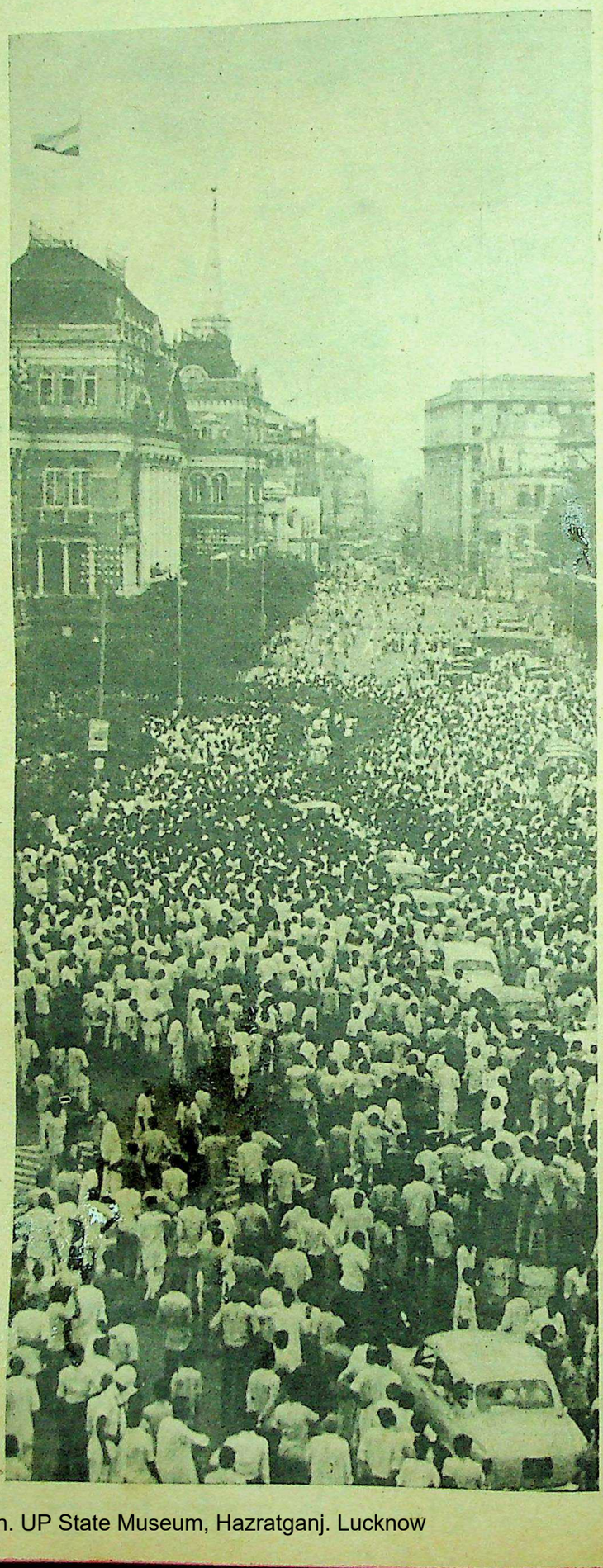
Is a red sun rising?

The history of the Communist movement in India is a history of painful mistakes. But they are now getting a new opportunity to become an important factor in national politics. Will they rise to the occasion?

By KEWAL VARMA



COMRADE X: "What's this comrades? For the last three days we have only been discussing this or that mistake we have made. This breast-beating will take us nowhere." Comrade Y: "Comrade, don't you know Lenin said that Communists must honestly own up their mistakes." Comrade Z: "But comrade Lenin said this only for those Communist Parties who rarely made mistakes and not for those Communist Parties who have always been making mistakes." That was the enlightening discussion this reporter overheard in a coffee stall at the Bhatinda Congress of the CPI last year. This history of the Communist movement in India is a history of mistakes. After 50 years of the movement, the two Communist Parties put together are only a marginal factor in national politics. The Communists were the main Opposition till 1962 but since then they have been progressively backsliding, yielding the role of the main Opposition to others. Like a frog in a well, the CPI(M) is trapped in a world of self-contentment, smugness, complacency and arrogance, within the walls of West Bengal and Kerala.

A most simplistic explanation for all this is that Communism is a foreign ideology and thus cannot take roots in the soil of a tradition-bound country like India. But if it could strike roots in China and Vietnam, why not in India? Similarly, the stigma of being pro-Soviet (the CPI(M) has of late become as much pro-So-

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viet as the CPI) is not a serious political handicap in India. After all, till the Revolution, Mao was called a Soviet agent and Ho Chi-Minh a Chinese agent. These spicy epithets are only good enough for newspapers. Politically, they become harmful if blind labelling leads to the sacrifice of national interests. In fact, this is precisely what happened with the Communist movement 35 years ago. In 1942, at the time when the national and patriotic upsurge was at its height, the Communists isolated themselves from the national mainstream. There is no denying the fact that in its infancy the Communist movement all over the world, China included, was guided by Comintern. At one time Comintern made a wrong assessment and concluded that the bourgeoisie in colonial countries had gone over to the side of imperialism and thus Gandhiji was dubbed a reactionary. It was Mao who opposed this line of the international Communist movement. The Comintern corrected its position. But M. N. Roy, who was then in charge of the India desk at the Comintern, was personally of the view that the bourgeoisie had become an ally of imperialism. He thus distorted the Comintern policy in the course of its implementation in India. The net effect was that Communists could not integrate fully with the national movements. Thus, despite the fact that a large number of Communists made tremendous sacrifices in the freedom struggle and fought many a heroic battle, crowned by the Royal Indian Navy strike in 1945, Communists could not adequately share the fruits of the freedom movement. The Congress carried away the bulk of this heritage, and the Communists missed the bus.

After Independence, the biggest socio-economic battle was fought against feudalism. The Communists did fight bitter struggles against feudalism in pockets like Telengana, the Tebhaga struggle in West Bengal, Maradar, Punjab, etc. But the main credit for the battle against feudalism was again taken by the Congress. With the abolition of zamindari, 20 million cultivators were freed of feudal exploitation. The secret of the Communists' success in Kerala and West Bengal is that they carried out the second stage of the socio-economic battle against semi-feudal relations in the form of tenancy and sharecropping. Kerala is the only State where absentee landlordism has been completely abolished. West Bengal is closely following Kerala's footsteps and Devaraj Urs is also going along the same lines in Karnataka. That explains his as well as the Communists strength in Kerala and West Bengal

The tragedy of Indian Communists has been that on the political plane, wherever there is a spontaneous national upsurge, they have a knack of remaining out of step with the mainstream. After 1942 the second biggest political upsurge was the demonstration of democratic sentiments in 1977. The CPI clearly played a treacherous role. The CPI(M) played a passive role and did not join actively in the struggle against dictatorship. None of its important leaders was arrested during the Emergency. The result was that whereas the CPI was badly mauled, the CPI(M) could barely retain its strength in the 1977 elections. The main beneficiaries of the Congress collapse at the national level were the Rightist Parties. Between 1942 and 1977 whenever there were mini-upsurges, the Communist movement was found wanting in enthusiasm. Even in 1978-79 the national campaign against Hindu communalism was articulated and led by Raj Narain and company and the Communists are latecomers in this campaign. The CPI(M) till the eleventh hour, was wavering about whether or not to break with the Jana Sangh-dominated truncated Janata.

The most serious setback to the Communist movement resulted from its 1964 split. Differences had existed in the united Communist movement

"EMS"

on the question of whether there should be a tactical alliance with the Congress or not in carrying out certain socio-economic reforms. However, these internal differences alone could not have led to the split, but for the split between Moscow and Peking. Precisely at the time the Indian Communist Party split, many other Communist Parties in the world got split between Moscow and Peking. In India, it was not an accident that all those who in the National Council of the united Communist Party voted against the resolution declaring China as an aggressor, later formed the CPI(M). The only dissenter was Sohan Singh Josh. But it must be said to the credit of the CPI(M) leaders that after the 1967 elections they acquired self-confidence and began to assert their independence. This annoyed Peking which shifted its patronage from the CPI(M) to the Naxalites. The CPI-(M) for its part, also slowly drifted closer to Moscow. In 1968, while the CPI was sharply divided, the CPI(M) wholeheartedly supported the Soviet troops' march into Czechoslovakia. In ideological terms, the CPI(M) is still sticking to Stalinism whereas the CPI associates itself with post-Stalin trends in the international Communist movement. The CPI(M)'s attachment to Stalinism is evident from the fact that it celebrates Stalin's birthday more enthusiastically than even Moscow does.

THE split in the Communist movement was compounded by the divergent routes taken by the two Communist Parties between 1969 and 1977. The CPI aligned itself with Mrs Gandhi with the object of fighting the challenge of feudal and relatively Rightist forces. Meanwhile, the CPI(M) adopted an overbearing and big-brotherly attitude towards its smaller allies in West Bengal and Kerala. In the period between 1967 and 1969 some brash upstarts among the CPI(M) cadres resorted to politics of physical assault and murder of even their allies. The CPI, which had taken a different political course, overreacted and snapped its alliance with the CPI(M). Objectively, the CPI played into the hands of Mrs Indira Gandhi and sabotaged Left unity. The CPI said that it was following a unity-struggle policy but in practice it remembered only unity and forgot about the struggle. It continued on its sliding downhill course till it bit the dust pathetically during the Emergency.

In the name of fighting Right reaction, the CPI supported authoritarianism and lost its credibility in the process. In this game of self-delusion, some sections began to see Mrs Gandhi as a harbinger of socialism. *New Age* once pleaded: "Mrs Gandhi alone cannot bring Socialism." But S. A. Dange in his note of dissent at the Bhatinda Congress asserted that "Mrs Gandhi was bringing democratic reforms with Socialist orientation." Yet, all the CPI's labour from 1969 to 1977 did not go to waste. The CPI's politics did contribute to the radicalisation of a large section of Congressmen, making them stand against Mrs Gandhi. They are now prepared to accept an alliance with Leftists, including the CPI and CPI (M).

Theoretically, there is nothing wrong with the policy of unity and struggle. In fact, that is the only course open to the Left Parties to grow from strength to strength. But unity and struggle is like a double-edged sword. You must have a keen sense of timing, that is the knowledge about when to unite and when to break. Mao joined hands with Chiang Kai-shek thrice and broke with him thrice. The CPI lacked that sense of timing. Its judgement was also clouded by an extraneous consideration, namely the strong support the Russians were giving Mrs Gandhi. The CPI(M)'s record in this regard is only a shade better. It entered into an alliance with the Janata, but did not take the initiative to break this alliance when the time came. The initiative was entirely Raj Narain's and the CPI(M) was only confronted with a fait accompli. Instead of setting the pace, the CPI (M) timidly followed the events leading to the isolation of Jana Sangh-RSS forces. Now the wheel has again come a full circle, and the two Communist Parties have come together to ally with Charan Singh. In 1967 too they had done the same

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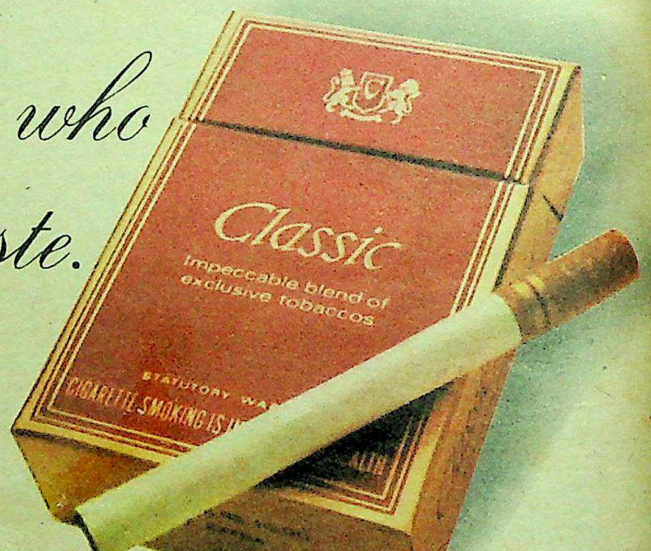

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when together they joined the anti-Congress front. But unless they develop the art of deciding when to make and when to break alliances this politics of alliance may not benefit them.

One difficulty with Indian Communists is that they are rather recent converts to democratic politics. There is yet no international experience to bring about socialist-oriented reforms without force within a democratic framework. In a democratic framework, a broad base of popular support is essential for carrying out reforms. This is more true when these reforms are effected at the State level and the Central Government is not wholly helpful in its attitude. The broad-based support in crude arithmetical terms should mean active support from 50 to 55 per cent of the population. It is precisely with the aim of winning over such a base of support that the Italian Communist leader Berlinguer is pursuing his policy of Historic Compromise. In a sense his Indian counterpart is E.M.S. Namboodiripad. When the first Communist Government was dismissed in 1959, in the face of the liberation struggle and the Communist Party later lost the Assembly elections, EMS opted for the Berlinguer way. He neutralised and won over the support of the Church and Muslim communalists for the socio-economic programme. The EMS-led United Front swept the polls in 1967. But his blind spot was the Congress whom he would not touch with a pair of tongs. His unfinished task was completed by Achuta Menon and the Congress joined the alliance. The land reforms were implemented with the Congress as a partner in the Government. In the process a huge chunk of the Congress was also radicalised and A. K. Antony is the product of that phenomenon. Unfortunately the latest turn of events indicates that sectarianism has resurfaced in EMS.

In West Bengal also one has to keep one's fingers crossed. In the short term there is no threat to the CPI(M). But this is because the CPI(M)'s detractors are disunited at present. The moment they unite, things will hot up for the CPI(M). Unlike EMS, who is trying to expand the area of his support the CPI(M) in West Bengal is most reluctant to accept new allies, let alone take the initiative to enlarge its base of support. Even limited reforms generate hostility among those who are adversely affected by them.

APART from acquiring the skill of forming united fronts and accepting the compulsions of working in a democratic framework, the Communists have to learn many more things to become a national force. Their alliance with the Lok Dal and Congress will, perhaps, help them get a few more seats. But they will still not become a decisive force at the national level. One of the biggest failures of the Communist movement is that they have trained the Indian working class to become a class for itself instead of a class which feels a responsibility towards its other allies. The two Communist Parties along with the other Left Parties have been competing with each other to encourage economism among the working class. As a result, the organised working class fights only for increases in wages, irrespective of the consequences of these demands for other sections as well as for the national economy. In the process, its own monetary gains are also liquidated. In fact, during a critical economic crisis, when the working class presses wage claims that are hard to concede they give the impression of holding the country to ransom. Thus, unconsciously, the working class facilitates the work of authoritarian forces. Since the Communist movement is linked with the working class, it must be educated to temper its economic demands and ensure that it is in no case alienated from other toiling sections of society.

In the final analysis the success of the Communist movement will depend on its intellectual, political and organisational capacity to respond and adapt to the changing socio-economic realities of India. The most crucial aspect of this change is the abolition of the zamindari system, which has made 20 million tenant-cultivators owners of land. But still about 25 per cent of land under the plough is cultivated by tenants and sharecroppers. Communists should naturally be in the forefront of a drive to make these tenants and sharecroppers owners of the land. But when a tenant becomes a landowner, he very soon develops the capitalist's psychology. As a result he begins to get alienated from the Communist movement. This is the experience of both China and Vietnam. Even in India, in those pockets where Communists fought for tenants in their struggle, they began to lose the support of the tenants. There is a strong impression that in the Malabar area of Kerala, tenants who for long stood solidly behind the CPI(M) have now become cold towards the Party after becoming owners, even though their struggles were led and fought by the Communists. In India, unlike in Europe and Japan at the comparable stage of economic development, the weight of the peasantry among the total population is not declining. In Europe and Japan, poor and marginal farmers either sold their land or were forcibly deprived of it and they migrated to

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cities to become industrial workers. In India this process is not operating. There are a number of reasons for this. First, the pace of industrialisation is slow and as such, better alternative opportunities are not available to poor farmers. Second, because of the land-ceiling there are not many takers for agricultural land. Third, because of the price-support mechanism, the thrust of market forces against poor farmers is being blunted. Fourth, there are not many instances of poor farmers alienating land in favour of money-lenders.

Notwithstanding these factors, poor and marginal farmers are increasingly falling below the poverty line because of demographic pressures leading to the fragmentation of land as well as their failure to gain access to inputs, institutional credits and new technology. Obviously, the Communists cannot wait endlessly for the composition of the population to change in favour of the industrial working class. But if they have to win over this mass of poor peasantry, they must present before them a perspective for reorganising agriculture on the lines of service co-operatives growing into cooperative farming without losing the title to land. Simultaneously, they have to make concerted efforts to win over the rural proletariat. Right from the days of Gandhiji, when he fought for social equality among them, landless agricultural workers have, by and large, been with the Congress. But the most difficult Indian riddle which the Communists have to solve is the intertwining of castes and classes, of deciding how far to carry their fight against casteism and how to make use of the castes as a short-cut. This is no doubt contradictory.

Yet a fine balance can be struck. The Communists' failure to grasp Indian peculiarities was evident at the birth of their movement. When the Communist Party was founded, there was an intense debate over whether it should be called the Communist Party of India or the Indian Communist Party. There was a feeling among Indian Communists that if the Party was called the Indian Communist Party, it would mean that there was an Indian variety of Communism. (Ironically, in Hindi they agreed to call themselves the Bhartiya Communist Party). But unless Indian Communists discover an Indian road to socialism and adapt socialism to India's peculiar conditions they will fail, notwithstanding their success in one or two States. Like Euro-communists, Indian Communists must develop the perspective of Indo-communism essentially as a response to the peculiar situation developing here. In Europe with the growth of technology and automation, out of every five new persons who join the work-force, three are whitecollared and two are bluecollared. As a result, the demographic composition of Europe is changing in favour of whitecollar employees whose cultural value-system is different from that of bluecollar workers. Hence Euro-communism has renounced the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat. As against this the CPI(M) here is clinging to the corpse of Stalinism and refusing to do any rethinking.

However, what is most heartening is that Communists are coming together again and extraneous factors, such as the Moscow-versus-Peking issue (both the Communist Parties are pro-Moscow) no longer exist to divide them. The bitter experience of stagnation in the Communist movement following its split, has strengthened the sentiments of unity in the two Communist Parties. The two Parties together will have confidence in themselves and even when they join an alliance, they will be able to retain their identity and gain from this alliance. The Communists will continue to have relevance and even bright prospects in India since there is no other Party on the political horizon which can solve the problem of Indian poverty and undertake urgent socio-economic reforms. What assurance is there that instead of solving these problems some forces may not impose an authoritarian regime and the Indian people may, in the bargain, have neither bread nor liberty? Thus, the Communists do not have all the time in the world.

The CPI: Left alienated

Who are the Party's "Left and democratic" friends and "revisionist" foes?

By RANAJIT ROY

THE Congress(I) slogan for the Lok Sabha election in January will be "Indira bulao, desh bachao". The CPI's central organ, the *New Age*, of September 9, commented: "The return of Indira Gandhi to power means the restoration of the scum that is the caucus with Sanjay, Bansi Lal, Dhawan, Yashpal Kapoor, et al, to the positions of authoritarian power, undoubtedly a forbidding prospect for the nation. Sanjay, let it be said, is more powerful in the Indira high command today than at any time in the past. The Sanjay phenomenon, it must be added, is not just an offspring of an indulgent mother's affection; it is born in the wedlock of authoritarianism and dynastic ambition."

The editorial, which is the handiwork of Mr Bhupesh Gupta, is the CPI's strongest attack on Mrs Gandhi so far. It reflects the current stand of the Party's dominant leadership represented by Mr Rajeshwara Rao, the General Secretary, and Mr Gupta. These two leaders have travelled far indeed from Bhatinda where the Party had its Eleventh Congress in April 1978, a year after Mrs Gandhi had been ousted from power and her Emergency regime had come to an end. At Bhatinda the Party described the victory of the Janata in these words: "Reaction has been able to capture power... This is a serious reversal, though temporary, for the democratic forces in the subcontinent. This suits well the global designs of the imperialists." Mr Biswanath Mukherjee and several others fruitlessly tried to have this formulation of the election results changed. Mr Mukherjee said that the Party, in this formulation in reality described the Janata Government as "more reactionary, as it the previous Indira Government was progressive. Or, in other words, if a choice is forced upon us, the (Indira) Congress is preferable to the Janata. This is essentially the same old line."

Clearly, the CPI was keeping its options open about Mrs Gandhi's Party. In this matter the view of Mr S. A. Dange, the Party's Chairman, prevailed. The task the CPI set before itself then was to "direct the sharpest blows against the RSS-Jana Sangh-BLD combine", not against Mrs Gandhi, and break the Janata Government.

It so happened that the BLD itself became the main force who could break the Janata. The CPI, the CPI-(M) and some other Leftists added grist to the BLD mill. So did Mrs Gandhi who, without showing the least repentance for what she and her son had done during internal Emergency, had managed to occupy the centre of the political stage once again. The new Government formed by the BLD under the name Lok Dal and the Congress is only a caretaker one. The Lok Sabha election being in the offing, the question of a Left and democratic alliance which both the CPI and the CPI(M) have since long been propagating has assumed immediate importance.

Mr Gupta's editorial notwithstanding, the CPI and the Congress-(I) had struck a deal to avoid mutual contests in Kerala's panchayat and municipal elections and a day after the editorial appeared Mrs Gandhi met Mr Dange in Bombay. Mr Dange had returned home after a long sojourn to the Soviet Union for medical treatment. In recent days the Congress(I) had made overtures to the CPI for alliance in the Lok Sabha election but these

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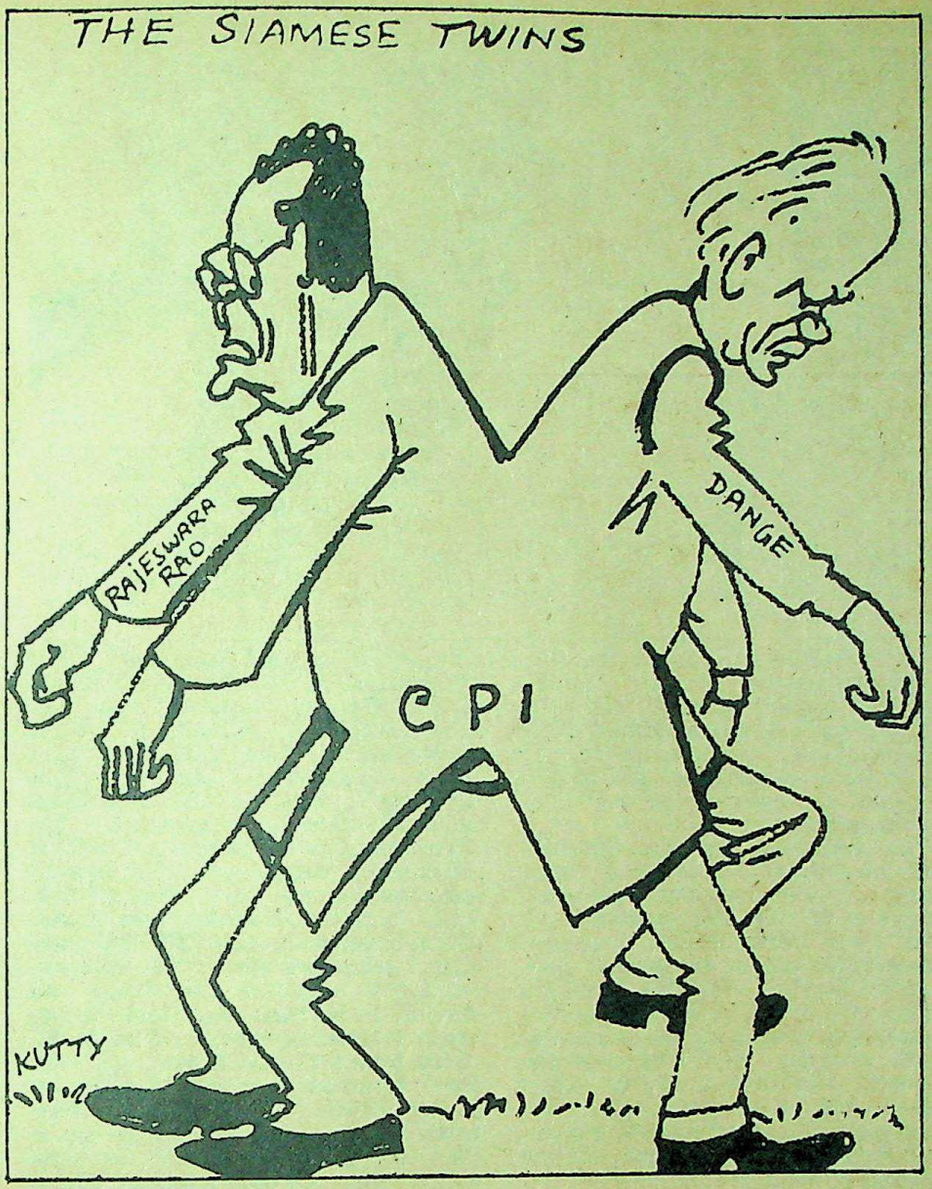

had been spurned by the Party's dominant leadership. Mrs Gandhi, being uncertain of what the coming election has in store, was is looking for allies. Mr Dange would be of help in making the CPI change its stand, she must have imagined.

Mr Dange's admiration for Mrs Gandhi and her Party remains as profound as it was before the 1977 Lok Sabha election. As late as April 1978, a year after her defeat, he wrote what amounted to a panegyric on her "complex personality" and urged the Party to realise that "the fall of Indira Gandhi in reality puts an end to a whole period of taking some very basically progressive steps in the political and economic history of the country". This, despite the fact that Mrs Gandhi had in 1976 called the CPI an anti-national Party.

After the Chikmagalur byelection last November Mr Dange publicly gloated over Mrs Gandhi's victory and made abrasive comments on the CPI(M)'s support to the Janata candidate. This was too much for the Party's central executive which publicly censured him Such grave violation of Party dispicline, as Mr Dange was held guilty of, usually invites expulsion from Communist Parties. He had gone against the Party's policy decided at Bhatinda which spoke of "the supreme importance of exploring all possible areas of agreement between the CPI and the CPI(M)". Even the censure was resented by Mr Dange's followers who constitute a very substantial section of the Party. Stronger action might have caused a split.

More, a disease of the Party noted by its Seventh Congress in Bombay in December 1974, remains uncured. The "organisational report" adopted there said: "In the all-India centre. as well as State centres, the leaders who have committed big blunders continue to be eternal leaders. Only in exceptional cases they are removed from key positions but kept in the leading committees. In the past, if one made self-criticism and purified himself, like a sinner bathing in the Ganga to wash off his sins, it was sufficient to get a new licence to commit more blunders. Nowadays even that type of formal self-criticism is not needed because we have thrown this weapon of criticism and self-criticism into the dustbin."

Mr Dange has no love for Mr Rajeshwara Rao's and Mr Gupta's stand to treat Mrs Gandhi as an enemy of the CPI. It is reported that Mr Vasudevan Nair, the then Chief Minister of Kerala, recently called on Mr Dange on his way back from Delhi to Trivandrum. The CPI(M) had demanded that the Kerala Assembly be dissolved and a fresh election called as preconditions for forging a new united front. Mr Nair was reluctant to do so. He wanted the CPI(M) to join the existing Front. Mr Dange's approval of Mr Nair's stand may be taken for granted. But the CPI's presently dominant leadership is prepared to strike an agreement with the CPI(M) on the latter's terms. It is possible that the Kerala leadership will ultimately be persuaded to do so. Otherwise, the CPI's effort to be back among the Left Parties after its prolonged subservience to Mrs Gandhi may not bear fruit. Mr Rao has sought to belittle the political significance of the Congress(I). He says that there has been no understanding between the two Parties as such but that in some areas agreements have been reached between candidates of the two Parties at a personal level. It is open to question whether agreements covering most parts of the State would have been arrived at if the Party itself did not like it.

In 1964 the group that got the name CPI was admittedly bigger than the one that assumed the name CPI(M). Today, the CPI admits that the CPI(M) is the largest Left Party. Indeed, in July, when the Janata was breaking up, Mr Rao made a formal appeal to the CPI(M) to take the lead in building Left and democratic unity, an appeal that must have galled Mr Dange. The two Parties together formed Governments in West Bengal and Kerala in 1967. They were together again when they fought Mrs Gandhi's Congress early in 1969 in the midterm election in West Bengal and won a resounding victory. From around July 1969, serious trouble began in the United Front Governments. It so happened that in June that year Moscow had lined up 75 Communist Parties, including the CPI, at a world Communist conference. The CPI's representatives returned with the lesson that they must "carry further forward the ideological, political and organisational offensive against revisionists of both 'left' and 'right' varieties".

This offensive brought down the Kerala .Government headed by Mr E. M. S. Namboodiripad of the CPI-(M) in October 1969. The CPI struck a deal with Mrs Gandhi, and Mr Achutha Menon of the CPI became Chief Minister with her Party's support from outside. In the midterm election there, in 1970, the CPI and some other Parties entered into a formal alliance with Mrs Gandhi's Party and defeated the CPI(M), which was indeed the Front's sole enemy. The same Front contested and routed the CPI(M) in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections that

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were held simultaneously there in March 1977.

Mr Karunakaran of Mrs Gandhi's Party became Chief Minister but within a few months he had to quit because of disclosures about the murder of the student in police custody during Emergency when he was the United Front's Home Minister. Mr A. K. Antony took over from him. The Congress was split by Mrs Gandhi for a second time in January 1978. Mr Antony joined the Swaran Singh Congress. He resigned in protest against his Party's decision to support Mrs Gandhi in Chikmagalur, and Mr Vasudevan Nair became Chief Minister. When Mrs Gandhi split the Congress, half of the 38 Congress MLAs in the State joined her Party and left the Front. The Front, however, continued to function as a Government.

In West Bengal, Mr Ajoy Mukherjee, of the Bangla Congress, fully backed by the CPI, resigned in March 1970 and handed the State over to Central, that is Mrs Gandhi's rule. In 1971 there was an Assembly election along with the Lok Sabha elections. Mrs Gandhi's Party and the CPI came to an electoral agreement against the CPI(M). Even so, the CPI(M) emerged as the single largest Party and, with its Front partners, took 125 seats in an Assembly of 280. The CPI backed the Congress which formed a Government. This Government fell within a few months. The Governor did not give a chance to the CPI(M) to form a Government. The Centre put the State once again under its rule. In 1972, when the State was called upon to elect its Assembly for the third time in three years, the CPI was in open alliance with Mrs Gandhi's Congress. The country had not yet witnessed an election like this one. There was mass rigging and the CPI(M) and its allies were reduced to small groups in the Assembly. Mr Siddhartha Ray became Chief Minister and functioned as Mrs Gandhi's Gauleiter in the State. The two Parties worked in close cooperation in the 1977 Lok Sabha election also.

THE period from March 1970 to March 1977 was tragic for West Bengal. The administration, the police, the CRP, the BSF, armed intelligence agents and hired gangsters called "resistance forces" were deployed on a large scale to crush the CPI(M) and the Naxalites. Thousands of political workers were murdered by the guardians of law and order in a planned manner. Barbarities were perpetrated in jails and police lock-ups, too, where some 75 Naxalites were killed and about 700 maimed. With the CRP and the BSF protecting them, Congress stormtroopers moved from area to area to drive away Mrs Gandhi's opponents. This was the period when, under Mrs Gandhi's patronage, monopolists and other propertied people had full freedom to loot the country. The history of West Bengal of this period is written in the blood of young people drawn by Mrs Gandhi's forces, official and non official, open and clandestine. Undiluted fascism was in operation. No other State experienced anything of the kind not even during the internal Emergency.

Promode Dasgupta

The CPI imagined that its main foe, the CPI(M), was being effectively crushed and that this would enable it to fill the political gap that was being created. It used Communist jargon to provide justification for Mrs Gandhi's terroristic regime which was said to be fighting revisionists of both the Left and Right varieties. How valuable this support was from a Party which calls itself Communist to Mrs Gandhi's fascism! The same support was extended to her from distant Moscow, too.

In the early Sixties Mr Bhupesh Gupta had warned the undivided CPI of "an exaggerated or alarmist appraisal" of the growth of communal and Right reactionary forces because, he said, it "may lead to tailism behind the Congress and bourgeois leaders". This is precisely what the CPI reduced itself to between 1969 and 1977, and Mr Gupta himself bore no small responsibility for it.

The 1977 Lok Sabha election gave the CPI a severe jolt. Many, but not everybody, in the leadership and ranks realised that the Party had committed a grave crime against the toiling people and against Left and democratic unity which it had never ceased to mouth. At its Seventh Congress in Patna in 1968, it declared its aim to forge "a common democratic platform as an alternative to Congress policies". Within a year and a half it tied itself firmly to Mrs Gandhi's Congress and remained there for eight crucial years. At Bhatinda it recorded that "our Party's independent image was blurred and it became identified with the then ruling Congress Party". It confessed that it should not have supported internal Emergency. But, it maintained that the Party's record upto 1974 was "glorious" and that the mistakes it committed "do not invalidate the basic analysis and the main conclusions of the Party programme". Was the CPI's alliance with Mrs Gandhi a mistake? No. "The example of Kerala", it said at Bhatinda, "would call for special mention because our line of Left and democratic unity, which had been assailed by the CPI(M), stood once again vindicated by the splendid results of both the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections that took place there simultaneously (in 1977)".

This leaves the road open for the Party to an alliance with Mrs Gandhi in the future. The CPI has now taken what appears to be no more than a tactical move to be back among the Leftist Parties whose company it had given up. The documents adopted at Bhatinda were the result of a compromise between conflicting views. The Party was united only so far as bringing down the Janata Government was concerned. That objective had been achieved. In this matter the CPI can rightly claim that the CPI(M) had been forced by circumstances to become hostile to the Janata Party which it used to describe as a "friendly Party." Even when the no-confidence motion was being debated, the CPI(M) was undecided on the stand it should take.

While every group in the CPI professes to stand by the slogan of Left and democratic unity, there are sharp differences on who should be regarded as Left or democratic. These differences exist in the top leadership also. One section is represented by Mr Rajeshwara Rao and Mr Bhupesh Gupta and the other section by Mr Dange. At this moment, Mr Rao and Mr Gupta both seem to be the winners. They would have no truck with Mrs Gandhi. But Mr Dange is not a small force in the Party. The internal fight continues. What shape it will take in the future is anybody's guess.

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The CPI(M)'s realpolitik

Maybe the Party should tackle its own problems first, but the polls are important

By TARUN GANGULY

THE CPI(M) is at crossroads. The traumatic experience, following the fall of the Morarji Government, has suddenly raised the Party to the national pedestal from its regional groove. The change has resulted in stresses and strains within the Party. But in the process the CPI(M) has come out of its ideological straitjacket. The question is, can the Party adjust to the new situation?

In the election strategy spelt out by the Central Committee, the CPI(M) has promised full support for the Lok Dal–Congress combine, knowing full well the "class limitations" of the coalition partners. It has also shown an eagerness to win over the anti-authoritarian and secular forces still remaining within the Congress (I) and the Janata Party. Though the Party is still sore about CPI's role in the past decade, it the is willing to accommodate that Party within the framework of Left unity if certain conditions are fulfilled. All this indicates that the Party is ready to show enough flexibility to adjust to the changed political situation at the Centre.

This softening of its attitude towards the landlord-bourgeoisie combination of the Lok Dal–Congress and the reformist line of the CPI has already given rise to murmurs of protest within the Party. The West Bengal unit of the Party, though it has fallen in line with the national leadership, still has reservations about the Lok Dal, Congress and CPI, and this will certainly be reflected in its adjustment of seats with these Parties in the Lok Sabha elections from that State. Similarly, the Kerala unit is still sore about the CPI, which contested panchayat polls there with the support of the Congress(I). The Tripura Party is still unwilling to accommodate any CFD candidate in the allocation of seats there. I mention only these three units because the Party is well-placed in these three States.

No doubt, the CPI(M) has come a long way to make compromises with a section of the ruling class, that is the Lok Dal–Congress combine, to defeat the two major evils of authoritarianism and communalism as represented by the Congress (I) and the RSS-Jana Sangh-dominated Janata Party.

In the background of these dilemmas, the Party has a membership of 157,000. Its trade union wing CITU is 1.5 million-strong, the All-India Kisan Sabha (its peasant wing) has 2.3 million members and its student wing SFI has 400,000 members. These figures are quoted from the Salkia (Howrah) Plenum document of December, 1978. The figures show that the strength of the Party is not formidable in a country of a population of more than 650 million.

In the last Plenum, the Party found that its main problems were those of growth — "of how to draw out and enrol thousands of people who follow us and our mass organisations in daily battles". It found that there was a tendency in the Party "towards federalism" which is really the antithesis of democratic centralism, the cardinal principle of Party organisation. In the Salkia Plenum, it was admitted that the Party's growth was "severely handicapped by the Party centre's failure to fight against all alien ideologies". It found to its chagrin that there was "an abandonment of criticism and self-criticism inside the Party, depriving it of one of the important weapons of constantly rectifying itself and improving its understanding and practice". The Salkia document maintained that in a "large number of State committees there is lack of collective functioning, division of work leading to individualistic functioning. Instead of the committee, the secretary functions, leading to concentration of power, inefficiency and bureaucratism". The same document goes on to say, "rank and file members do not feel that they have a role in shaping and reshaping the Party's line and policy, they do not feel that their initiative, understanding and experience are being given proper weight." The document laments that the class composition of the Party has not changed." "Our mass leaders are not conscious of their responsibility and our Party as a whole has failed to develop the elementary class consciousness of the proletariat into socialist consciousness and attract large numbers to the Party organisation."

I have quoted copiously from the CPI(M) document to show that there is an awareness inside the Party of its shortcomings. The self-criticism made in the document is unique. But the question is, has the Party improved itself in the past ten months since the publication of the document? The answer is an emphatic "no". More so because the Party has taken up a new course without properly rectifying its past mistakes. The leadership of the Party, which came in for sharp criticism in the document, remains the same. In addition there is now the tension that has grown over the realignment that the Party has agreed to. The CPI(M) knows that the organisation is weak "except in a few pockets of the country". As late as last December, the Party observed that the sad state of the organisation was mainly because of the failure of "the central leadership of the Party, the Politburo and the Central Committee though part of it should be shared by the State committees and their secretaries as well." These candid confessions indicate that the Party is willing to rectify its position. It wants to involve the rank and file more in the decision-making process and wants them to be creative organisers rather than robots who only follow dictates.

LET US examine the position of the Party in the States. West Bengal is the main base of the Party, where it has about 40,000 members and the largest number of followers among trade unions, students and peasants. But all is not well there. In its largest unit in the State — that in 24 Parganas — nearly one-fourth of its members is sharply divided. The district committee leaders there have sharp differences with the State committee. Similar differences exist, though to a lesser extent, in other districts. All this was evident from the speeches made at the last Plenum. All this, the Party believes, can be solved if inner-Party democracy is restored.

There is a feeling in the Party that its membership is lagging behind the actual following it commands. Moreover, only five districts account for 50 per cent of the membership, while the workers for only 20 per cent.

In Kerala, though the CPI(M) is the single largest Party, it is not in a majority, according to a Party document. The document admits that political campaigning has not made any significant change in the correlation of political forces in the State. One indication of the Party's weakness there is that its mouthpiece *People's Democracy* sells more in Karnataka, where the Party is much smaller than in Kerala. In Tripura the Party has had a spectacular growth in the past two years. But the Party there has not been able to solve the Bengali-tribal conflict. In Tamil Nadu, it has failed to cope with Dravidian nationalism and in Andhra, it is still to overcome the "right revisionism" of the CPI and

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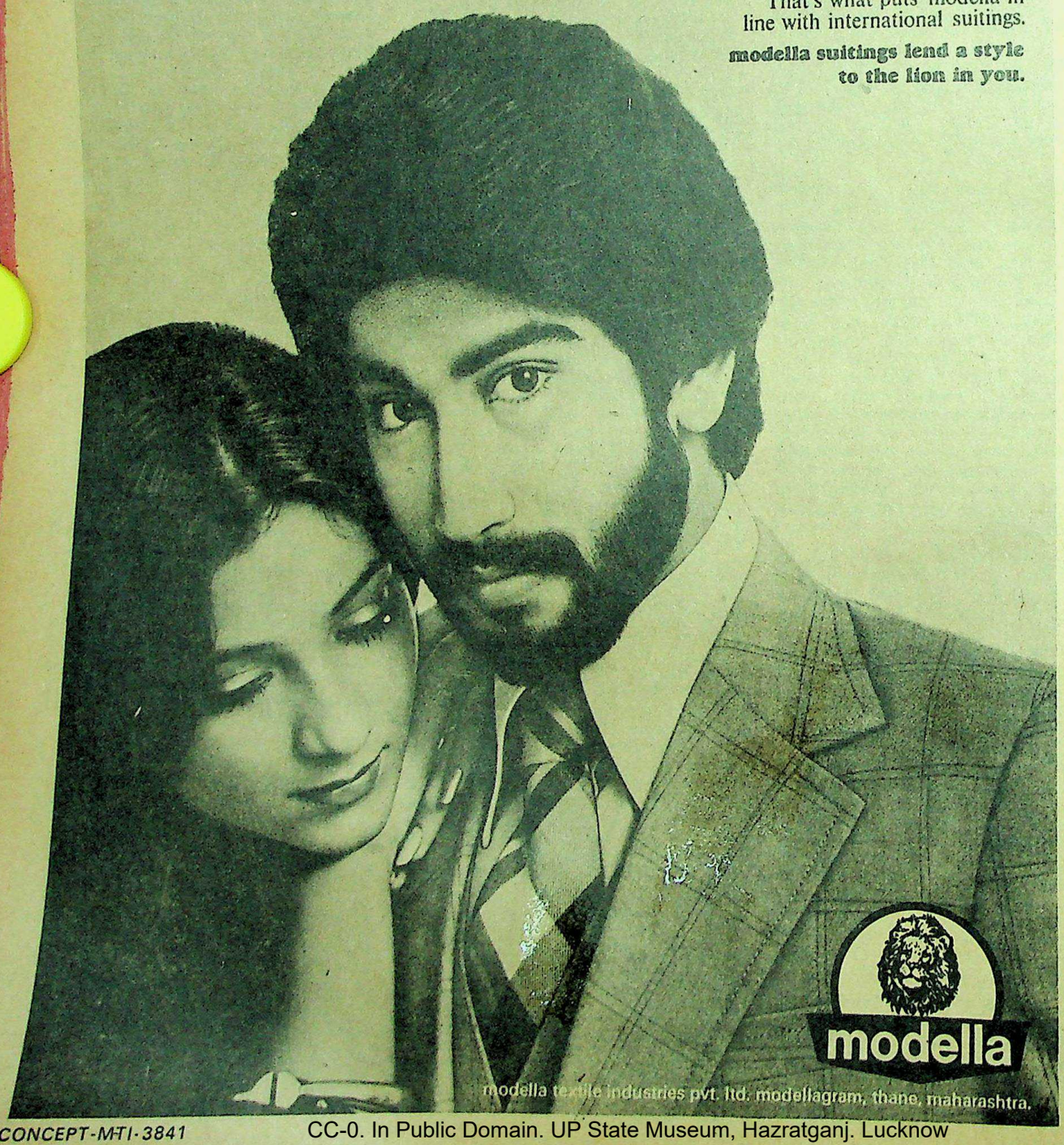

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the "Left adventurism" of the Naxalites. In Punjab, the CPI(M), but for its association with the Akalis, has failed to win over the landless labourers. For instance, the Party depends more on individual contributions for its funds. It is a victim of the landlord-bourgeoisie combine there. In the Hindi belt, the Party is almost non-existent. That is why the Party depends more on the united movement of Left and democratic forces to consolidate its position in the States of UP, Punjab, Bihar, Haryana and in Delhi. The Party frankly admits that in Bihar the CPI is a stronger force. The Bihar unit of the Party suffered from a "sectarian attitude to the movement of growing resistance to Indira Gandhi's authoritarianism".

The CPI(M) is fully aware of its weaknesses and its strength. It knows that despite an electoral adjustment with Janata (S) and Congress, it can only make marginal inroads into the Hindi belt. In the western States, Gujarat and Maharashtra, the Party is small; in Maharashtra the Party is yet to withdraw its support from the Sharad Pawar Government, which has Jana Sangh Ministers. In Rajasthan, though the Party has made some inroads into trade union movement, in electoral terms, this amounts to nothing much. The CPI(M), by extending its support to the Charan Singh camp, has taken a calculated risk. It knows that it is not strong enough to fight authoritarianism and communalism singlehanded. But it now has the stature to lead the Left Parties in a campaign to gain concessions for the masses from a section of the ruling class. In the process, the Party has lost its pristine purity, but in the bargain, it is now in realpolitik.

It is for political pundits to argue whether the CPI(M) committed a breach of trust by withdrawing its support from Morarji Desai or not. But in practical terms, the CPI(M) now can expect to gain handsomely in the elections. The Party, accordingly, has decided to field candidates who can win and in the bargain, increase its strength. The only imponderable is how the new alignment will affect the morale of the Party in States like West Bengal and Kerala, where the Party has a long tradition of anti-capitalism. Will not the cadres find it a quirk of fate to have to sell the same hated landlord-bourgeois Party candidates along with their own, to the electorate? In the next few months, the picture will be clear, but by then for the first time in Indian politics, the CPI(M) will be a major factor in electoral politics.

The Marxists' second gamble

Their first ploy failed. Will this succeed ?

By BARUN SENGUPTA

THE left and the so-called progressive forces of the country have gambled again. They had gambled quite the same way in 1969 and were completely befooled. The 1969 gamble could have sealed their fate for a long time but for a miscalculation by Mrs Indira Gandhi in 1977.

In 1969, during the great battle all the Left and so-called progressive forces of the country, except the socialists, were with Mrs Gandhi. All of them declared that the Syndicate was the biggest danger. All of them worked for the victory of Mrs. Gandhi's candidate for the Presidential post. And all of them rejoiced when he won. But for the votes of CPI(M), CPI, Forward Bloc, RSP Mrs Gandhi's political career would have received a severe jolt in that year of (dis) grace 1969.

Of course, the Leftists did not support her out of affection or love. They all expected rich dividends. They all calculated, Mrs Gandhi would have no other alternative but to depend on them for her Government's survival in Parliament. They all hoped that never in the future would the bourgeois leadership be able to rule the country alone—they will have to share power with the leftists and give major concessions to the Left movement. They were all sure that by supporting Mrs Gandhi they were furthering the cause of the Left movement in India.

How she treated the Leftists after the victory is well known. Further narration would seem unnecessary. Except for the CPI, who remained with her till she lost the 1977 election, all the Leftist Parties were completely cornered. The working class movement was brutally suppressed. And ultimately came the internal Emergency which took away the Fundamental Rights as well. The CPI, of course, remained with her in spite of all this. But alas, she made a miscalculation. She went in for a snap poll—and lost power. The Leftists, along with all the other forces of the country again got a chance to come out in the open. After that, everything went against her. The CPI and the so-called progressive forces deserted her. Even tyrants of the States started saying that she and her son were solely responsible for all the excesses of the Emergency. Most of the senior Congress leaders went over to the rival faction. Even when she won a by-election, Parliament expelled her. Devaraj Urs also turned sour and finally broke with her. The continuous series of commissions and cases was giving her hell. In the end came the Special Courts. She could see it all clearly—so long as the Janata Party and the Government remained in the saddle there was no

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way out. She knew that if she had to wriggle out of it, the Janata Party must be smashed and the Janata Government pulled down. Nothing would suit her better than a midterm poll. That would give her a chance to go to the electorate. A big section of the people still adored her. Another section was fed up with the Janata Party, Governments and leaders. She might get a majority in the Lok Sabha even by securing 40 per cent of the votes cast.

So, she concentrated all her firepower on one object—to split the Janata Party and force a midterm poll by any means before the Special Courts concluded their sessions and she was pushed to a tighter corner—just what she did in 1969. Then her one-point programme to defeat Sanjeeva Reddy and outwit the Syndicate before they would consolidate their position by having their own President.

And, as in 1969 so also in 1979—the Leftists and the so-called progressives willy-nilly helped her. She could not have defeated Sanjeeva Reddy without the help of the Leftists; she could not also have the Janata Party riven and brought down the Morarji Government without the help of the CPI (M), CPI, Forward Bloc, RSP, PWP, Madhu Limaye, George Fernandes, etc. Had the CPI (M) not decided to support Charan's no-confidence motion and had George not deserted Morarji at that early stage the Janata Government would not have fallen, the Charan Singh Government would not have been installed and a midterm poll would not have loomed large. But, did the Leftists go against the Morarji Government to help Mrs Gandhi and bring about a midterm poll? No. They thought that by bringing down the Morarji Government they would be able to strengthen the Left and progressive forces of India. They calculated that after Morarji's fall, Charan Singh would form a Government and he would largely have to depend on them. Thus he could be forced to give a lot of concessions to them. Their expectation was that it would not be difficult at all to lure away MPs from the Janata Party and Congress (I) once Charan Singh formed a Government. They were sure that after a week or so, Charan Singh would not have to lean on Mrs Gandhi's crutches any more. Till the last day, they persisted in exhorting Charan Singh: "Don't surrender to her. She has no other way but to support you now".

Alas, how wrong they were! All their calculations and expectations went awry and ultimately they had to do what Mrs Gandhi had been clamouring for the last two years—a midterm poll.

Last time, it was the cry of the Syndicate. This time it was the cry of the Jana Sangh-RSS. I am afraid, the Leftists and so-called progressives would soon realise what spells the greater danger for them at the moment. But, this time their gamble might be far too expensive. ■

Maharashtra's Marxists

The smaller groups lead the way

By OLGA TELLIS

THERE are two very distinct Left groups in Maharashtra. One is that of the traditional Left Parties like the two Communist Parties and the other is represented by Leftist groups. There are over 30 Leftist groups functioning in various parts of Maharashtra, most of them working in rural areas, who believe in the Marxist ideology and work at the grassroots level. In the context of the dynamic situation prevailing in the country today, the Leftist groups are gaining prominence over the traditional Left Parties that have become conservative and almost status quoists. In this context the small Leftist groups are acting as a catalyst for change and people's struggles.

A classic instance is of the five groups—Bhoomi Sena, Plot Dharak Sanghatana, Kashtakari Sanghatana, Kranthi Sena and Gram Swaraya Samithi. The first operates in Manor in Plaghar taluka, the second in Wada, the third in Shisne in Dhanau taluka, the fourth in Veuji in Talasari taluka and the fifth in Jawahar taluka. All these talukas are in the Thane district which has a large tribal population. The district has an area of 3.6 million hectares under forest cultivation. Poor tribals and other landless peasants driven by poverty and lack of an alternative source of income have occupied forest lands and brought it under cultivation in their effort to eke out a meagre existence. Even so, the land occupied by the landless peasant tribals is in the majority of cases, not effectively forest land, but land in the deforested zones where no thick forests exist. Thousands of such landholders who have been in possession of forest land are being cheated by the Government which went back on its promise to regularise all encroachments on forests before March 31, 1978. The divisional forest officer's office in Dhanau under whose jurisdiction tribal areas fall, refuses to release any list of persons whose encroachments have been regularised and so the future of thousands of poor peasant tribals is uncertain. The five groups wanted the Government to regularise all lands that were encroached upon at least one year before March 31, 1978.

The traditional Left Parties like the CPI and CPI(M) were content with having all land occupied till 1974 regularised. The Government too was agreeable but ever since the Left groups took the initiative, the traditional Left Parties have had to fall in line and join the struggle for land for the adivasis and tribals.

Speaking about his group, the Kashtakari Sanghatana, Nicki Cardoza says: "We started after we were disillusioned with religion and politics. We stand and struggle with the poor. Most of our members who were once in the Janata, Congress and CPI(M) realised that in all cases the Party came before people and the people were sacrificed to Party norms. During the Emergency, for instance, innumerable atrocities were perpetrated by the police, departmental people and vested interests on the adivasis and landless and the latter could not complain because any voice of protest was dubbed as defiance of authority and crushed. We were priests and we were disillusioned by the way the religious heads claimed to work for the poor but their activities helped only vested interests. For instance when we organised a strike at the Dapchari Milk Project, people went to the church to protest and the church, instead of taking up our cause, were afraid to confront vested interests and kept quiet at injustices thereby. The three principles on which we work today are swatantra, swalambi and swabimani which means freedom from exploitation, selfreliance and self-respect. Our basic functional principles are (1) janashikshan—education of the masses, which most political Parties miss (2) jana jagruti—the awakening of the masses by making them conscious of their needs, (3) jana karya—the action of the masses and (4) jana shakti—the power of the people. We have about 25 activists among whom are Rambhau Gharat, Gopal Bodle and Mrs Gulab Shanda and all adivasis, and our members and sympathisers number about 25,000."

Among the traditional Left Parties, the CPI's strongholds are in the textile, hotel, engineering and pharmaceutical sectors, spread over Bombay, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, Kandesh and parts of Kolaba and Bhir districts. In Bombay they have been working in the textile unions for 51 years and there has not been a single textile strike that has not been led by the CPI. As Mr Sardesai says, "We are not a majority force but we are the single biggest force of the working class movement in the State."

NEXT WEEK
Interviews with prominent Leftist leaders

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SPECIAL REPORT

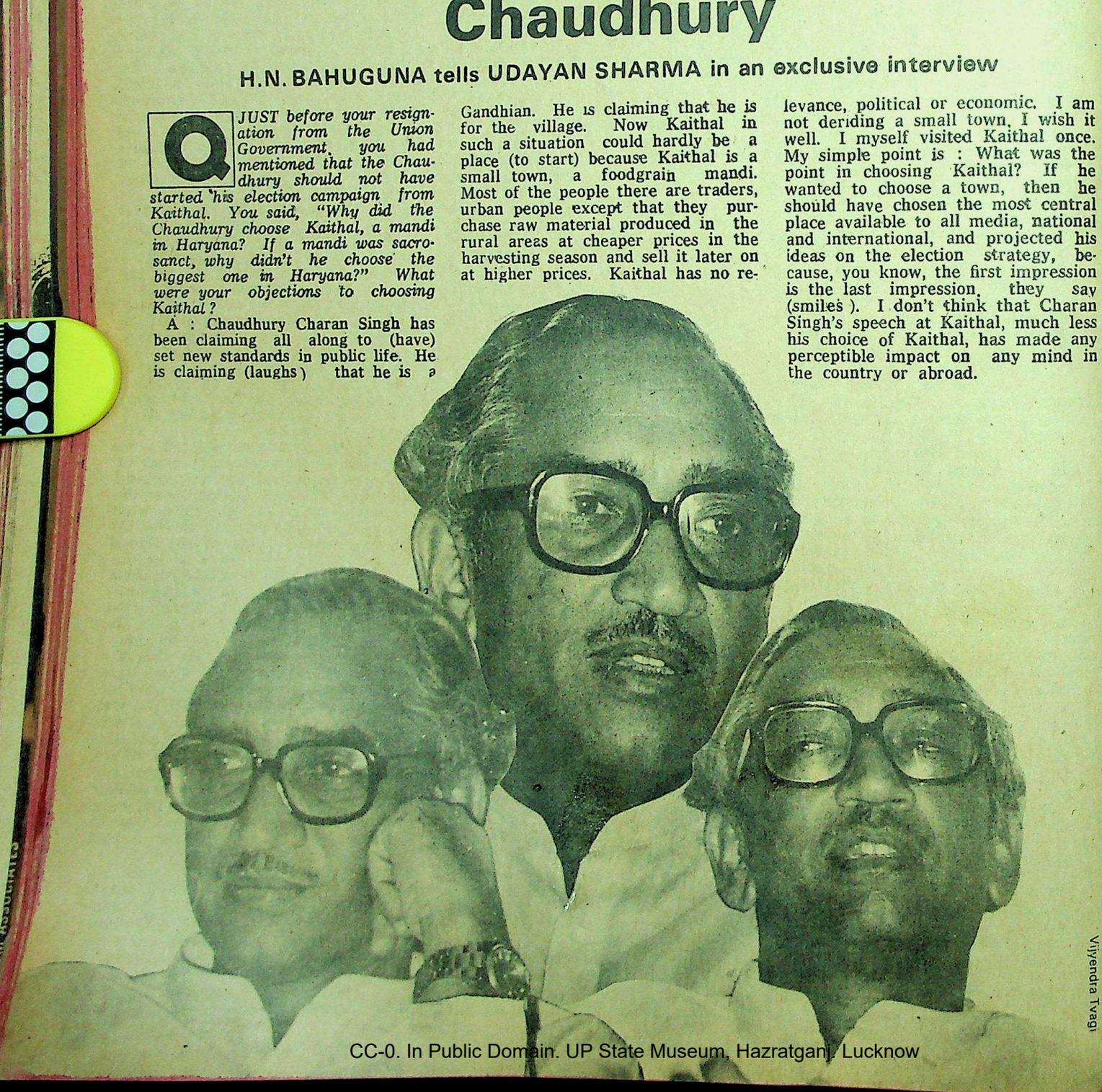
The Bahuguna story

Remaining in power is more important to the Chaudhury

H.N. BAHUGUNA tells UDAYAN SHARMA in an exclusive interview

Q JUST before your resignation from the Union Government, you had mentioned that the Chaudhury should not have started his election campaign from Kaithal. You said, "Why did the Chaudhury choose Kaithal, a mandi in Haryana? If a mandi was sacrosanct, why didn't he choose the biggest one in Haryana?" What were your objections to choosing Kaithal?

A : Chaudhury Charan Singh has been claiming all along to (have) set new standards in public life. He is claiming (laughs) that he is a Gandhian. He is claiming that he is for the village. Now Kaithal in such a situation could hardly be a place (to start) because Kaithal is a small town, a foodgrain mandi. Most of the people there are traders, urban people except that they purchase raw material produced in the rural areas at cheaper prices in the harvesting season and sell it later on at higher prices. Kaithal has no relevance, political or economic. I am not deriding a small town. I wish it well. I myself visited Kaithal once. My simple point is : What was the point in choosing Kaithal? If he wanted to choose a town, then he should have chosen the most central place available to all media, national and international, and projected his ideas on the election strategy, because, you know, the first impression is the last impression, they say (smiles). I don't think that Charan Singh's speech at Kaithal, much less his choice of Kaithal, has made any perceptible impact on any mind in the country or abroad.



Vijyendra Tyagi

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In this context, I'd like to illustrate (my point with) an example. When Gandhiji decided on the individual civil disobedience movement, he chose Vinobha Bhave as his first satyagrahi. He didn't choose the Congress president, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel or even Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He chose Vinoba Bhave. And his argument was that in choosing Vinoba Bhave, Gandhi was choosing a person who was perfectly non violent, who had no political interest whatsoever except the good of mankind. Now this difference a choice of person or place can make. If the Chaudhury had any use for my advice and he'd asked me how he should start, I think he should have made a start in the election campaign from an altogether different angle. Now the Chaudhury could have chosen Haryana as a start, of course, he could have even chosen a simple village — he should have chosen a simple village — and collected the first batch of thousand people — young — with whom he could sit for a day and give them the whole concept of India's, future dreams. Each movement in this country has ended in disillusionment. Each election has made the people more or less disillusioned. What have you and I watched during the last few years? People getting disillusioned about the establishment, ringing for a change. finding no change possible, then reverting to where they had committed a mistake — that is all. Therefore he could have told the thousand young men to go around the villages and canvass on foot, (on a) *Padaytra,* as they say. They will carry the message of the new India of his (Charan Singh's) dreams. But the whole point is whether he has his dreams. His dream is limited. his horizons are limited, his views are limited to almost the climax of antiquated, anti-village type of economic relationship. Now, that could be a new style for a Prime Minister who calls himself a Gandhian.

A village to him has primacy. I think that's one point where he is not wrong. The village has to have a primacy not because, unlike in my belief—I do not believe that there is a conflict of interest between the village and city—but because the weakest child has to be spotted out. The weak link in the chain is the village, therefore, we choose it. That public meeting in the village would have had a new type of reverberation. Going to Kaithal is like going to a *sabzi mandi.* Going to a village would be different, and going to a village would regenerate in the hearts and minds of villagers a hope that an era has dawned. There are, first, (things) to be decided for a public meeting. It should have been properly organised. Second, the content of the speech should have been proper. What type of society does the Chaudhury want? What type of village does he want? What type of land relationship does he want? What tvpe of education does he want to have? What type of socio-economic structure does he want to have? What type of relationship between the producing class and the rest does he envisage? What type of economic order does he want to usher in? We have all talked of new education, but what is new education has yet to be defined.

The Chaudhury should have tackled science and technology. For example, even upgrading of cattle today without proper, artificial insemination is an impossibility. It will take at least a thousand years if you have to change your cows, buffalos and milch-yielding cattle, or beef cattle—I won't say beef, but meat cattle. Somebody would take objection to that. If you want to change that progeny, if you want to change their naturalised pedigree then you would have to depend on having semen samples, properly built, having artificial insemination, and therefore having cylinders carrying liquid nitrogen which will be able to keep the sperm alive in the semen, kept for being injected into various animals. Because taking one cow, a she-buffalo to a bull or a he buffalo does not produce all superior types. Similarly, artificial insemination does not. But in the case of artificial insemination six efforts may succeed out of ten. The dose of semen which issues once from a bull is enough to inseminate hundreds of she animals. Now, the Chaudhury should have talked of what he is going to do about animal husbandry, of how he is going to remove rural poverty. He should have been able to tell how he is going to upgrade. (the animals). It's not enough to say that artisans must be helped. He must have been able to say how he is going to help the fisherman, how he is going to help the *kumhar,* the village potter, who today does not find even earth to make his earthen pots. During the Zamindari (system) the *kumhars* were allotted land by the zamindars—that you can pick up your earth from here, subject to sanction of the village. After the abolition of zamindari, everything rests with the Gaon Sabha. Its head is interested in money or sometimes charges so exorbitantly that there is poor demand. Then he should have said that in our colleges for art and craft whether the selection will be made from among the sons and daughters of the rich people who are interested in art and craft or from among the sons and daughters of those who had kept to the traditional arts of India, as it is done by the *kumhars,* the potter man, the prajapati, as we call him. He should have been able to say what he is going to do—whether Union Carbide will continue to have the licences for processing prawns which it had got earlier or whether the fishermen who helped to get these prawns will by the process gain something.

He should have been able to say whether he will allow continuance of these banks to lose money and get bad debts. I will give you an example. I was studying a paper on Bengal. I found out that in Bengal all banks together distribute Rs 700 crores annually as credit to the industrial sectors. In terms of the policy and social objectives laid down by the Government, one per cent of this money must go for (loans on) differential interest rates. That means loans upto Rs 200-300, or a maximum of Rs 1,000. Now, who are the people who gain by this money—the pheriwallas, the small shopkeepers, the small fruitseller who today gets loans every morning from the money lenders at exorbitant rates. This three per cent differential interest rate was created for these poor people in the hope that they will get it. Now, in Bengal I have found out that the bad debts of banks is more than Rs 8 crores every year from the industrial sector. Rs 8 crores every year can be tolerated by the banks as bad debts from the industrial sector. but they are scared to distribute Rs 7 crores to the proorer sections of the people. I think Rs 7 crores can be absorbed by Calcutta's small peddlers. The vegetable, fruit and meat peddlers, provided the banking institutions have the will or the courage or the direction or, if I may say so, if we could generate in them the will, give them the vision, and the Government kept a very vigilant eye on these big people who have become the chairmen of the banks to see that they do their jobs, that have not been dutifully done. They will lose Rs 8 crores, but not distribute Rs 7 crores where recoveries are 98 per cent. If that Rs 7 crores would have been distributed, it would come back to the exchequer to the extent of 98 per cent and the bad debt would have been two per cent, which will be hardly anything. Two per cent of Rs 7 crores is not even Rs 20 lakhs. They are afraid of losing Rs 14 lakhs, they are not afraid of losing Rs 7 crores.

Has the Chaudhury been able to explain and spell out these ideas or any new ideas about the new society? He keeps on simply talking about the correct human style. Now, what was his intention? How did he try to meet this hostility of the Press? I would agree the Press is hostile at times. But, like the administration, the Press is also managed by human beings, and as it goes wrong, the administration can go wrong. The Press also may go amiss sometimes. You cannot, therefore, say that the whole Press is bad. He could have made a speech saying that what he said to the Press was to fan out more and more into the rural areas, study the people's ideas, project the Government's weaknesses, say where the policies have gone wrong, say where the promises to the weaker sections of the people have not been realised, made an in-depth study of the life—like in the USA—to root out corruption. to go deep into it, to get into the job. After all, the whole Nixon affair was found out by the study and reports made by some journalists. Now the Chaudhury claims to be the crusader of a faction. Will he invite the Press to join in that crusade? The Press will be a very, very good help to him in that crusade. Of course, the Press

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may get a bit wild. The Press may go off on a tangent but that doesn't mean that he shouldn't do his job. He could have said, I appeal to the Press to help me in my crusade for this. But he said that the BLD was being squeezed out of the power structure, 'my friends were being squeezed out of the power structure, I was being squeezed out of the power structure'. What does that mean? He places more importance on this notion than the nation's malady. His remaining in power is more important than the setting of the national scenario in the context of the international scenario. And to that extent I disagree totally with the Chaudhury's choice, of place, of words and of scene at Kaithal. It is uninspiring.

Q: You were a member of the caretaker Ministry for about two months. How could you say that the Government did not know the signs of its very existence?

A: Well, all I said was that the attribute of the Government is that it should be able to command. Now I leave it to your judgment of whether we made any perceptible change in the sliding disease which this Government had with regard to its capability to govern. It didn't take any step or do anything to make people feel that we are capable of governing this country. A number of steps could have been taken, a number of areas could have been identified. Did the Chaudhury take the decision? Was the decision available to the Cabinet? Did the administration ever change? Really speaking, from my personal experience—I am not letting out a secret —but I am telling you that I have been witness to, Secretaries telling me frankly—not in my department, but a number of Secretaries—that this Government was a quirk of the latest political situation in the country. They never looked upon it as an authentic will of the people of India to go in a direction. However, it was helpless. Nobody could have given it the legitimacy that it needed to assert itself. But at the same time the Chaudhury could have taken a number of steps if he acted effectively in the matter of curbing the inordinate delay, or, if I may say so, mismanagement which the Government is responsible for. If he had done something good with regard to the history text books immediately on his appointment as Prime Minister, the history books withdrawn by the Janata Government, which gave India a perspective of composite culture. If he had thought of appealing to scientists and technocrats and got them together to help us in this energy crisis. It he had moved into directions new, and even talked to the editors of newspapers, journalists, senior journalists— I wonder if he had a single Press conference since he joined as Prime Minister. I have my grave doubts. I would say there is no substitute for a Press conference, here you come face to face, meet the real media.

If he had given a lead to students for the future, or even to the villagers. Look, he could not even have a committee on drought. Any wise Prime Minister would call every political Party leader and say, friends, we are facing an unprecedented drought, what are your suggestions? With great difficulty, he called a Chief Ministers' conference and all that he did was to quarrel with the Chief Ministers and tell some of them that though you talk of revolution, you have done nothing in this heartland. I don't say that he should not have said what he said. My point is a Prime Minister at a conference does not quarrel. Prime Ministers create consensus, not conflict. Therefore, he didn't appear to govern at all. the semblance of Government which had withered away during the Janata rule could not be restored.

Q : After your resignation, you made a strange allegation against the PM, by raising the questions of Kampuchea and Israeli cows. I presume, when you joined the Chaudhury's Government, you already knew about the limitations and basic approach of the PM. You joined the Government without forcing any programme but started to bargain after some ime. Wasn't this unfair?

I will not give up my basic value system for the kingdom of heaven

A: Well, though those that have come to power to bargain see in everybody a bargainer, I would not like to remind the people I never bargained for any position with the Chaudhury when I helped him to upset the applecart of Hindu fanatics from the Central administration. My witnesses are the Chaudhury's own men. I am willing for a confrontation with anyone, but I would like to say clearly that be it Devi Lal, be it Karpoori Thakur, be it S. N. Mishra, be it Raj Narain, if any of them is willing to make a public statement on the nature of the bargain that I was making all along the line. I was helping them to overthrow communalism.

Of course, this is not a standard for the Chaudhury for public behaviour — he bargains before he does something. But I did not do so. After that, all that I was bargaining for was principles, ideas, and programmes. Did I, at any point of time, ask the Chaudhury or his friends to give me some more seats in the Cabinet? Did I, at any point of time, say that unless they gave me those seats I would quit? I only said that I will not merge with you and the condition for my merger was exactly what you have said in the earlier part of your question. It was becoming clearer and clearer that Chaudhury Charan Singh had neither the comprehension, nor the will nor the political philosophy by which the socio-economic changes taking place all over the world, as understood by him, was being made relevant to the efforts of the Indian polity moving towards a new direction. When I joined him, I joined him on a limited question — let nobody be in doubt — recall the early August joint statement of Charan Singh and Bahuguna in which we said our differences with regard to national issues are too well-known to be repeated. That indicates we joined hands to fight the common enemy as the common enemy has been identified.

I think at that point of time the paramount duty of any patriot was to do this minimum basic thing of throwing away the communal impact on the Central administration. It would be unfair to say that I joined them in spite of knowing them. It was as good as Gandhi joining all hands, or the Congress in the struggle for freedom (when) all factions of the people loved to join in (the fight) against a common enemy. So that was all. The limited purpose of our alliance was this. I wanted to expand it into the social, economic and foreign affairs fields. There was resistance and that's why came the break. Because I wouldn't then merge.

Q : Don't you feel that your political sharpness has become the bane of your career?

A : Well, that's what some people tell me but then I say that it is not the ideal for me to keep on angling for position by blunting the edge of my views, or ideas or ideologies. If having ideas and ideologies is called political sharpness or manoeuvrability, I'm afraid, I cannot help it. I will not give up my basic value system for the kingdom of heaven.

Q : Now, what do you have to say about the so-called Bahuguna formula regarding Congress unity?

A : I must say I never gave any formula. It's true, I will not hide it. Long ago, sometime in September-October 1977, the idea was mooted by many of us. I won't name all the friends — some of them are in Janata today, some of them are outside Janata today. When we thought that all the Congressmen elected on the Congress ticket — 150 may be brought into the Janata fold. And my belief was that this would be a polarisation in which all those people whose origin was in the freedom struggle, who belong to that stock, not only Congressmen, be it Socialists, be it the BLD people, be it the CFD people or other types of people, all of these people would join. Our basic premise was : a very good theoretician friend who is still in the Janata, his basic theory was that let the basic stock from the freedom struggle combine today to give viability to this country because (people were) disillusioned with the Janata because it became a northern Party, because the communal element in the Janata Party was becoming dominant. The people of this country had never accepted the Janata Government as (having legitimacy) beyond the Vindhyas. So

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we saw that if these people who are also trying to fight certain elements within the Congress, if they could join then a new type of political force could merge. Having come to a dead end because of the unwillingness of the people that were in power at that point of time, we stopped talking about it.

This clamour for (the rights of) backward classes originates from the misconception that a few services here and there will yield the results. Has corruption lessened in the administrative apparatus with the influx of other castes than the upper castes getting into the services? Wherever reservation has been made, has that made any perceptible change? I am not opposed to reservation, let me not be misunderstood. What I am saying is unless the basic value system changes, we cannot wish away corruption by a change of men. Unless the basic approach or the class character of the Government changes — and this doesn't mean caste character of the Government but the class character of the Government. Which is the class you want to serve? Which is the type of society you want to build? Unless these ideas are clear nothing will happen. Similarly, a gang-up of men has never won. It is not the number that has made the difference in the world. It is always ideas, the ideologies which have made the difference. Now, nearer home, in the 1971 and 1977 elections do you think organisation won it? Do you think gang-ups of men won the elections? In 1971 the entire range of stalwarts was on one side. There was no organisation, I was general secretary of the Congress at that time and I know what organisation we had. Therefore, this uniting Congressmen will be another empty dream.

We have to unite on ideas and nobody is willing to spell out those ideas. Now today's (October 28) morning papers carry a story of some thought emerging in the mind of the Prime Minister for calling on his alliance partners to start working on a common minimum programme. A thing which should have been done, a thing I have been asking for, a thing which I asked him (for) in writing, orally. All our alliance partners, let us sit together. A leadership which can't even think of calling friends for a common poll strategy can hardly be expected to form a common minimum programme. This country needs a basic change, a basic break with its past feudal and capitalist character and if that can come, if those ideas can emerge not just talking of revolution, not merely saying that the sharecroppers shall not be dispossessed of the land he is tilling. The land relationship has to be finally settled, land goes to the tillers. Therefore I have told Chaudhury Sahab when he asked me to merge that it will be a gang-up bereft of basic ideological orientation. I talked of a number of things in land reforms. I thought, the Prime Minister till (this) day has talked of tardy land reforms. Did he go beyond that? What would, according to him, be the correct type of land reforms? I just spelt out that. He excels in in negativism. I identified the tardiness in land reforms and I told him what he should do. Beginning with imparting rights in Bihar, conferring full rights of possession of the sharecroppers in Bengal, conferring full rights of ownership on the landless people who have been given land under the ceilings act in Karnataka. I have been telling him about weeding out these cooperative societies, these so-called cooperative societies, and distributing land to the real landless people or forming cooperatives of the real landless people. I told him, make your Government implement the Vishwanath Committee's recommendations which I had started but failed to discharge, no doubt because I was elbowed out by vested interests by carrying all sorts of stories even to the (former) Prime Minister, telling her that I was a challenge to her power. Essentially, I was a challenge to the vested interests. Therefore positivism is the need of the hour. Gang-up Congressmen, unite Socialists, for what? For which objective? Unless that is clear, nothing will happen. Therefore I have no formula but a formula of unity of minds.

Charan Singh excels in negativism

Q : Don't you feel Devaraj Urs' negative approach of uniting all Congressmen against Mrs Gandhi will only help Mrs Gandhi?

A : The more we gang up without clear ideas, beliefs and set out basic objectives, the more advantage will accrue to anyone who is opposed to the establishment. Since she happens to be the one opposed to the establishment, the advantage is bound to go to her.

Q : What is the basic difference in approach between Babu Jagjivan Ram, Chaudhury Charan Singh and Mrs Indira Gandhi?

A : One knows how to talk politics, the other knows how to talk and use politics, the third one doesn't know how to talk politics and, much less, how to use politics.

Q : At the moment it seems you will not merge with either the Lok Dal or the Congress. What are your options?

A : Well, I have to think of it. Yes, I will not merge with the Lok Dal. But there have been talks, discussions, negotiations recently between the Congress, CPI(M), CPI and myself. I am waiting for those results before taking my time to plan. But I must tell you, I will work for ideas, not merely ideas but for the implementation of those ideas. And for the remaining part of my life — which I treat as five to seven to ten years, at most — I will crusade for those ideas and the implementation thereof rather than seek power and position.

Q : Suppose CPI, CPI(M) and Congress don't accept your 31-point programme, and all of a sudden Mrs Gandhi says okay, I'm ready to implement your programme, what will you do?

A : Well the first point, I have been a little shocked by reading this morning's newspapers : Mr Devaraj Urs has offered publicly that he will choose the good points out of the 31 points. To me, each of the 31 points is a cardinal principle of my faith. Those 31 points find their origin in the past promises of the Congress while it was struggling for freedom. Therefore it has a national sanction. It is a sanction much higher than the normal Parliamentary sanction. It was a promise sanctified by the blood and sacrifices of millions of our brave people. No, I do not know if Mr. Devaraj Urs has read all the 31 points because there is nothing bad in those 31 points. The 31 points are an integrated picture of the Indian economy, its polity and its foreign connections. They barely state the principles, not the body. Each one is a direct thesis. It appears to me that Urs has not liked some of them, obviously, that's why he doesn't support some of them. Gandhiji used to say, I am willing to join hands with anyone if he serves the national purpose. But this is a hypothetical question that you have raised and I don't think it's time for .....I will have to see the background, the nature of the offer made in the light of past experiences, find out the worthiness thereof.....I can come to any conclusion.

Q : How do you see Devaraj Urs' politics in Delhi. The president of the Congress is trying to fight against communal forces. He is aligning with Charan Singh's Lok Dal, CPI, CPI(M) and Socialists against the Janata Party dominated by the RSS, In the south he is clandestinely adjusting with the Janata Party in Karnataka.

A : I share the anxiety which is inherent in your question. I have made these points plain to Mr. Devaraj Urs. My fears and their basis have already been conveyed. I'm convinced that opportunistic alliances are bound to fail. I'm not saying that he is doing so. Let me make that very clear. It is not that he has told me that he's doing so. The stories emanating from the Press remain uncontradicted till they die. That there might be local adjustment of seats with the Janata in a number of States beginning with Kerala right up to Maharashtra and Gujarat. In Kerala and Tamil Nadu it is already there now. In Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra...and now has come the story of Bengal also. All this is going to happen. That would embarrass the alliance partners not only in those States but also in the rest of the country and the balance of advantage will go to one who is fighting at least clearly in the battle. ■

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Too clever by half?

By TARUN GANGULY

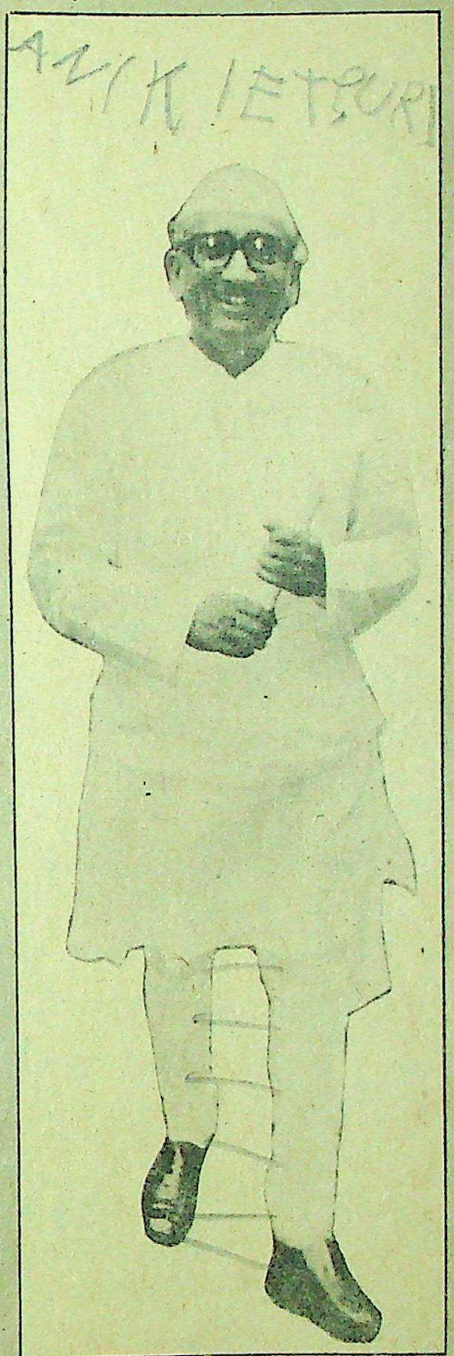
MR Hemavati Nandan Bahuguna has come full circle. By severing links with Mrs Gandhi on the fateful morning of February 3, 1977, he took a dramatic place upfront in national politics. But call it an irony or a quirk of fate, on October 19, 1979, the second non-Congress Prime Minister, Mr Charan Singh, asked him to quit the Central Cabinet.

Mr Bahuguna, whom his political detractors prefer to call *Natwarlal*, is generally considered too sharp both by his political foes and friends. And this cleverness according to his critics has become the bane of his career. So far, he has been able to hitch himself to various bandwagons to remain in political limelight since he knows that left to himself he is not a winning force, at least in Parliamentary elections. He flourishes in the company of a stronger force. Mr Bahuguna, a shrewd judge of himself and those around him, cleverly convinced Babu Jagjivan Ram of the necessity of leaving Mrs Gandhi in 1977. And that sealed the fate of Mrs Gandhi.

But it appeared that Mr Bahuguna was losing his sure touch when the disintegration of the Janata Party started in the monsoon session of Parliament last July. After initial dithering, Mr Bahuguna, against his better judgment, joined Charan Singh. He was certain that he would be able to outfox his old rival in UP politics, Chaudhury Charan Singh. But the tension was visible all the time. Things almost came to a crisis point when despite pressure from Madhu Limaye, Raj Narain and Biju Patnaik to merge his CFD with the Lok Dal on September 26, Bahuguna refused to do so.

Bahuguna survived the September tussle by asking for some more time. He told Charan Singh's emissaries that his name had not been cleared by the Prime Minister, who had termed him a KGB agent. In the process he cleverly forgot that he had also described the Prime Minister as unsound of mind. Charan Singh immediately said that he had been misinformed by Morarji Desai, but of course the Chaudhury did not fully withdraw the allegations.

In the next phase Bahuguna convened a stage-managed meeting of his CFD. Three groups in his own Party, which had neither a flag, nor a constitution nor any ideology, proposed three different things. One group suggested merger with Lok Dal, another with Congress (I) and a third one preferred to go it alone. This indecision amply suited Bahuguna, and he kept the final word pending. All these goings-on in Bahuguna's camp only angered Chaudhury Charan Singh and made him doubtful about Bahuguna's intentions. Through Raj Narain, he opened a dialogue with the Shahi Imam to gauge Bahuguna's much vaunted support among the Muslims.



Vijyendra Tyagi

But the National political scene was becoming clouded all the time. The CPI(M), which had almost got the Kerala Government on a platter, over-reached itself and in the process became isolated in Kerala politics. Meanwhile, Mrs Gandhi's camp was gaining strength. She had successfully manoeuvred the DMK into her fold in Tamil Nadu. In Karnataka, Devaraj Urs fort was showing signs of wear and tear and Maharashtra and Gujarat had become ripe for her to pluck.

Bahuguna now started assessing his position. The situation took a weird turn when it was reported that the Russians considered that only Mrs Gandhi could provide a stable Government in the country. The story goes that a senior leftist leader, who had been to Moscow, found the Russians very warm about Mrs Gandhi. Did that tilt Bahuguna towards Mrs Gandhi? Sources close to the Bahuguna camp say that he had made up his mind to ditch Charan Singh on the Diwali day. Charan Singh too was becoming doubtful about Bahuguna's ulterior motives. So before Bahuguna could jump off the Chaudhury bandwagon, Charan Singh asked him to resign. And that left Bahuguna no choice but to leave.

It will remain a mystery for some time to come whether Bahuguna really had made up his mind to quit at the instance of the Russians or not. But protagonists of this theory say that in the Russian assessment Mrs Gandhi is likely to secure 200-odd seats on her own and with Bahuguna's support the figure could considerably increase. Regarding the CPI's alliance with the Lok Dal, the propounders of the theory say that the CPI is the Trojan horse in the Lok Dal camp, destined to bolt out towards Mrs Gandhi after the elections. But then these are the imponderables in politics about which there cannot be any clear-cut answer at this stage.

After his removal from the Union Cabinet, Mr Bahuguna tried to persuade Mr Fazlur Rahman, Labour Minister and the only other CFD minister, to resign. Rahman however did not agree to the idea. He says, "where is the CFD? It died with the merger of the Party with Janata Party on May 1, 1977." Some of the CFD Ministers in the UP cabinet tried to persuade Rahman at Bahuguna's behest but they also drew a blank. When Bahuguna called for a meeting of the CFD, Rahman left for Calcutta to avoid the meeting.

Mr Bahuguna knows that the Congress (I) is now more under the grip of Sanjay Gandhi than ever before. And Bahuguna's bitter relations with Sanjay need hardly be recalled. Secondly, people like Kamalapati Tripathi and N. D. Tiwari of UP do not want Bahuguna in their own backyard. That means Bahuguna will find it difficult within the Congress (I) at present even if be goes there.

Realising the tight corner he is in, Bahuguna floated the idea of bringing all Congressmen together, including Babuji. Jagjivan Babu has already spurned this suggestion. Bahuguna could conceivably get out of the mess by joining the Congress, but will that be good enough for Bahuguna?

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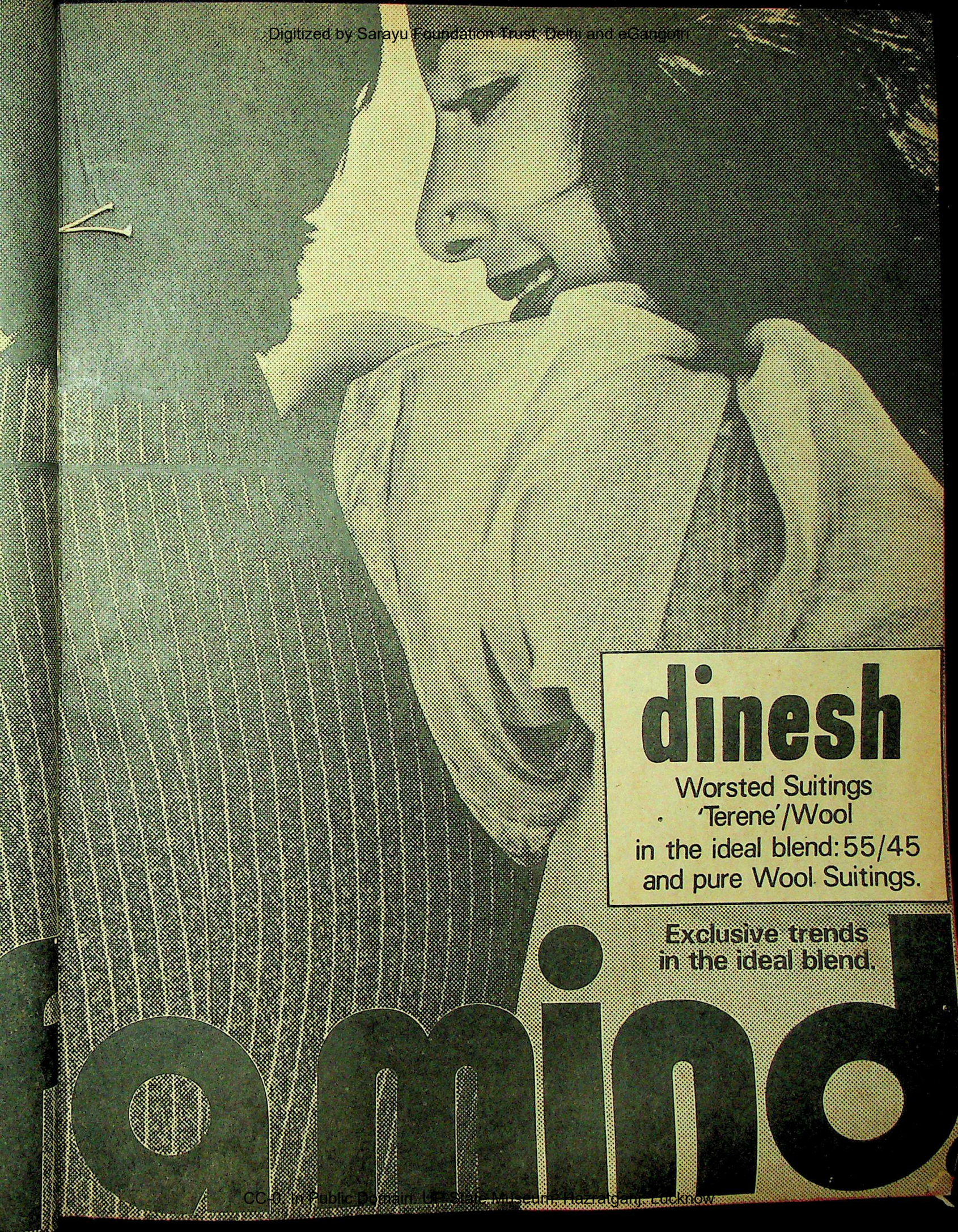

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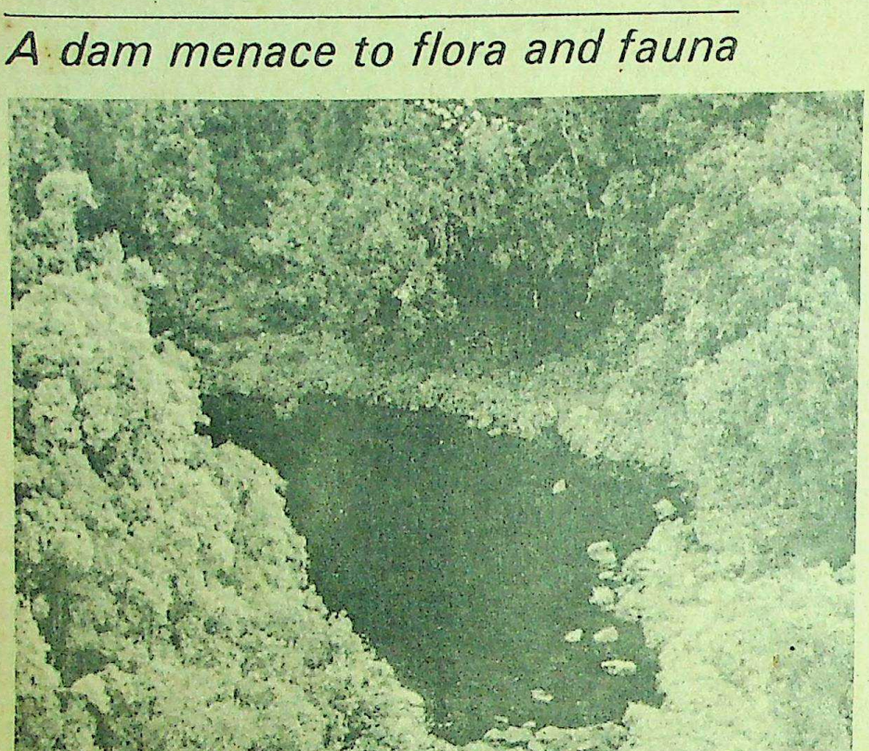
Scream of Silent Valley

A dam menace to flora and fauna



T. M. Rangarajan

A view of the Silent Valley

THERE is good news for those who have been fighting for the scrapping of the Silent Valley project, since the Centre has decided to ask Kerala to abandon the project totally, keeping in view the ecological danger it poses and the negligible benefits it is likely to provide. The Central Government is said to be willing enough to finance an alternate project for the needs of power of the State. This decision has thus brought to an end the struggle by some ecology enthusiasts which took concrete shape on August 30, when the Kerala High Court accepted a rather unusual plea by Mr Joseph John of the "Friends of the Trees" organisation, and issued a stay order on the implementation of the controversial Silent Valley project. This Rs. 50-crore project, though the costs are likely to escalate rapidly, is expected to produce 60 MW (522 MU of energy) of electric power and irrigate 10,000 hectares of land in the backward region of Malabar in Kerala. The hydro-electric project will require 1,022 hectares of land, including 950 hectares of evergreen forests. The 430-metre long and 130-metre high concrete arch-dam will create an artificial lake with a head of 857 metres, the highest in Kerala. The project will generate power at minimum cost.

Though the project was first mooted in 1940, genuine interest was taken since 1965. The Kerala Electricity Board, however, kept delaying it as it was already involved in another multi-purpose project at Idukki. Meanwhile, ecologists and conservationists, led by such experts as Salim Ali, Zafar Futehally and Romulus Whitaker began campaigning against the proposed rape of the Silent Valley, also described as the "50 million year old biological cradle."

"We cannot afford ecological luxury", commented Vasudevan Nair, Kerala's ex-Chief Minister when he received a note from David Munro, director general of the International Union For Conservation of Nature, requesting the State Government to "save the Silent Valley". A number of organisations like World Wildlife Fund and Natural History Society, have also registered their protests. Recently "Friend of the Earth Society" of Malaya made a request through its Government, asking Prime Minister Charan Singh to pressurise the Kerala Government to give up the project. But as the State Government has reportedly already spent about Rs. two crores on this scheme, it is unlikely that the project will be given up. Mr Nair, Kerala's CPI Chief Minister made it abundantly clear that regardless of aid from the Centre, his State will implement the project as early as possible.

To the "power-starved", agriculturally backward community in Malabar, the project appears to be a boon; the farmers of this region have been agitating for it for the last two decades. All political Parties have supported the idea of a hydro-electric project in this region. Objections raised by well-known ecologists and conservationists have been often interpreted as irrelevant pleas to save the ecological balance for purely aesthetic reasons. And for the Communist Party of India, the project has become a prestige issue. CPI leaders in Malabar openly laugh at the idea of "putting-up-monkeys-before-men", and elsewhere CPI workers are threatening to rouse public opinion against ecologists. "If they can collect one hundred signatures against this project in a week, we can collect one lakh signatures for it within three days", a CPI spokesman told this correspondent. Some students of Palghat who have been trying to educate the public to fight against the project, are frustrated. "They want to become rich overnight. They don't realise that the project is intended to be completed only by 1985 if everything moves smoothly." This is due to "Dubai mentality", according to a student leader. "All of a sudden in Kerala, we have a new class, the 'Dubai' or 'Kuwait' class. And everybody has become crazy after the fast buck".

"Some of the politicians know that we ecologists are not just concerned about animals and birds", says M. K. Prasad, biologist and activist of the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP). "But they're scared to face the truth. What if the next generation is going to suffer? By then, most of them would've retired from public life. They don't realise that the damage done to ecology can never be repaired. And some of the scientists too, seem to be as ignorant about ecological balance. And they seem to

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think that the controversy regarding the Silent Valley project is unnecessary."

The Silent Valley contains India's only substantial stretch of tropical evergreen forests, the habitat of many complex and botanical species. Most of the animals living in the interior forests depend on vegetable food reserves: among the mammals, the arboreal species (living on tree-tops) are more abundant than terrestrial ones in this region.

"The lion-tailed macaque (monkey), the Nilgiri, langur (ape) and the giant squirrel are so acclimatised to the environment of the valley that tampering with the ecological balance will force them into extinction", says Mr M. K. Prasad. "The lion-tailed macaque is of extreme importance in understanding the biological and social evolution of man. It is a rain-forest dweller which can't adapt itself to any new environment. Its extinction will mean the loss of one more link in the chain of evolution. Some politicians have suggested the removal of rare animals from the valley to a well maintained zoo", moans Mr Prasad. "When I was trying to impress upon a politician about the rich reserve of medicinal plants here, he at once said, 'can't you sow the seeds in a number of gardens and have many more such plants?'

Apart from mouthing populist sentiments, the Kerala Government had also sought to discredit the conservationists by claiming that the Silent Valley is indeed not a virgin forest, that illicit tree-felling and smuggling has been going on here since 1914. "This is like a plea for continuing rape on the ground that virginity has not been preserved", noted an editorial in the *Hindu*. And then there's this argument that the natural riches of the valley are not exclusive. The report of the multi-disciplinary survey team, led by geologist P. K. Thampi, states that several new species of animals, insects, flowers were noticed by the 11-member team which surveyed only 425 sq. km. of this area recently. "If a more extensive and thorough survey is not conducted before the dam is constructed, it would be difficult to say later what has been lost", P. K. Thampi adds. According to T. S. N. Moorthy a beautiful, non-poisonous snake has also been discovered. This snake wants to be carried away even by a man who attacks it!

That only one-tenth of the Silent Valley is being used for the dam is yet another specious justification put forward by the Kerala Government. But ecologists fear that elimination of even a tiny fraction of a virgin forest can prove disastrous and disturb the natural balance. The heart of the Silent Valley forests where the dam will be constructed, performs a very important function: it regulates the water supply to the plains, by retaining rainwater in the sub-soil and releasing it slowly. In this way the hydrologic balance is maintained. This averts floods and droughts in the plains. Soil erosion too is prevented and the climatic condition of the whole region is maintained.

"There are already complaints that standing crops in the villages around the forests are being raided by wild animals", adds M. K. Prasad. "Wild boar and porcupine are the most menacing among them: cattle lifting by tiger has also been reported. All this is due to the preliminary work on the dam site. Further pressure on and persecution of wild life by the inhabitants in the centre of all forests would force them out into the fringes of the forests. Already the crops in Mukkali colony have been trampled by elephants".

In 1970, the task force of the National Committee for Environmental Planning and Co-ordination (NCEPC), under the leadership of Zafar Futehally made a study of the Silent Valley and expressed serious reservations over the hydro-electric project. However it made a "serious mistake" by suggesting a number of safeguards in case the Kerala Government persisted with it. Around the same time, the Kerala Forest Research Institute too studied the situation, and in unequivocal terms cautioned the Government against plundering the valley. The Kerala Government seems to have suppressed this report.

The safeguards suggested by the task force were given great publicity by the Kerala Government, as it claimed to have the greatest concern for minimising the loss to the forests. They include: no colonies for staff and labour will be constructed within the boundaries of the reserved and protected forest areas. After the execution of the project, only the minimum maintenance staff shall be allowed to stay at the project site, provided they (a) will not keep cattle and goats, (b) will not bring any land under agricultural cultivation and (c) will assist fully in forest fire protection measures. No gun licences should be given in the project area. The project should provide funds and place them at the disposal of the Kerala Forest Department for compensatory afforestation of an area equivalent to that used by the hydro-electric project in the Silent Valley.

The safeguards do not provide any effective guarantee against certain climatological threats to the region. "Those who have favoured the project try to tell us that the requirements of human beings are more important than the preservation of a few monkeys and trees but they do not understand the ecological stability of these forests is crucial to the economy of the region", says M. K. Prasad. According to him this stability depends on the maintenance of the tree-cover.

The task force constituted by the NCEPC stated that if the present trees are replaced by others for silvicultural or horticultural purposes, or are removed for any other reason, the top soil will be washed away in one single monsoon. Following its denudation the land will become unproductive for any agricultural purpose. Such havoc has already been wrought at Idukki. Though this project began only in 1967, the approach road was constructed in 1954, allowing unrestrained encroachment and by the time the project was completed, the natural forest around it had vanished and the micro-climatic conditions underwent dramatic changes. The summer heat is now as intense as in the plains. Landslides are more frequent during monsoons and wells and ponds in the area dry up quickly in summer. "The Kerala Government may be serious on safeguards but how can one expect the officials of the Electricity Board to have genuine concern for ecology", Mrs Rukmani Arundale had said.

The report by KSSP also seeks to question the benefits that would accrue from the project. The report says: "The project envisages irrigation facility for about 10,000 hectares: irrigation has meaning only if it can give the required amount of water, at the required place and the required time. The experience so far does not indicate any possibility of realising all these three requirements simultaneously. Only where lift irrigation has been resorted to, has it been possible to assure water supply for irrigation. Lift irrigation requires either diesel engines or electric motors to lift water. The former is costly and has often proved to be unreliable because of the irregular supply of diesel. The latter has not proved altogether successful due to interruptions in power supply, unsatisfactory services and inadequacies in distribution".

What are the alternative sources for the immediate supply of power to the Malabar area? The KSSP noted: "The Idukki-Karnataka 220 KV line, if expedited and extended to Cannore, will be able to convey bulk power. A crash programme can make the transmission system effective enough in a year or two". By the time the Silent Valley project will be completed (say, by 1989), it will provide 522 million hydro-energy units whereas the region will require a minimum of 2,600 million units of hydro-energy. The construction of a thermal station, and that too of the coal-fired variety is strongly recommended but the powers that be seem to be bent upon this hydro-electric project.

The KSSP cites the examples of projects where priority was given to environmental considerations in deciding the fate of hydro-electric projects. In 1967, two dams across Grand Canyon of Colorado river in Arizona were not given clearance on account of their threat to wildlife. Tamil Nadu gave up the Moyar project to save the wildlife of Mudumalai and Bandipur region.

ARTHUR PAIS, Trivandrum

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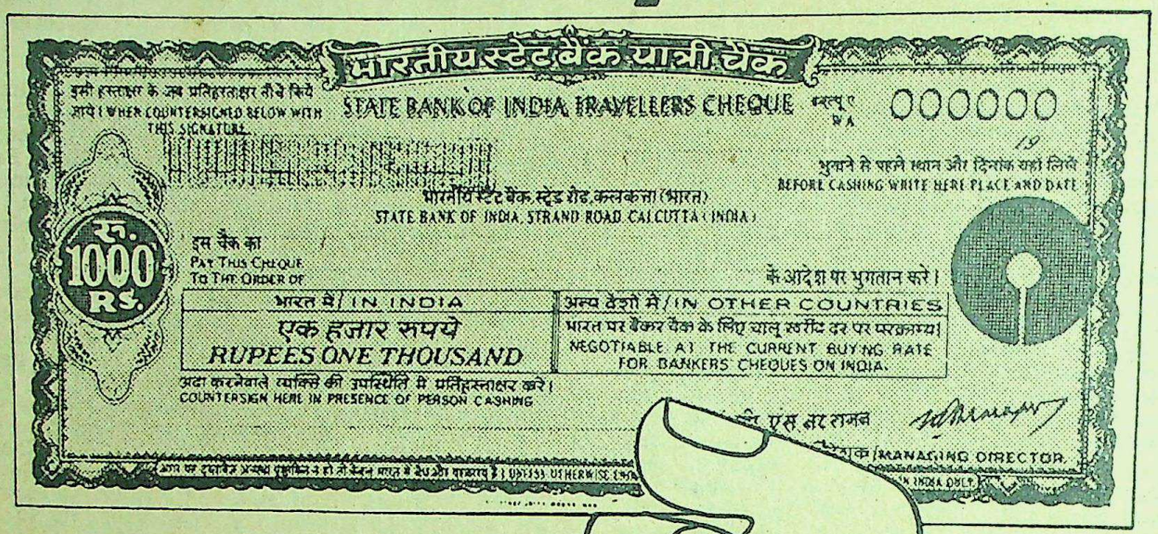

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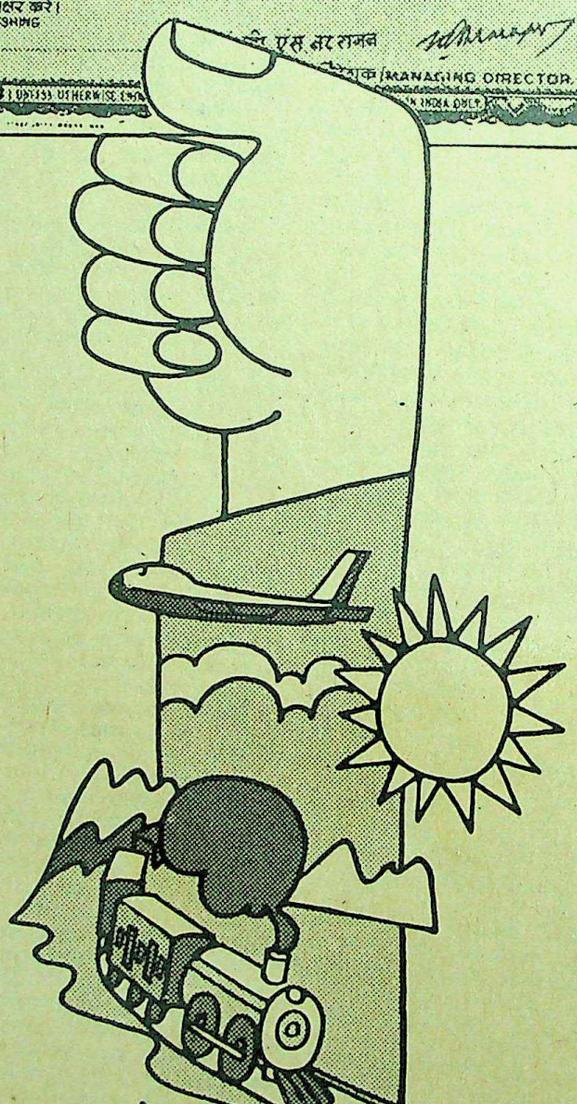

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Janata routed in Sikkim

Is the clock being turned back ?

Asoke Bose

The victory procession

THE former Chogyal of Sikkim, Palden Thondup Namgyal, was encaged in a red box in 1975 and came out from a black one in 1979. The magician, the people of Sikkim, waved the magic wand in no uncertain terms. The people had cast their votes in the red referendum box which stood for the merger of Sikkim with India and abolition of the institution of the Chogyal. Through the black ballot box in the October Assembly elections they voted for Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP), a regional Party neither registered with nor recognised by the Election Commission of India, which is avowedly against both the issues the red box had represented.

The full import of the results was brought home when jubilant supporters of SJP moved from the historic White Hall in Gangtok the vote counting venue, to the nearby palace gate chanting the 'Sikkim national anthem' that was banned by the Government of India after the protectorate Himalayan kingdom joined the Indian union as its 22nd State on April 27, 1975. What triggered off the midnight procession was the announcement of the result of the Dzongu scheduled tribe constituency where a diminutive forest ranger turned politician, Athuk Lepcha, humbled Kazi Lhendup Dorji, former Chief Minister and New Delhi's man in Gangtok.

The crushing defeat may cause the Kazi to retire from politics. It will take more than an able organiser to keep the disarrayed Janata Party workers in the fold. The turn of events have also prompted a number of deputationist IAS officers who were allegedly a part of "the Kazi's divide and rule policy and corrupt administration" to leave the State. The new Chief Minister, Nar Bahadur Bhandari, has levelled 93 specific charges of corruption against the former administration, demanding a CBI enquiry into them.

Bhandari is also determined to demand the recall of the Governor, B. B. Lal, for his alleged involvement in politics. Unconfirmed reports indicate that Bhandari may suggest the name of the Chogyal as the first citizen of the State. Bhandari's election symbol was a horse, the rein of which, he said, would be placed in the hands of the threesome Sikkimese brotherhood consisting of Nepalis, Bhutias and Lepchas. In his scheme of things the 50,000 strong Indians of non-Sikkimese origin who form nearly 16 per cent of the State's over 300,000 population are "outsiders" who should not indulge in local politics.

One of the primary reasons of the Janata Party's total rout was a sustained campaign that the Kazi's compliance to include 9,000 plainsmen electors was a conspiracy to enable them to take over Sikkim. The denial of franchise rights to about 25,000 Stateless people of Nepali origin, described as "noncitizen" only lent credence to the need of a crusade against the plainsmen.

Bhandari has, however, been able to rally round the SJP a considerable section of the people belonging to all the three communities who believe that the Party will figure out some effective way to force the Central Government to review the merger and the Chogyal issues and also keep the Indian plainsmen at bay. In order to muster support of a cross section of the people, Bhandari kept the other hot local issues like inclusion of the Nepali language in the Constitution's eighth schedule and the Presidential Ordinance giving effect to Lok Sabha Bill number 79 of 1979 withdrawing reserved seats for the Nepali community in the Assembly at a low key.

The elections over, some of the architects of Sikkim's merger have now swollen the ranks of hangers-on around Bhandari criticising their own act and blaming others more vocally than the Janata Parishad itself. The game of defections is also on and it has benefited the Janata Parishad raising its strength from 17 to a stable 19 in a house of 32 members. The Chogyal thought it was wise to be abroad during the elections with compensation involving lakhs of rupees still pending with the Central Government, so that he was not accused of politicking. But Prince Wangchuk, a tough young man who feels that the China bogey in Sikkim is merely an "alarmist opinion" maintained a telegraphic liason with his father in the USA about the election results. He also made a few of his rare public appearances in meeting Bhandari at a hotel in Gangtok Bazar after he was named the Chief Minister.

The main question now is, to what extent Bhandari will go on the question of the merger and the Chogyal at a time when the Central Government's unstinted support is essential for him to implement any of his election pledges. His promise of needbased wages to Government employees, social security for educated unemployed, paid panchayat office bearers who will be his eyes and ears will strain the purse of the State whose internal revenue does not even match the non-Plan expenditure but which enjoys the highest per capita development expenditure in the country.

There was disappointment writ large on the faces of some radicals when Bhandari did not make any reference to the merger and Chogyal issues in his first public speech after winning the elections. What he can attempt to do with reasonable hope of success is to persuade the Central Government to give the Chogyal a fair deal in property settlement and a respectable position in society, free from an organised canard always being directed at him.

L. B. Basnet advisor to SJP, who won the prestigious cosmopolitan Gangtok constituency felt one just needed a "rudimentary common sense to understand that the merger cannot be undone though it was, as Morarji Desai had agreed, illegal and unconstitutional". Bhandari's cryptic and repeated "no comment" to the questions therefore leads one to the conclusion that he is keeping the issues open only to ensure a wary Central Government's continued cooperation and further special treatment to the sensitive border State where the rain god still responds to the prayers of monks blowing massive horns and beating cymbals from the altars of mysterious Buddhist monasteries to give the State a fair weather for an election to be held.

TAPAS MUKHERJEE, Gangtok

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Bloody Wednesday!

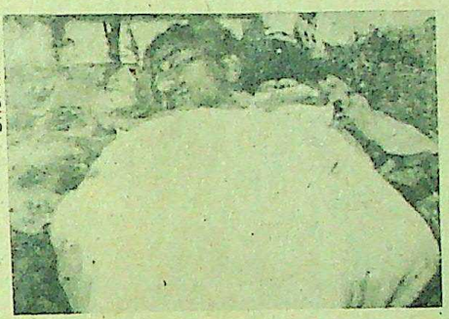
No one knows how many died

ON Wednesday, October 17, the people of the largest industrial township in North India, Faridabad, were not talking of the familiar problem of labour unrest; they were witnessing a bloody vendetta. As groups of the city's two lakh workers trudged towards Neelam Chowk to keep a date with their brethren, policemen readied for action at the approach to the Chowk. When the workers reached the spot, they were bluntly told to disperse. They refused. Shots were fired, first in the air and then on the crowd, sparking off a wave of violence, arson and murder of a kind the city had never seen before. At the end of the day there were several dead and injured. The Government maintains eight people died—six on the spot and two others in hospital—and 19 were injured. Though the actual figures cannot be ascertained, dead bodies were seen being hurriedly removed from the trouble spots in police jeeps.

According to spokesmen of Faridabad's strongest and most active union, the CPI(M)-supported CITU, which is being accused of collusion with the Lok Dal to incite violence and discredit the Haryana Janata Government, the police action was totally unprovoked and premeditated. The night before the violence had erupted, they say, a large number of patients had been discharged from Faridabad's Badshah Khan Hospital and additional stocks of medicines were acquired.

Workers in the township have been on the warpath for quite some time now. Their main grievances relate to lay offs, closures, poor pay (a worker's average pay is Rs 150; many workers are kept as apprentices for years with a stipend of Rs 120 and often correct registers are not maintained of all the workers in a factory, and how much they are paid), recruitment of casuals in place of those retrenched, and attacks on workers by goondas hired by the managements. Some of the factories against which allegations persist are East India Cotton, Autopin, Ceraco Auto, American Universal, Precision Steel and Bharat Carpets. Before the trouble broke out, at least 25 factories in the area were on strike or under partial lock out. Workers also complain of excessive use of Section 144; hardly has a month passed since the lifting of the Emergency, when prohibitory orders have not been in force. In protest, a massive rally was organised by an All-Trade Union Action Committee consisting of representatives of CITU, AITUC, HLU, a faction of INTUC and some independent leaders on September 21, at which a 12-point charter of demands was declared and approved. The demands included withdrawal of cases against workers, arrest of the managements' hired goondas, grants of compensation to all workers, and a minimum wage of Rs 350 (three months ago the minimum wage was raised from Rs 160 to Rs 250, but even this is not being properly implemented by managements, CITU workers allege). At the same rally, a call was given for a bandh on October 6. The Government's response was immediate. Section 144 Cr P C was reimposed in the township after a gap of 25 days. The bandh was postponed to October 17, to avoid a breach of the prohibitory orders and also to give the Government more time to think.

Think the officials did, but on the wrong lines. Meher Singh Rathi, Haryana's Labour Minister came to Faridabad and threatened the Action Committee members with dire consequences if they went ahead with the bandh: "Faridabad ko police chavni bana doonga aur tum sab ko sidha kar doonga" (Faridabad will be swarming with policemen, and you shall all be set right) he was alleged to have told a group of workers. But the workers did not budge. If the bandh was to be withdrawn, negotiations should be held, they insisted. On October 15, another 20,000-strong rally was addressed by, among others, the local Lok Dal MLA, Deep Chand Bhatia, who told the workers to go ahead with the bandh, even violate prohibitory orders, if the authorities did not speak to them. There was no incident, however. Following the rally, prohibitory orders, which had been lifted, were reimposed around midnight on the 15th, when most workers were indoors and asleep. The announcement that Section 144 was in force was made in only a few areas of the sprawling industrial township.



SharmaPhoto

The body of Kashmiri Lal Bali

It was not until 10 the next morning—when it was already too late—that the organisers of the bandh, preparations for which were made well in advance, came to know about the prohibitory orders. The Action Committee members began frantically spreading the news, but only a few could be informed. Hundreds of workers from all over Faridabad and the surrounding areas, from the many cotton, engineering, chemical, rubber and plastic factories began grouping up and moving towards Neelam Chowk from as early as 8.45 a.m. When they came to a railway overbridge—the immediate approach to the Chowk—a contingent of policemen led by Sub-Inspector Brahm Dutt, stopped the procession. The officer fired three shots in the air and then on the crowd, killing three workers. Furious, the workers charged ahead, overwhelmed the policemen, and beat the officer to death. Thus started a brutal worker-police vendetta, with policemen firing indiscriminately on the crowds, making lathi charges and bursting tear gas shells, the workers retaliating by stopping a train and burning two jeeps and two fire brigade vehicles, destroying property in some factories, and forcing shops and establishments to close down. The police chased the workers to their hideouts, and picked up the dead bodies and rushed them away. Eyewitnesses insist not less than 50 must have died and over a hundred were injured. In one of their encounters, a force of 25 policemen pursued a group of workers to Press Colony, took up positions on the stairs of a house and in front of a wall in the adjoining Jawahar Colony, and fired ten rounds. It is impossible to say where they aimed, but instead of a crowd of workers, the bullets tore through the temple of Kashmiri Lal Bali (42), who was standing on the roof of one of the houses in the locality, and ripped open the abdomen of another person, Jagdish Prasad (30), who was standing a few feet behind Bali. Two children who were playing on the roof, Surinder Kumar (16) and Anil Bali (12), Kashmiri Lal's son, were also injured. When this reporter met one of the injured children, Surinder, he pointed to the spot where Kashmiri Lal fell dead. A large mark of splattered blood had not been cleaned.

There is another version of what happened, of course — one less damaging to the authorities. The violence was a result of inter-union rivalry, and incitement by CITU and other leaders, including Mr Deep Chand Bhatia, who was later arrested. The workers were bent upon making the October 17 bandh a success, and on the fateful day, began forcing shops and establishments to close down They had prepared themselves for an organised aggression on the police. The police action was necessary to protect a train the workers had stopped, and an oil tank they threatened to set on fire, which might have caused an explosion that could be disastrous for the entire city. Mobs had burnt down police jeeps, fire brigade vans and a DTC bus, property belonging to a tyre factory, and lynched a police officer to death. They had no right to disturb peace and destroy public property if their demands —which the Government was yet to know about, anyway — were not met, said Haryana's Janata CM, Bhajan Lal in an angry statement. He refused to institute a judicial inquiry, but agreed to start a magisterial inquiry.

NIRMAL MITRA, New Delhi

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Rendered speechless

Calcutta TV does it again

Anil Grover

Sudhangsu Dasgupta

QUICK on the heels of the report in SUNDAY (October 7) on the censorship game being played at Doordarshan Kendra, Calcutta, they played the game again. Producer Abhijit Dasgupta's regular programme, *Youth Time*, this time telecast a debate ("This house believes that mass media aggravate youth unrest") on October 18, at 8.50 pm with six young participants, and chaired by Mr Sudhangsu Dasgupta.

While summing up the debate, Mr Dasgupta said something to the effect of categorising the various people who are affected by mass media, be they gentlemen or Communists. It was the usual debating technique of making a tangential remark about a current subject, and this was an innocuous dig at the very most. The reference was to the "power" tussle between the State power commissioner, Mr S. M. Murshed, and the then acting power minister, Dr Ashok Mitra, when (on July 6) the latter recalled a special taskforce which was on its way to the Santaldih power station to study its problems. This erupted into a battle of egos and Dr Mitra, it was hoped, would make an apology as becoming of a gentleman. Mr Mitra had then exploded: "I'm not a gentleman, I'm a Communist." The entire episode, including the remark owned by Dr Mitra himself, received nationwide coverage. But significantly enough, even at that time, *Business Standard* (July 8) reported: "Calcutta Doordarshan added its mite by suggesting in its Bengali news that no such incident took place"!

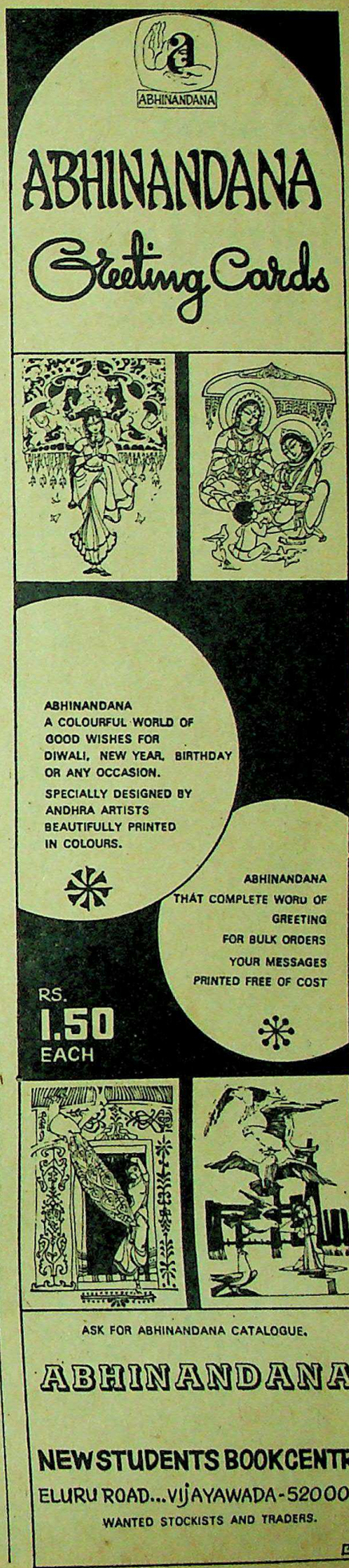
Possibly hoping for public memory to fade, the programme which was recorded in mid-July was only telecast in mid-October — not a regular practice. One might concede that this was at least a professionally polished move. But Calcutta TV wasn't taking any chances. So they simply switched off the sound track at the required moment. The attempt this time was to pass it off as a possible "technical defect"—so naturally no apologies were tendered to the viewers or to Mr Dasgupta, nor was his permission sought prior to the cut. And they very nearly succeeded in their game. All viewers I spoke to immediately after the programme were not even aware of the "cut", and those who had noticed, thought it was a technical defect either in their own TV set or the transmission. The two give-away clues were: the switch-on and off sound, and the contents of the statement which confirm any doubts. Mr Sudhangsu Dasgupta preferred not to comment on this though he agreed to reveal the nature of his statement. Evidently, while the "chop-suey" as reported earlier in SUNDAY (October 7) was horribly ham-handed, this time it was a study in the methodology of censorship! Calcutta TV is learning fast—even if this is a Left handed compliment.

Last time, it was argued by Miss Mira Mozoomdar, director, Doordarshan Kendra, Calcutta, that four minutes, not six, were cut. This time, it is argued by another official that "exactly 12 seconds of audio were erased." Is censorship divisible?

According to Calcutta TV, the 12 seconds of audio had been erased "with the intention to edit, not cut." It was scheduled for telecast "a week after recording, and the programmes had been issued to the Press to this effect." But last minute changes, especially with sports programmes (cricket) forced a postponement by three weeks each time. Meanwhile, two other *Youth Time* programmes were also held up for the same reason, and that is why this programme was eventually telecast three months later. "So the programme was not held back intentionally."

Meanwhile, the producer of the programme, Mr Abhijit Dasgupta, had to go abroad at 24 hours' notice ("on Dussehra day") and the required "rectification" could not be made. By the time he came back and rejoined ("on October 19"), the programme went on the air with the erased portion as it was. TV feels that three months later, the item had become outdated and at that stage, they "wouldn't have bothered to tamper with it". TV also feels that the statement by Mr Sudhangsu Dasgupta was "uncalled for and in bad taste", and they had therefore erased it.

ANIL GROVER, Calcutta



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Spot report

Bihar

United we stand a chance

PATNA'S Gandhi Maidan was festive with a milling throng on October 23 when the five-Party left democratic, anti-authoritarian, and anti-communalist combination of the Lok Dal, Congress, CPI, CPI(M) and Forward Bloc held a rally there. Perhaps Patna had not witnessed such a gathering since the days of JP's Bihar movement in 1974. Peasants, bare-bodied and also in colourful attire, adivasis with drums, bows and arrows and workers from all over Bihar had assembled there to listen to the speakers. The rally was held to condemn the Government's inaction in combating the crisis in Bihar caused by drought, the rise in prices and the shortage of essential commodities. But in effect, it demonstrated the strength of the alliance partners on the eve of the Lok Sabha elections.

People poured into Patna from the early hours of October 23. They came by trains, buses, steamers, trucks and on foot carrying flags and banners. Most of them were supporters of the CPI followed by supporters of the Lok Dal. The supporters of the Congress, CPI(M) and Forward Bloc were few and far between. And there were the supporters of Sibu Soren's Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, a group of armed adivasis. The preponderance of the red CPI flag made it for them literally a "red letter day".

Initially, there was an unseemly scramble as to which constituent would lead the procession. According to the original plan, the Lok Dal was to be in the lead, followed by the CPI, Congress and others. But this plan was upset when some Congress supporters, led by Ramlakhan Yadav, emerged at the head of the procession. Along with him was the Lok Dal chief of Bihar, Mundrika Singh, on a jeep, with elephants and camels marching ahead of them. When the procession, which was about 10 km long, reached the Gandhi Maidan it was already half full, with more people arriving every minute. Slogans there were aplenty —*Hame chahiye lok shahi nahi chahiye tana shahi* (We want democracy, not dictatorship), *Sampradayikta murdabad* (Down with communalism) and *"Kheti ki fasal jhulsali hai, mantriqan ki masti hai* (Crops are drying up while the Ministers are making merry)". At the meeting the alliance leaders— Karpoori Thakur, Abdul Ghafoor, Ramlakhan Singh Yadav, Chaturanan Mishra and others—called for the unity of the alliance partners.

But, till the time of writing, no unity has emerged, despite a number of meetings to this end. The rally has only had the effect of making the CPI more confident as had happened in 1975 when a CPI-Congress Anti-Fascist conference was held in Patna where the CPI stole the show. After the conference, the two Parties had drifted apart. Would it happen again? Soon after the rally at Gandhi Maidan, the CPI demanded that it would contest 26 out of the 54 Lok Sabha seats from Bihar. Besides, it has voiced its dissent over the "anti-workers' spirit" in Charan Singh's draft election manifesto. The CPI(M) has staked its claim to 10 seats. The CPI maintain that despite the fact that they have won a maximum of five seats in the past, that too in alliance with the Congress in 1977, they have acted as a balancing factor in no less than 20 constituencies and have helped other Parties win. The CPI(M) has never had any representation in the Lok Sabha from Bihar. Yet, this year, as their demand for seats has shown, they are more ambitious. This is probably because of their alliance with the CPI. The Congress has also set its sights on contesting a large number of seats, but is ready for a compromise. As for the Lok Dal, Karpoori Thakur insists on seeing the alliance through or at least a "seat adjustment".

But the partners have little choice before them. The CPI has a central directive not to have any truck with either the Congress (I) or the Janata. Nor can the Congress led by Ramlakhan Singh Yadav and Abdul Ghafoor, have an understanding with the upper castes-led Janata and the authoritarian Congress (I). The CPI(M) and Forward Bloc are in no position to dictate terms. The situation was summed up rather neatly by a CPI leader who said: "There is no option but compulsion".

There are, however, chances that the alliance may finally materialise. The seat adjustment would be roughly as follows: CPI(M) one or two, Marxist Coordination one, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha one, the CPI and Congress together about 20 and the Lok Dal the rest. If this is not agreed upon, the Lok Dal may concede some more seats to the other Parties. The "unwritten agreement" between the Janata and the Congress (I) to share the key seats and the fear that the upper castes would leave nothing unturned to defeat the backwards in the elections may force the alliance partners to unite.

S.P. SAGAR

A view of the Gandhi Maidan on October 23

Krishan Murari Kishan

Kerala

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Kerala

Left unity: One step backward

IN his book *White House Years*, currently being serialised in Indian and foreign journals, Henry Kissinger says that "policy emerges when concept encounters opportunity". In Kerala where, the left and democratic unity encountered its opportunity to come to power, policy took a nose-dive and hid itself beneath the slag and slime of rank opportunism.

What was originally sought to be achieved in Kerala was a realignment of forces to replace the ruling united Front. The Front came into being as an anti-Marxist instrument a decade ago, a polarisation which today is negative nationally, and strategically unwise as far as the State is concerned. The new volte face in Kerala has led not merely to an anti-Marxist Front, but to an even more rabid formation — an anti-Communist Front of the type which toppled the first Communist Ministry two decades ago.

It was only in the last week of September that the ruling Front partners, including the CPI and the Congress, issued a joint appeal indicating their willingness to hold talks with the CPI(M) to forge a left and democratic front. To achieve this they had also agreed, in principle, to the dissolution of the State Assembly — a precondition laid down by the CPI(M). But the talks got bogged down over a proposed legislation which, controversial by then, had become a "prestige issue", with the CPI(M) demanding its withdrawal while some of the ruling Front partners like the Kerala Congress, the Muslim League and the Congress insisted on its passage. The CPI which stood firm in the beginning and through the negotiations finally gave up its stand in the "interest of left unity".

In analysing the present situation, we have to consider two political developments in the State since the talk of left unity began. In the recent civic elections the Marxists almost swept the polls. Their impressive victory at the long overdue civic polls, which took place after 20 years, gave them a new confidence and indicated how the winds were blowing. Taking note of this and the possibility of a left takover after the coming elections, the bishops gave a call to the two Kerala Congress factions, which are Christian dominated, to unite. Instead of dissolving the Assembly and going in for fresh elections, an alternate non-Communist Ministry was on their minds. There was much more to this call than a mere interest in their unity. Perturbed at the prospect of a combination of progressive Parties coming to power, the Church wanted reaction to consolidate. They knew that the obvious, even blatant, hint of a bishops' appeal was not lost on certain elements in other Parties also.

The failure of the talks on the issue of the land gift bill gave an unexpected opportunity for the anti-Communist elements in all the Parties to demand an alternate Ministry. The Muslim League and the Kerala Congress, which would have benefitted by the passage of the bill, took the initiative in the matter. They found instant support being extended to them by the Congress(I) and the Janata which were all along opposing the land gift bill. The Congress, which thought that 'political honesty' demanded the passing of the bill, was forced to go along with the Party. None of these Parties were interested in going to the polls since the Assembly had a life of another two and half years and because they thought that their manoeuvring would help them get power or at least its fringe benefits. Thus, instead of widening the left and democratic Front in Kerala, by a process of rea-

Haryana

The Lok Dal starts its campaign

OCTOBER 14, an unusually torrid day for the northern plains, was the day Chaudhury Charan Singh chose to declare war against the forces of evil which for him are represented by the Congress(I) and the Janata. Launching his election campaign in Kaithal, in Haryana, 100 kms from Chandigarh he observed morosely that his opponents would meet with failure. The PM's visit was bereft of the usual pomp and show one associates with a visit by the executive head of a country. Apart from the Deputy Commissioner of the district there was only one other dignitary on the spot to greet the Chaudhury when he alighted from an IAF helicopter — the Deputy Speaker Kanwar Vijay Pal Singh of the Lok Dal. But the meeting itself was well attended. Lok Dal partisans even claimed a crowd of four lakhs, but the more correct estimate would be far less. What is true is that such large meetings have rarely been held in this small town.

In the first of two speeches before leaving for Rajasthan on the second leg of his hurricane election tour, he declared "none of the Harijan Ministers or Chief Ministers has done for the Harijans what I have done for them", by way of proof that he was in no way anti-Harijan. When it came to explaining why he had parted company with Morarji Desai, he remarked "I made him the Prime Minister" and justified his decision regarding the parting of ways by saying that the former PM had turned out to be "abhimani" after that.

"If the Press continues its campaign of showering abuse on me," he added, "you can be sure that I am doing positive good for the downtrodden villagers". He explained the logic behind this by saying that the "newspapers are against me because they are controlled by capitalists whose enemy the Lok Dal is". Mrs Gandhi and Atal Behari Vajpayee figured prominently in his attack on capitalists and traders ("God forbid, if the Pakistanis drop a bomb on Delhi tomorrow, these dishonest traders would double the prices") Reacting to the charge of casteism against him, he said, "Let Mrs. Gandhi and Vajpayee declare that they will assure jobs to those who marry out of their castes and I will retire from politics and leave the Lok Dal." He lashed out at Babuji, saying "I preferred Morarji to Jagjivan Ram because I could not trust the latter who was a party to the declaration of the Emergency which sent us all to jail. I did it from my sickbed and a few months later the same Prime Minister had the audacity to demand my resignation when I was sick. What a comparison. And they call us defectors !"

But it was the tenor of the Chaudhury's speeches in the strongest of Lok Dal strongholds that left one surprised. There was none of the expected assertiveness. Mrs Gandhi too had visited the same town three weeks previously and she had vigorously attacked both the Janata and the Lok Dal. Also equally surprising was the failure to touch on the subject of the withdrawal of four Emergency cases against Bansi Lal, the former Defence Minister under a "secret agreement" between the Janata and the Congress (I).

A CORRESPONDENT

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The Woolblendmark on DIGJAM suitings ensures great looks and comfort round the year!

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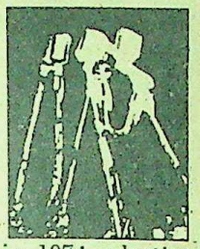
Orissa

It's Mrs Gandhi versus Biju



IN Orissa, elections have been held rather frequently in the Seventies. In 1971, there were elections to the Lok Sabha in March and the State Assembly in June. Three years later, in 1974, elections were held for the Assembly again. Depite half the State under feudal rule (the other half is comparatively well off) the Left movement is yet to sprout. Neither agricultural nor industrial labour is properly organised. Under such circumstances, in Orissa, personalities rather than issues dominate the election scene. The forthcoming elections will probably not be any different but some local issues can easily become rallying points.

From 1952 to 1961 it was the Maharajas versus the Congress. In 1961 Biju Patnaik came to power and since then his personality has dominated the political scene in Orissa. In 1967, he was with Mrs Gandhi and both of them proved to be negative personalities: *"Biju Hatao"* became the Opposition's slogan and the Congress was swept out of power. A coalition of Swatantra Party and the Jana Congress, a breakaway Congress group, ruled the State until the coalition broke down in 1971 and fresh elections were declared for the State Legislature.

In 1971, Indira Gandhi and Biju Patnaik parted company and the war of nerves began in earnest. In spite of the massive Indira wave which swept the country in 1971, Biju Patnaik successfully prevented the Congress from coming to power

Goutam Patole

C.N.S.

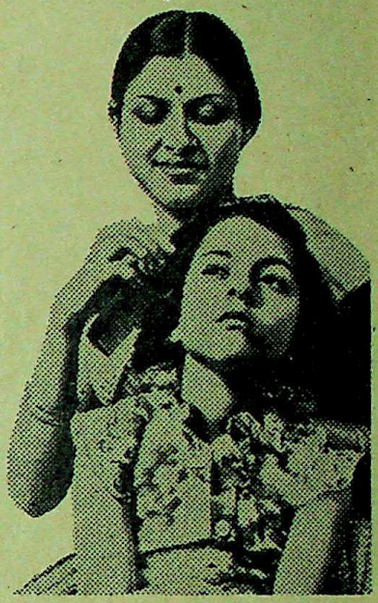
in Orissa. Patnaik's Utkal Congress, the Swatantra Party and the Jharkhand joined hands to form the Government. This coalition however did not last long. The 1974 elections brought Mrs Nandini Satpathy to the forefront of Orissa politics. She easily became a force to reckon with, but the Emergency and later her defection to the CFD pushed Nandini into the background.

The forthcoming elections will be a clear-cut contest between Mrs Indira Gandhi and Biju Patnaik; it will be a clash of personalities. Biju Patnaik today does not have the charisma of 1972. Predictably, the Opposition's election campaign will centre around inflation and bad Government. The Opposition is likely to harp on the point that Biju Patnaik did not live up to his promise of giving Orissa a steel mill and a shipyard.

People in this State have already started thinking about Mrs Gandhi despite what she did during the Emergency, because of the weak Government at the Centre and the scarcity of essential goods in the State. Ninety per cent of the electorate in Orissa live in villages and it is yet to be seen how far the promise of a "farmer Prime Minister" can affect the voting pattern. Candidates are, it is true, often selected on caste considerations but there is not much hostility between castes and this is therefore unlikely to be an issue in the elections. The same can be said of communalism. For the rural people of Orissa, Delhi is very far away and predictably local issues will decide the fate of the Parties.

SWARUP JENA

I have two people earning for me. My husband and my bank.



You might call me a little fortunate.

In a way I am.

It all started five years ago when my father left me a small inheritance.

On my husband's advice I invested it under the Deposit Certificate Scheme with UCOBANK.

And welcomed into my life another earning partner.

Today UCOBANK keeps adding something to my small inheritance.

In time to come I'll be able to make a present to my daughter.

The earnings of many years.

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the friendly bank round the corner

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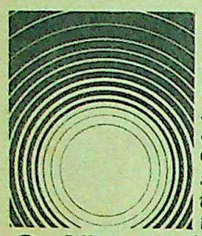
Andhra Pradesh

"Vengal Rao will be routed"



ARTHUR PAIS talks to Dr M. Channa Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and one of Mrs Indira Gandhi's staunch supporters, on the issues involved in the elections.

Q: *What are the main issues (as far as Andhra is concerned) in this election?*

A: There are no local issues involved ; we are fighting to have a strong and stable Centre ruled by a progressive Party. The two year long Janata misrule has harmed the nation considerably ; our fight is to initiate a process to repair the situation.

Q: *But your predecessor, Vengal Rao, wants to make this election a referendum against your two year rule as the Chief Minister...*

A: He's welcome to.... I have full confidence in the people : we have stood by them. One of the earliest decisions taken by the Cabinet was to exempt small farmers who own 5 acres of dry or 2.5 acres of wet land from payment of land revenue. Take the May 1979 cyclone for instance : because the State Government moved in swiftly and took prompt measures to evacuate the people in thousands very few lives were lost. You know what happened during the 1977 cyclone ? Even though Vengal Rao was warned about it sufficiently in advance, he continued his stay in Delhi indulging in petty politicking. He didn't even show interest in the disposal of dead bodies. This time as soon as we got the warning, we moved in. If the State Government had not acted speedily, there would've been thousands of deaths, and we would have got all the sympathy of the world. I have no use for such sympathy, I am a man of action and since Andhra is cursed by periodic cyclones, my Government is going ahead with a plan to plant causuarina trees all along the coast for a width of 200 metres. After an interval, cashew and coconut plantations will also be started and we'll allow habitation only behind these plantations.

Q: *But your Government is steadily acquiring an anti-people image...*

A: Pure, malicious propaganda. I am a man of action and I cannot tolerate sycophants and people who indulge in sheer rhetoric. The other day people from C. Rajeshwara Rao's constituency asked me to set up a polytechnic : I promised and the project is being readied. The CPI leader made a public statement that for the first time he had come across a CM who stood by his word — and so fast...

Q: *And yet the CPI is fighting against you ... in spite of Rajeshwara Rao.*

A: He's a senior man in the Party and despite his personal goodwill, he cannot change his Party's attitude ... nor can he join the Congress (I). But I am glad to say that many Congressmen, particularly at the grassroot level, are deserting Vengal Rao and joining hands with Congress (I). B. P. Maurya who used to swear his loyalty to Mrs Gandhi (you know I got him elected from Andhra) now goes around saying fantastic things, that Congress (I) dissidents will walk out. He's indulging in mere wishful thinking.

Q *As the person in charge of the election campaign for all the four southern States, how do you evaluate your Party's chances ?*

A: In Andhra we will win all the 42 (seats). The Left combination led by Vengal Rao will be totally routed. Sometime ago Vasudevan Nair, the CPI leader, was telling me that the CPI and CPI(M) were going to be allies and this would create a problem for Congress(I). You're welcome to join hands, I said. Even in Andhra you may do so, I added. But he himself said that in Andhra such an alliance won't cut ice... Whatever my critics may say, people here are with me and with Mrs Gandhi.

In Karnataka we hope to win atleast 20 out of the 28 seats, and since the Left Parties in Kerala are isolated, Congress (I) should have a bright chance . We will win at least 50 per cent of the seats. And in Tamil Nadu, we should win a majority of the seats.

Q: *You feel quite optimistic about Kerala. Despite Congress (I) losing heavily in the panchayat election. One hears that even C. M. Stephen is looking for a safe seat outside Kerala.*

A: The scene has changed dramatically since the fall of the Vasudevan Nair Ministry. Now people in Kerala too are realising that only the Congress (I) can bring in stability and Stephen is quite optimistic.

Q: *Do you think that the people in Tamil Nadu will buy the Congress (I)-DMK alliance ? Couldn't you have prevailed upon your "good friend" MGR to stay back with Mrs Gandhi ?*

A: There's a complete and genuine change of heart in the DMK : It has realised that only Mrs Gandhi means business ... I will not comment on why MGR stayed out of the alliance, but this much I can say, we were gradually losing faith in him after he withdrew his offer to support Mrs Gandhi in Thanjavur.

Q: *There have been specific incidents which have been followed by mass riots, like the Ramiza Bibi incident and the alleged police rape of Shakila who later committed suicide. This may cost your Party the Muslim votes.*

A: These incidents were unnecessarily politicised. Facts show that the police acted within the framework of law. I refused to set up a judicial enquiry because I want the Centre to set up the norms: Over a hundred workers died last year in the Kanpur riots. Why wasn't a judicial enquiry started there ? Despite these two incidents, I am sure of the Muslim votes...they have more trust in Mrs Gandhi and in me than in other politicians. ■

The voter

SAHADEV RAI, 35, a roadside peanut vendor, in Calcutta, who hails from Madhubani district in Bihar, says : "I will vote once again for Indira Gandhi's Congress. Look at what the Janata did. Neither could they govern nor could they form a stable Government. Everything is so expensive that there is hardly any profit left for me. Onions cost Rs four a kilo. At least during Indira Gandhi's rule the prices of food items were not so high."

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"Our painter recommended Dulux to us. Now I recommend him to our friends."

Bulu Guha

A one-time behaviour therapist in Canada and a teacher in New Delhi, Bulu today is a busy newspaper P. R. executive in Calcutta, but one who still finds time to be a dedicated housewife. With a charming home that's all her own creation—down to the specific shade of blue on her bedroom walls. Colour is important to her, so she studied the shade cards carefully, picked out her colour schemes—and left the rest to the painter. His choice was Dulux—and she was delighted with the result. Here's the story in her own words.

"My drawing room is on the small side, so I chose Dulux 'Buttermilk' to create an impression of space."

Q. What paint did you have in mind ?

A. I didn't know much about Dulux or any other paint. So I decided on the colours and left it to my painter to select the paint.

He's the one who recommended Dulux—and judging by the results, I'm glad he did !

Q. So you left the expensive decision to your painter ?

A. Yes. He'd painted some of our friends' houses, and we liked his work. After all we were 'new' to Calcutta—and, as they say, seeing is believing.

"Porcelain blue provides the balance in our bedroom. Because blue is a cool colour and we live in a warm city."

"I wanted a bold colour to arrest the length of this long and narrow passage—so bright pink was my choice"

Q. Are you satisfied with the result ?

A. Definitely. With Dulux's wide range I had all the choice of colours I wanted. And the walls and doors look as good today as they did 2½ years ago, when we first had them painted. In Calcutta's humid climate, I think that's pretty good !

Q. Would you use Dulux again ?

A. Would I ? Of course. And if we're still in Calcutta when it's time to repaint our house, we'll use the services of our painter again. In fact, right now he's doing a friend's flat—one I recommended him to, I'm proud to say.

Dulux paints. Now and for years ahead

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Why did Pakistan attack?

A. G. NOORANI reviews Asghar Khan's book on the Indo-Pak war of 1965 to answer this and other questions

"PLEASE do not rub in my weakest and fatal point," Mohammed Ayub Khan would tell G. W. Choudhary whenever he questioned him on his fateful decision to go to war on Kashmir in 1965. He accused Foreign Minister Bhutto and Foreign Secretary Aziz Ahmed of misleading him. Choudhary served as Director-General (Research) at the Foreign Ministry from 1967 to 1969 and as Minister of Communications thereafter till 1971.

The consequences of that war were far graver than many imagined. First, Ayub lost the confidence of his real constituency of power, the armed forces, as well as his popularity with the people, especially after Tashkent. Second, the war exposd erstwhile East Pakistan's isolation from the West. If its security depended on China's help rather than the armed forces of Pakistan, why could it not ensure that help by its own exertions? Significantly, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's famous six points were propounded in February 1966. Lastly, the war bred in Pakistan a false illusion of victory so that the Tashkent accord acquired in the people's eyes the image of a sell-out, very similar to that fostered in German eyes after 1919—of an "undefeated" army betrayed by the leaders at Versailles. Such illusions serve, in turn, to breed neurosis.

Air Marshal (Retd.) M. Asghar Khan's book is an interesting addition to the growing literature on that war by Pakistani writers. More so, the remarkable foreword by Altaf Gauhar who was close to Ayub. While their views on Ayub differ, hatred of Bhutto unites them. Together they help to answer the question: How and why did Pakistan decide to attack India and how and why did she stop the attack?

The bare facts were already well known. In May 1965, even before the Rann of Kutch arbitration agreement was signed, a force of some 30,000 men, known as the Gibraltar Forces, was set up under the leadership of Gen. Akhtar Husain Malik. In July, Ayub visited them at the headquarters in Muree and addressed them. On August 5 guerilla attacks were launched across the cease-fire line. Asghar Khan had relinquished office as Commander-in-chief of the Air Force on July 23 and knew nothing about what was brewing. It was a Pakistani initiative, entirely. Altaf Gauhar writes; "Asghar Khan is not alone in suggesting that the 1965 War was fought for no purpose. Nothing has been written so far which could give a dispassionate observer the feeling that there was some great principle or ideological position for which Pakistan adopted a course of action which was bound to lead to large-scale conflict. Nor is there any evidence that even at the political, diplomatic or professional level the operations had been properly planned."

It seems that towards the end of 1964 the Kashmir Publicity Committee—a Foreign Office front body—had recommended military action. Ayub Khan shot down the idea. Why did he change his mind six months later? Asghar Khan writes: "I found it difficult to believe that the President, who had always been cautious in his approach to international relations, particularly as they affected our contacts with India, should have agreed to a policy that had the germs of a conflict on a major scale. In the first week of August we read in the newspapers of the incursion of Azad Kashmir volunteers across the ceasefire line into Indian-held Kashmir. As these incursions began to increase in intensity it became obvious that a major shift had occurred in our policy towards Kashmir."

Operation Gibraltar was based on two assumptions—the Kashmiris were ready to revolt if promised guerilla support and India would confine military action to Kashmir and not cross the international frontier. Both were proved hopelessly wrong. The plan originated with the Foreign Office, and we have an authentic record of Bhutto's advice in his Government's White Paper on Kashmir published in January 1977 in his letter to Ayub Khan of May 12, 1965: "There is for the present at least the relative superiority of the military forces of Pakisan in terms of quality and equipment. "But, it would end with the passage of time. He added, specially, "India is in no position to risk a general war of unlimited duration with Pakistan." There could be "general war of limited duration". It is clear from the extracts of the letter that Bhutto did not think that India would regard an attack on Kashmir as one on itself despite its repeated declaration to that effect from 1951 onwards and most recently in April 1965.

The first four infiltrators gave away the whole plan in a broadcast on AIR on August 8. "The blighters have spilled the beans", Brigadier Arshad, Director of Military Intelligence, lamented. It is absurd to suggest that the defender is bound to conform to the level of the offensive unleashed by the attacker. India mopped up the irregulars as best as it could and occupied the Haji Pir salient. Pakistan marched into the Chamb on September 1, threatening Akhnur. Asghar Khan recognises that India was "left with little choice but to remove this threat to the security of their vital strategic areas and, rather than confine the contest to Azad Kashmir, decided to extend the area of conflict to West Pakistan."

All Pakistani accounts agree that India's march to Lahore came as a surprise. Controversy begins here. At a PNA meeting at Lahore on February 26, 1977, Asghar Khan alleged that Chen Yi, the Chinese Foreign Minister, had warned Bhutto when he passed through Karachi en route to Paris that India would attack Pakistan, but Bhutto had deliberately given information to the contrary. "After September 6, when I met Ayub Khan he told me that Bhutto had deceived him."

Interestingly, this accusation by Ayub does not figure in the book, which is published now as it was written in 1967. though he repeats his charge that Bhutto distorted his talks with Chen Yi. Asghar Khan is altogether wrong. The meeting took place on September 4 not "on 1st or 2nd". as he avers. By then Pakistan was well inside Chhamb and the Indian offensive might well have been launched on the 4th rather than two days later. Moreover, the possibility of Indian action should have been reckoned by Pakistan when it planned the whole venture, in May. Moreover, why should Pakistan depend on Chinese estimates of India's reaction?

Bhutto's letter seems to bear out the charge that he had assured Ayub Khan that India would never cross the international frontier. But one cannot exonerate Ayub as Altaf Gauhar does. Altaf, however, has some interesting revelations to make on this point. He writes; "My own recollection is that in an important meeting Mr Bhutto claimed that he had given the assurance on the basis of a communication he had received from the Australian High Commissioner. In another meeting two days before Bhutto left for New York to attend the Security Council meeting in which the ceasefire resolution was approved he said : 'an assurance is not a guarantee; what I conveyed to the President was the advice of the Foreign Office'. When some other participants in the meeting criticised him he broke down and started weeping bitterly. After he recovered he

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uttered a sentence which I shall never forget. 'This means the end of my political career.'

Aziz Ahmed had only one concern during the war. Except him no one should see the President. Mian Arshed Hussain, who was then Pakistan's High Commissioner in New Delhi, claimed in a meeting after the ceasefire that he had sent a message through the Turkish Embassy in New Delhi on the 4th of September 1965 informing the Foreign Office that India was planning to attack Lahore on the 6th of September. This message was duly received in Islamabad but never shown to Ayub Khan. When Aziz Ahmed was confronted with this, his only explanation was that he had not seen the message in time.

In his rejoinder to the Air Marshal on March 1, 1977, Aziz Ahmed said that Chen Yi did advise that "India would not launch a war against Pakistan at that time" and claimed that the minutes of the talks, at which he and Agha Shahi were present, were submitted to Ayub Khan.

Now, this may well be so. But what turns on the talks on September 4 when Pakistan had already crossed the Rubicon? What is amazing is Aziz Ahmed's claim that "our assessment at that time was that India was determined to launch an attack against Pakistan." This is a lie. If Pakistan had expected the Indian move, she would not have moved No. 7 Infantry Division located south of Lahore to the Chamb area.

Plainly, Aziz Ahmed's boast is false. Pakistan did not expect India to retaliate as it did. In 1976, the *Defence Journal* of Karachi quoted Maj.-Gen. Shaukat Raza as saying that, "On 3rd September 1965, the Chief of General Staff, Maj-Gen. Sher Bahadur, held a conference of Directors. We were informed that our troops had attacked Chhamb from across the ceasefire line in Kashmir. Lt.-Col. Riaz Ahmed (Historical Section) asked if adequate precautions had been taken for the defence of Lahore and Sialkot as the Indians were bound to react in these areas. The Director, Military Intelligence (Brig. Irshad), supported by Director, Military Operations (Brig Gul Hasan), assured the gathering that the Indians were in no position to start an all-out war."

So much for the manner in which the war was launched. How was it brought to an end? To begin with, despite its remarkable performance in the air, Pakistan's counter-offensive on the ground was successfully blunted and a war of attrition had begun. Asghar Khan went to Peking, Jakarta, Ankara and Teheran to seek help. He told Chou En-lai on September 10 that "Chinese moves on India's northern borders would help to reduce the pressure against us in West Pakistan." After consulting President Liu Shao Chi, Chou said that the "proposal had such serious implications as to make it necessary for them to discuss things with Ayub Khan. He suggested that they could meet at Peking or Rawalpindi or at any other place our President found convenient. I said that I would convey their wish to Ayub Khan. Premier Chou En Lai added that it was important for them to know whether we really meant to fight until our political objectives were achieved. I said that I had no doubt that Pakistan would fight to the end."

But China's ultimatum to India on September 16 helped Pakistan little. Reason ? It brought the US and the USSR on the scene. On September 14, US Ambassador John M. Cabot had told the Chinese representative at the Warsaw talks "to stay out of the Indo-Pakistani conflict". Otherwise, he implied, the US and other UN nations would retaliate against China. Choudhury's version that Ayub "slipped into China for intensive discussions" to take the Chinese into confidence about his decision to accept the ceasefire seems unlikely to be true.

In 1974 a Pakistani academician, Anwar H. Syed, wrote in his book *China and Pakistan* that "After the Chinese sent an ultimatum to India, the American and British Ambassadors advised him that the Chinese action might lead to a general, and possibly nuclear, war. Unwilling to risk a break with the United States, and unnerved by the thought of a larger war, Ayub Khan now appealed to the Chinese to withdraw the ultimatum". This is borne out by Asghar Khan and more so by the White Paper. When Asghar Khan urged Ayub to keep fighting, the latter kept saying "We are under pressure".

In his statement in 1977 Aziz Ahmed revealed that on September 19 the British High Commissioner, Sir Maurice James, had called on Ayub Khan with an urgent message from Prime Minister Harold Wilson. Bhutto and Aziz Ahmed were both present at the meeting. The burden of the message and the statement of the High Commissioner was that Pakistan must accept a ceasefire before the Chinese ultimatum to India expired. Otherwise, he warned, "the nuclear powers would take over". At this threat, to the dismay of the Foreign Minister and mine, Ayub Khan visibly weakened. The High Commissioner had won his point". The White Paper sets out the discussions at length. Pakistan accepted the ceasefire before midnight of September 22 when the Chinese ultimatum to India was due to expire.

It was after the ceasefire according to Asghar Khan — and not before it as Choudhury believes — that Ayub went on a secret trip to Peking with Bhutto, Nur Khan and Asghar Khan. This was after a conference at Tashkent had been agreed but before it was held. The Chinese criticised the conduct of the war but approved the trip to Tashkent.

Asghar Khan, also, learnt nothing from the episode. Despite the knowledge of Operation Gibraltar which he acquired later, he had no hesitation in declaiming in Lahore three years thereafter that "this was a war not only for the preservation of our independence, but for the preservation of our very existence" which was threatened by "Indian aggression". In the book however, he describes the war as having been "fought for no purpose". While attacking Bhutto for rashness, he tried to outbid him in demagogy as an anti-Indian hawk. On February 26, 1977 he asked Bhutto at an election rally "why had he sneaked into the Indian High Commission at Karachi through a bath-room ?"

It is in vain to expect him to inject any sense of realism into Pakistan's India policy. Altaf Gauhar is more sensible. He writes, "Asghar Khan holds that Ayub Khan yielded to foreign pressure when he could have carried on the war regardless of the unsatisfactory situation on the ground. If all the information and documents relating to the War were made public, Asghar Khan might revise his judgment." He points out that "few people outside the armed forces realise how close Pakistan came to disaster in the 1965 War due to inadequate preparation, facile assumptions and criminal Foreign Office advice. The full facts still remain to be disclosed." He further points out that "unless all the facts of 1948, 1965 and 1971 are made public, our people will go on living in a false world, scoring imaginary victories against fictitious adversaries." This is the task before Pakistan's leaders.

But they seem unwilling to undertake it. Why, even Altaf Gauhar holds that "if Asghar Khan remained in command of the Air Force he would have given the Operation a positive and decisive complexion, because of his devotion to the cause of Kashmir and his whole attitude toward war with India." Clearly, what they really regret even now is not the launching of the attack but its failure.

They criticise Anglo-American "pressure" on Pakistan quite oblivious of the fact that it was Pakistan which had first sought outside intention — by China. And without Chinese help could Pakistan have hoped to inflict defeat and impose its terms on India? On the day India retaliated on the Lahore front, September 6, the U.S. Ambassador met Ayub Khan. The White Paper records that "on no less than three occasions during that meeting the ambassador told the President India has you by the throat."

Both, the attack and its failure, are historical facts of relevance to the Kashmir question today. A nation which fails in its own chosen forum — the battlefield — cannot hope to achieve success at the conference table. Had Pakistan won the war, would it have held a plebiscite in Kasmir under the UN resolutions ? The war has cost Pakistan dear. But it is not too late yet for it to put the past behind it and seek a new relationship facts of the past and the realities of based on a candid recognition of the today.

The First Round : Indo-Pak War 1965 (Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. Rs 35). ■

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Asterix and the BANQUET

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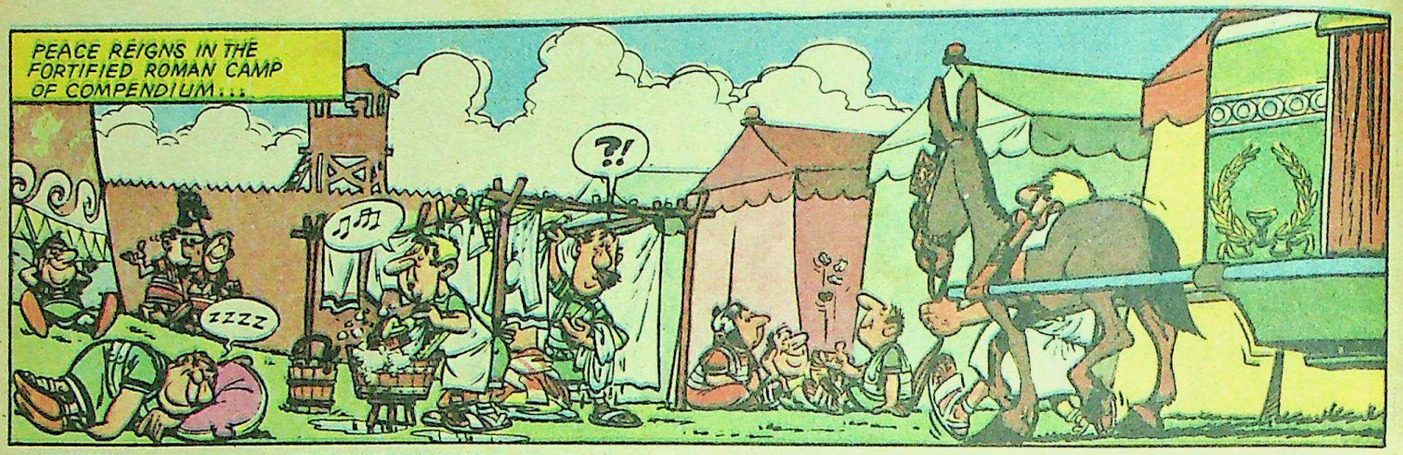

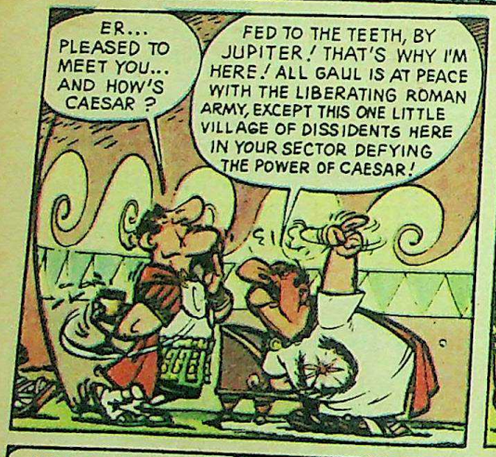

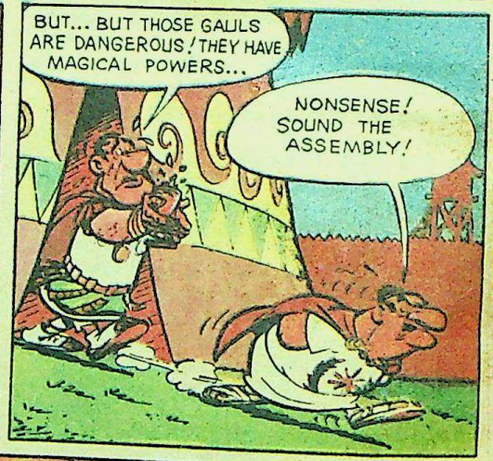

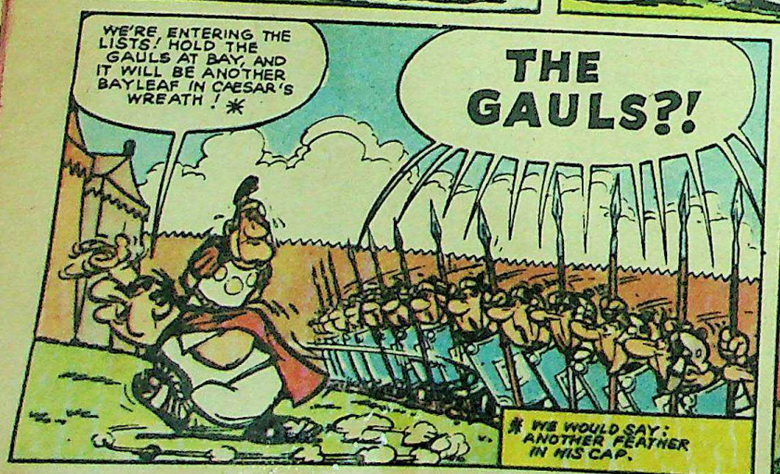

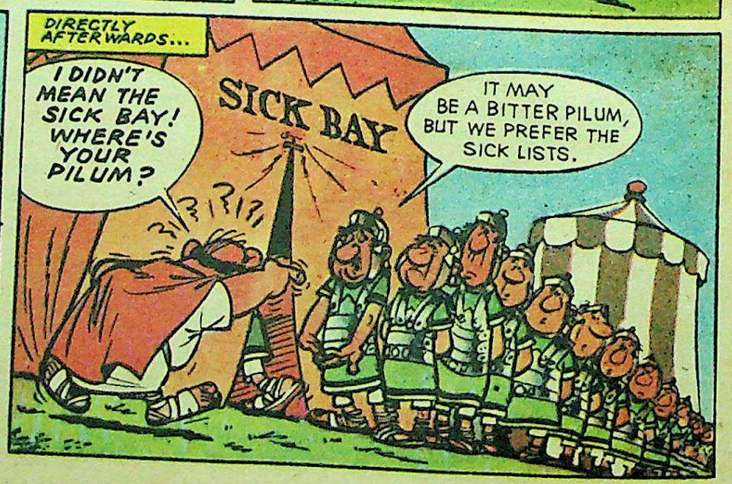

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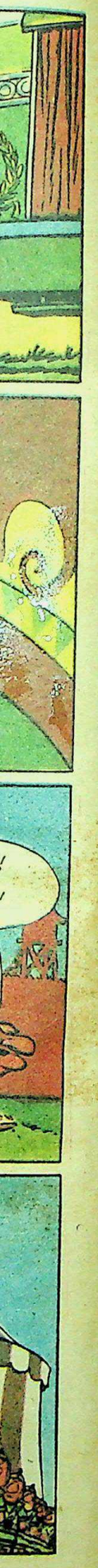

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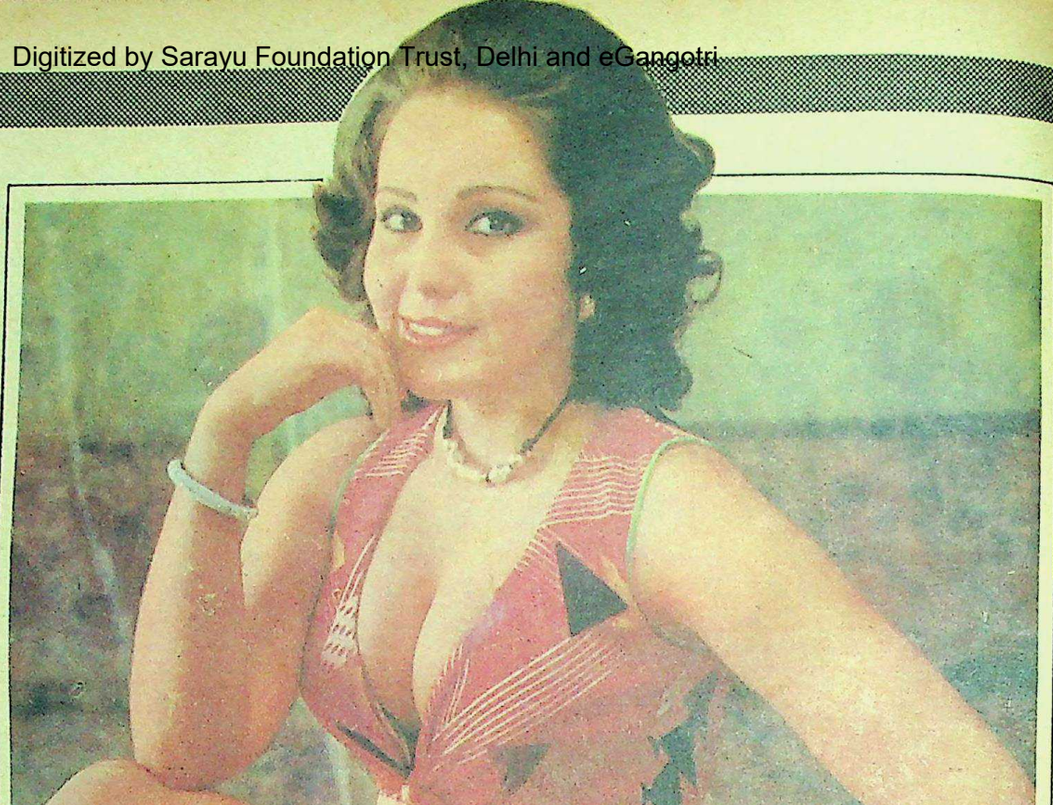
IN the burning issue of the recent rift between *Shatru* and *Amitabh Bachhan*, the usual stands have been taken by the two concerned parties. Amitabh is the tight-lipped (stiff-upper-lip, I should say) cold, offended person, deepening the mystery of what actually happened. It seems however, to have been sparked off by the release of *Kaala Pathhar*, irrespective of any other tensions there may have been under the surface before this. And needless to say, the other party in this cold war is Shatru, yakking about it to everyone. And with the shrugging of shoulders and the I-have-no-quarrel-with-him statements which he is making, there is the undercurrent of a taunt in what he says — he is very sure of his capacity he says; which means that the other person isn't.

IS the end of year proving to be a time for wedding in filmland? Following the Neetu-Rishi wedding scheduled for November 3 is a strong rumour that *Shabana Azmi* and *Shekhar* are going to follow suit as well. Maybe now her mom will be at peace, since her one wish has been that Shabana should marry.

Chaya Arya



Jezebel: What are the producers waiting for?

Nazneen: Leaning towards a big break

IN the flood of flop films that have certainly pulled *Hema Malini* down from where she ruled there is one which promises to be a resurrection for her — at least that is what trade circles predict. The film is Manoj Kumar's *Kranti*. Not only has she got a big good role, but Manoj has projected her in a very *desi*, sexy image which no one has done before. Trust Manoj the excellent visualiser to come up with the bull's-eye role for a falling star as in the case of Hema, or a rising one struggling to get up there, like Zeenat.

AND look who's going all out, at least verbally, to prove to the film world that she too, can act ... I mean really act. Like Zeenat, *Tina Munim* is now clenching a fist to all who care to listen and trying to assert that she wants to do dramatic roles of the type Benegal, Sathyu and Co. give their heroines. Imagine Tina playing a scheduled caste girl, an untouchable firebrand of the type Smita Patil played in *Manthan*. She wants to do at least the Rajashree type of films.

GHAR KI LAAJ the typical emotional family film which promised to draw swarms at the box-office, has not yet brought in the expected results. Perhaps like in most family films, a lot of month-to-month publicity will bring about the success Meanwhile *Kaala Pathhar* which has not been appreciated by many audiences, still has the largest number of prints showing in town, if that is any proof of its success. ■

Girish Shukla

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IS there a deliberate campaign going on against *Saritha?* Now that her role in *Nool Veli*, a Tamil tragedy, is much-talked-about, and the film is on its way to becoming a hit, Telugu and Tamil magazines are coming out with a number of personal stories concerning her. Since the day a Telugu magazine flashed a photograph showing her with a man, believed to be her husband, Saritha is in the news! Of course she hasn't denied her early marriage and since she doesn't live with her husband, she has never felt the need to speak about her marriage to any journalist. Some gossip-columnists suggest that she ditched her engineer husband because her films are doing well at the box-office. But this columnist knows for certain that he wasn't even around when Saritha began acting in her maiden film, *Maro Charitra*. And she's quoted as having said that she was married when she was just 16 and all that she got from him was loads of unhappiness. As she continued working not only in *Maro Charitra* but in three other films subsequently, she continued living in a small house in a depressing part of the city. Now with three hits to her credit, she can confidently move into a new better house.

WHAT if *Harry Pothen's* dreams of making his ex-mistress and star *Jayabharathy* act in Hindi films went kaput? She has at last arrived — via *Man Ka Angan*, a dubbed version of her Malayalam hit, *A Heart for Hire*. The film was premiered in Hyderabad recently and has had a good run : it's slated to be shown in Calcutta and Bombay in November. The subject is impotency : Jayabharathy is married to a masculine estate owner (Raghavan) who just can't perform. So she goes back to her old lover (Soman) but the guilt haunts her and disgusted with her coldness, he has a fling with a drama actress. The film has quite a few bedroom scenes, showing Jayabharathy trying desperately to "warm-up" her impotent husband : cheap-thrills enough to titillate our sex-starved audiences.

POTHEN had plans to remake *Rathi Nirvedham* into Hindi, with Jayabharathy playing the seductress of course. He had her tutored by Asha Chandra but one understands that despite Pothen's lack of interest in the project, some other producers have approached her to do the film in Hindi. Since permission to remake the film may not be given away, as Pothen himself is the producer, a slightly different version may go to the sets soon. In the meanwhile will Jayabharathy do something about her ever-expanding waistline, please?

JAI GANESH is the popular choice for the second lead in films starring Sivaji Ganesan but nobody can say how long this association will last. In the past Messrs Muthuraman, Srikanth, Vijayakumar and Rajnikant used to be the favourites. Sivaji is rather sensitive about his co-heroes getting the credit he feels even today he can carry a film to success on his own shoulders and he isn't wrong.

ACTRESS Latha's brother Rajkumar, who bears a strong resemblance to Kamalahasan, is paired with Hindi starlet Rajni Sharma in an up-and-coming Tamil film *Kashmir Kathali*. He's already having many offers but he wants to go slow till the release of his maiden venture and with sister Latha's excellent PR network, he should be able to go places quite fast.

SHARMILA TAGORE'S presence in director Sankaran Nair's Malayalam *Chuvanna Chiragugal* produced a good performance : she played a call-girl but the front-benchers were a bit disappointed. They seem to remember Sharmila Tagore in *An Evening In Paris* and *Talash*. What's the use of importing a Bombay star if she won't add glamour to a film, they felt.

NEWCOMER Vanithasri had high hopes that her maiden venture *Karai Kadantha Oruthi* would make her a big star. She plays a gypsy and has bared herself with grace but the film was an out-and-out amateurish affair, a case of inexperienced cooks producing tasteless broth.

HAS actor *Jai Shankar* parted company with Karunanidhi after the ruinous flops like *Aadu Pambey*? The grapevine has it that Jaishankar isn't interested in having celluloid digs at MGR since his dreams of gaining popularity as the DMK hero didn't materialise.

SUMITRA says, "Don't believe rumours about my alleged flings." Frankly speaking she has had very little from the gossip-mills; in fact, she's one of those gentle, adjustable stars, and what's wrong if she really likes *Ravikumar*, the up-and-coming Malayalam actor?

PIOUSJI

Rathi Devi : deserves better coverage

Subha

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WHO else, Flounder! Who else! Blacksmith Rusch, Franciscan monk Stanislaus. Preacher Hegge, rich man Ferber, and Abbot Jeschke. If during the lifetime of the abbess Margarete I was one and the other and successively this one and that one — her father, her kitchen boy, her opponents and victims — why would it not be conceivable that far away from her but wishing to help her by making pepper cheaper, I opened up the sea route to India to Portuguese caravels? Consider that the Sao Rafael dropped anchor off Calicut on March 28, 1498, at which time Kristin Rusch, an inhabitant of the Wicker Bastion, was pregnant with Fat Gret.

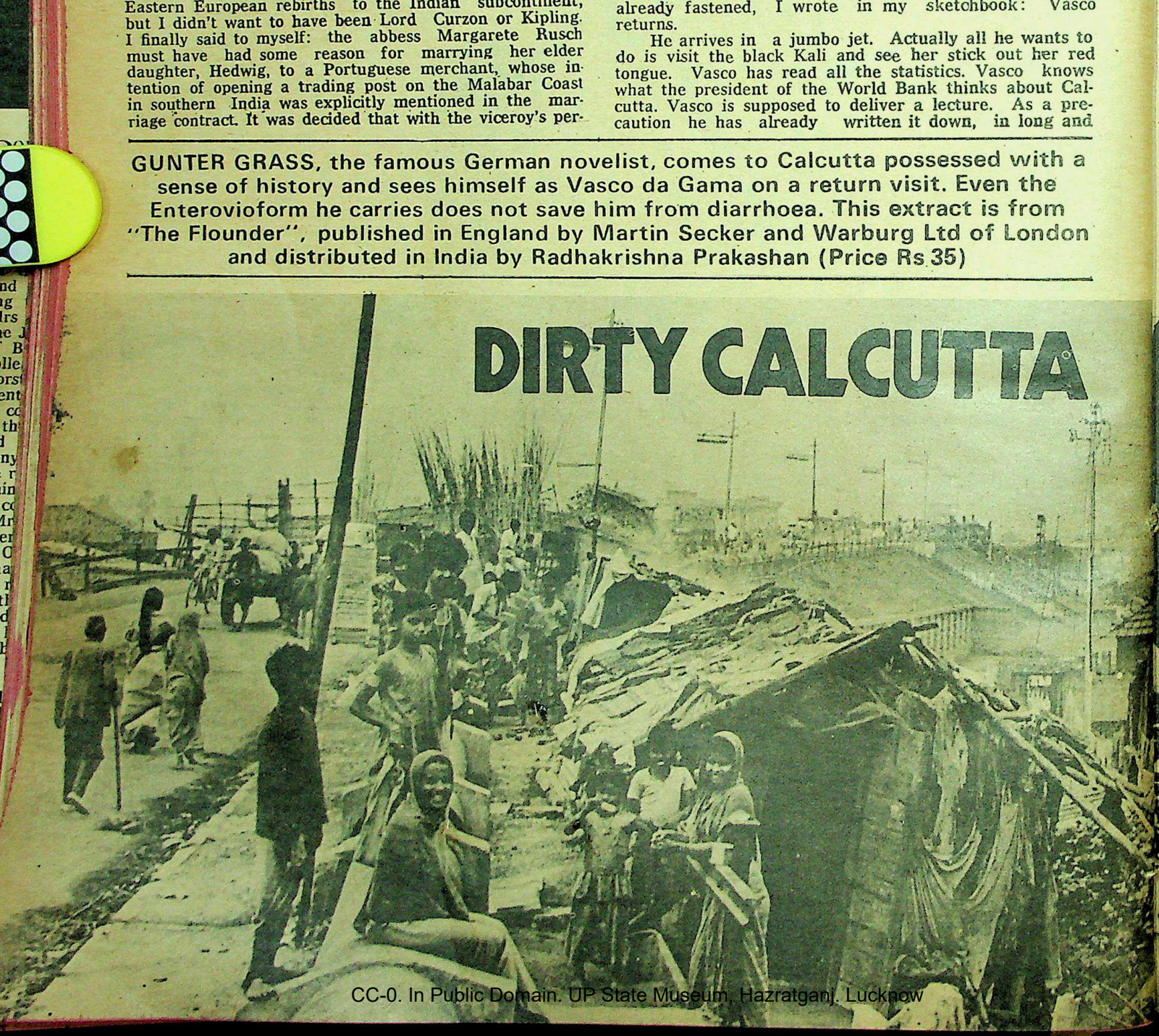
At first I merely toyed with this question along with my usual worries (Ilsebill), but then, when I'd started on my trip, it became an obsession. Possibly it was fear of the foreign surroundings that made me look for a role. (How was I to exist in Calcutta without one?) Or cursory readings in Hinduism beguiled me into extending my Eastern European rebirths to the Indian subcontinent; but I didn't want to have been Lord Curzon or Kipling. I finally said to myself: the abbess Margarete Rusch must have had some reason for marrying her elder daughter, Hedwig, to a Portuguese merchant, whose intention of opening a trading post on the Malabar Coast in southern India was explicitly mentioned in the marriage contract. It was decided that with the viceroy's permission the couple would take up residence at Cochin, and from there, as stipulated in the marriage contract, ship suitable amounts of pepper twice a year, for the feasts of Saint Martin and Saint John. The rule dating from the days of Vasco and of Alfonso d'Albuquerque that prohibited the entry of Christian women seems to have been relaxed, and the family struck root.

They settled in Cochin, where the merchant Rodrigues d'Evora and his wife, Hedwig, soon made a fortune in the spice trade—pepper, cloves, ginger, and cardamom—but the climate was too much for them. Along with four of their five children, they died before Margarete Rusch, who thanks to the stipulated spice shipments, was able to give Indian spices currency in Danzig and environs: tripe with ginger, millet curry, gingerbread, here in pepper sauce, pepper with anything and everything. And because my travel schedule included a visit to the seaport town of Cochin in the Indian state of Kerala, I decided to travel unofficially as Vasco da Gama. While still at the Frankfurt airport, though with my seat belt already fastened, I wrote in my sketchbook: Vasco returns.

He arrives in a jumbo jet. Actually all he wants to do is visit the black Kali and see her stick out her red tongue. Vasco has read all the statistics. Vasco knows what the president of the World Bank thinks about Calcutta. Vasco is supposed to deliver a lecture. As a precaution he has already written it down, in long and

GUNTER GRASS, the famous German novelist, comes to Calcutta possessed with a sense of history and sees himself as Vasco da Gama on a return visit. Even the Enterovioform he carries does not save him from diarrhoea. This extract is from "The Flounder", published in England by Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd of London and distributed in India by Radhakrishna Prakashan (Price Rs 35)

DIRTY CALCUTTA



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short sentences. "By a rough estimate..." says his speech. Well fed, Vasco suffers under the problem of World hunger. After many rebirths, Vasco is now a writer. He is writing a book in which he exists down through the ages: the Stone Age, the Early Christian, High Gothic, Reformation and Baroque eras, the age of the Enlightenment, et cetera.

Immediately after the takeoff he quotes himself: Somebody ought to write a report on hunger down through the ages, comparing past, present and future hunger. The famine of 1317, when there was nothing to eat but manna grits. The meat shortage of 1520, when dumplings of many kinds were invented. Hunger in Prussia before the introduction of the potato, and hunger in Bangladesh. The gestures and languages of hunger are in need of study. Behaviour patterns induced by the anticipation of hunger. Evocation of past famines: the rutabaga winter of 1917; the soggy corn bread of '45. What it really means to be starving. We need a catalogue of hunger quotations, says Vasco to himself, toying listlessly with refrigerated and therefore tasteless Air India pate.

The goddess Kali is looked upon as the female aspect of the god Shiva. Her power destroys. When in the mood she demolishes man's precarious structures. We are living in her era. (Vasco thinks in passing of his wife, Ilsebill, who likes to smash glasses and is a great hand at wishing.)

Even before the fuelling stop at Kuwait his eyeglasses get broken. But he is not unprovided for. Because of the humidity in Calcutta, Vasco has bought cotton trousers, shirts, and socks in a tropical-outfitting store in Hamburg. Vasco is supplied with Enterovioform. Vasco has had cholera and yellow fever shots. Vasco has thrice swallowed coloured antityphoid capsules on an empty stomach. Vasco is carrying five pounds of statistics in his luggage. Vasco is the guest of the Indian government. This is known on board the jumbo jet. Vasco is really someone else and is known under a different name.

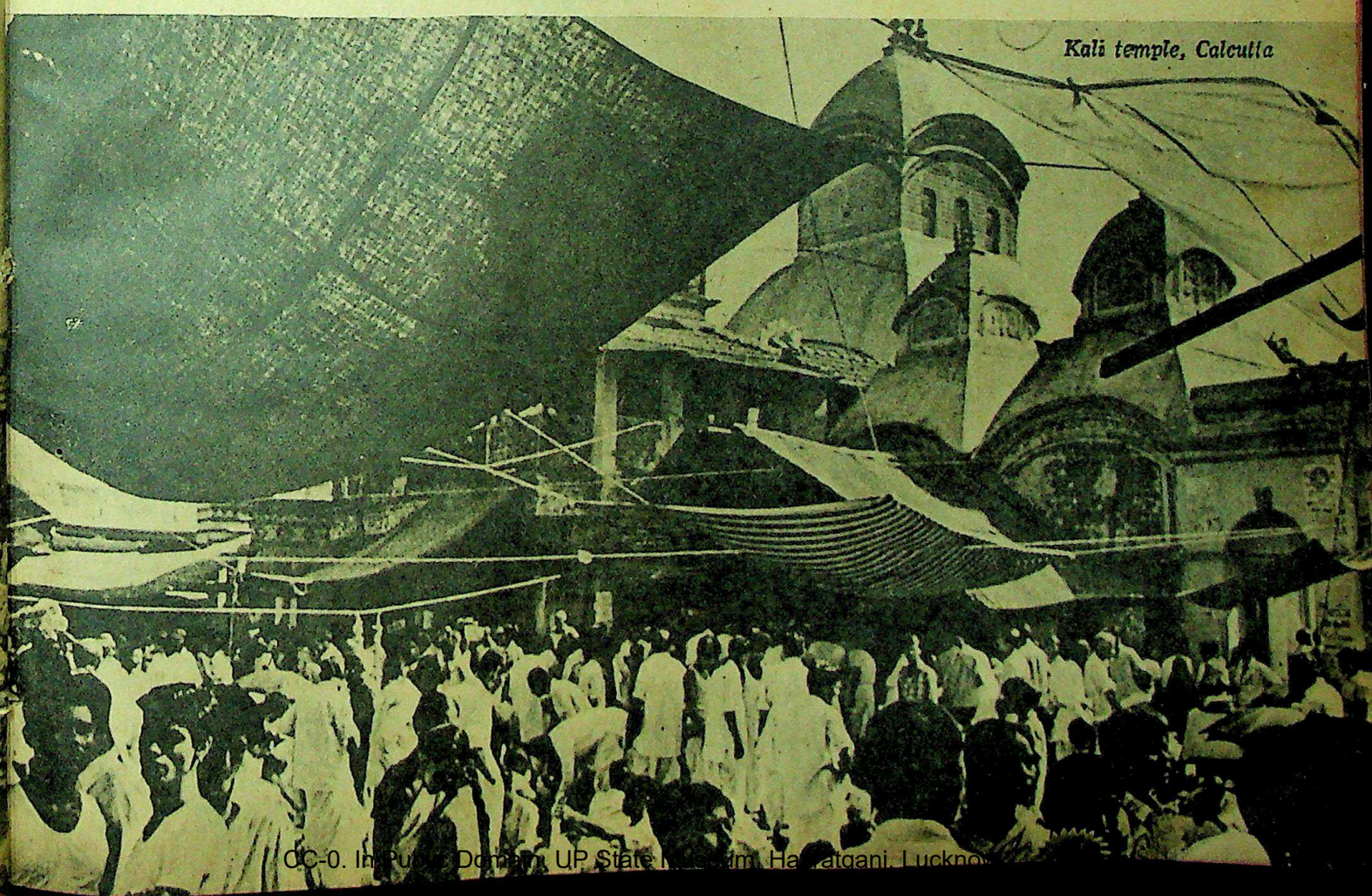
He ought to have spoken to his wool-gathering audience in Delhi about Kali and how she sticks out her red tongue, instead of citing roughly estimated figures replete with zeros, standing for protein deficiency, excess population, and mortality rates: abstract quantities worshipped only in footnotes, whereas the unfathomable Kali can be understood everywhere, but especially in Calcutta, on the Hooghly River. She who is hung with garlands of skulls and chopped-off hands. She the playful, commanding, terrible, Dravidian Kali. (She can also be called Durga, Parvati, Uma, Sati, or Padma.)

Still aboard the jumbo jet (without sleep), Vasco tries to construct a kinship between the neolithic goddess Awa, remarkable for her three breasts, and Kali, the four-armed strangler. He thinks up an uprising: Oppressed by matriarchy, the men in the swamplands of the Vistula estuary band together. In a frenzy of procreative activity (advised by the Flounder), they try to introduce the partriarchate. But Awa wins out and has a hundred and eleven men emasculated with stone axes. From then on she wears their dried penises strung on a chain around her vast pelvis, just as the Indian Kali decks herself out with chopped-off hands and skulls.

The moment he gets there, Vasco starts writing postcards. "Dear Ilsebill, everything here is strange..." Then, wishing to gain a visual impression of the strange country, he has his glasses made whole.

FOURTEEN ninety-eight: Vasco knows that he lied to himself then, just as he deceives himself now. Men are always rubbing up their aims to a high polish: For the glory of God... To save endangered humanity ... When what actually impelled him to find a sea route to India, the land of spices, was nautical ambition. It was other people, the "peppersacks", or shopkeepers, who made the big money.

At an evening reception (in his honour), some ladies who have studied in England question Vasco about the aims and motives of the women's liberation movement. Vasco tells them about a women's tribunal that is being held in Berlin but making headlines far beyond its confines. A captured Flounder, he tells them, is symbolically on trial; the Flounder embodies the principle of male



Kali temple, Calcutta

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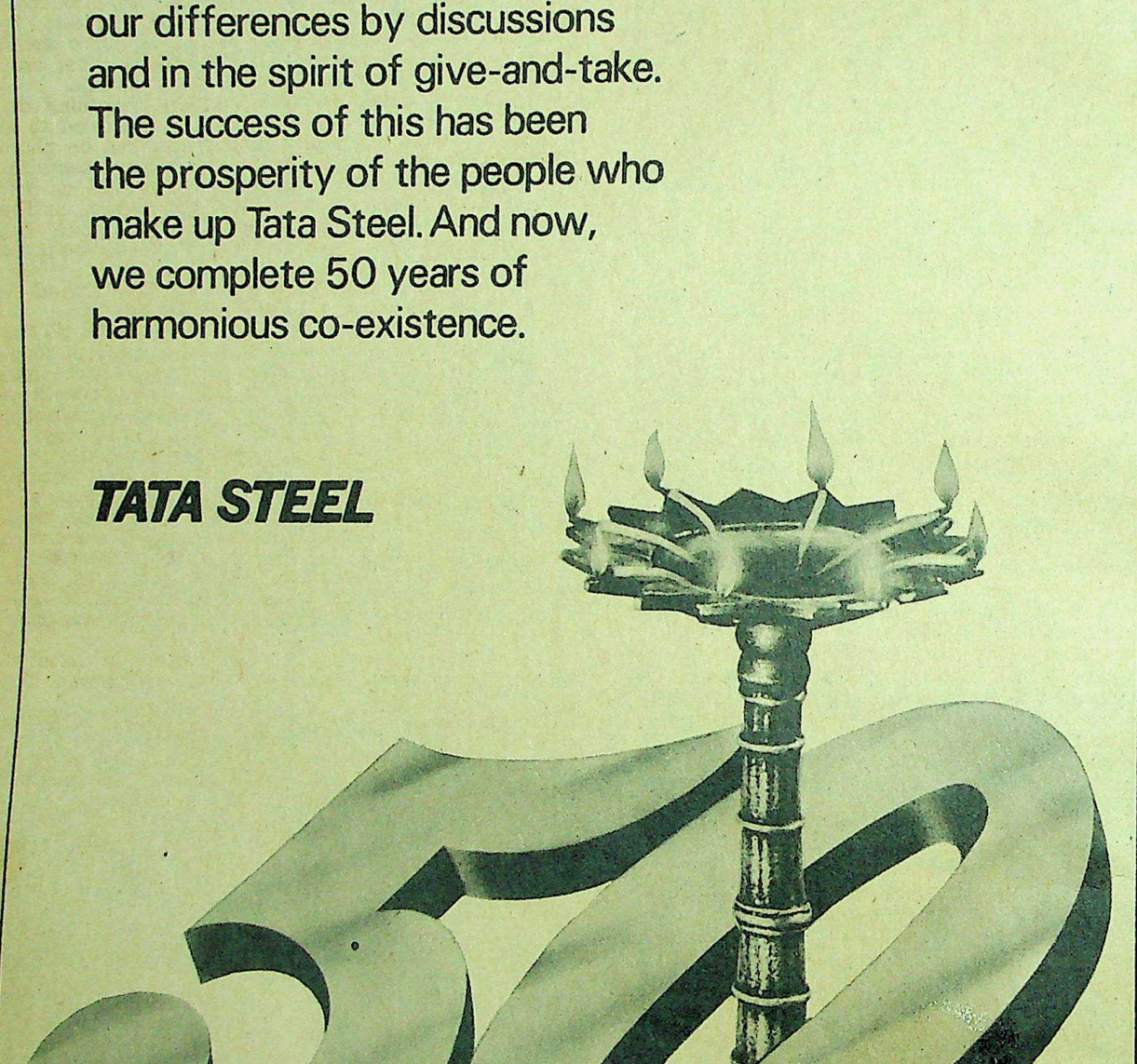

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domination; he is being tried in a bulletproof tank. Then Vasco suggests to the ladies that the liberation of Indian women be placed under the high patronage of the goddess Kali. (Mightn't Nehru's daughter, Indira, be an embodiment of her terrible aspect?) While pine nuts are being nibbled, his suggestion arouses interest, although the ladies, daughters of prominent Brahman families, prefer Durga, the mild aspect of the goddess; Kali, it seems, is more popular with the lower castes.

The next day Vasco doesn't feel like going to the museum; he wants to visit a slum. The slum dwellers look at him in amazement. He is intimidated by the cheerfulness of these poverty-stricken people and their unconquerable charm. The giggling of the ragged young girls who, because they have hips, show their hips. True, they beg with their hands and eyes, but they don't complain. (They're not starving, after all, just chronically undernourished.) It all looks so natural. As though that were how it had to be forever and ever. As though the growth of bigger and bigger slums was an organic process that shouldn't be disturbed, but at the most cured of its worst abuses.

Vasco (the discoverer) asks questions about work, wages, number of children, school attendance, family planning, intestinal flora, latrines. The answers confirm the statistics in his possession, no more. Then he is obliged to visit a large fortress (dating from his Mogul days) in which some units of the Indian army are now quartered. Looking down from the battlements at midday, Vasco tries to engrave a picture on his mind: five hundred ragged bodies lying in a flat field (whose grass covering has been eaten away by cows), looking as dead as if English machine guns, firing from the fort's embrasures, had mowed them down. Each bundle lies by itself. Dusty units. Corpses eager to rot. Their death-sleep warmed by the sun. Extras out of a colonial film, waiting for the next pan. A pity Vasco has left his 35-mm camera at the hotel. He makes a note of the word: death-sleepers. And I, he says, am supposed to have discovered this? In vain Vasco forbids himself to find these sleeping corpses, arranged by chance or some other law, beautiful. If he were tired and lay down among them he would look awkwardly out of place.

The chairman of the planning commission fills out a Nehru suit speaks past Vasco deep into the distance: We have, as you know, three thousand years of history behind us. We did not come into existence when that Portuguese discovered us by the sea route.

Vasco appears to be listening attentively while he tries in vain to recall the details of the 1498 landing at Calicut. (We sent a convict ashore to see what would happen.) The chairman of the planning commission explains that despite its infinitely various faces India is nevertheless one. No outsider can fully know us. Calcutta, he says, is indeed a problem, but there are many artists living in this fascinating city. And Bengali poetry...

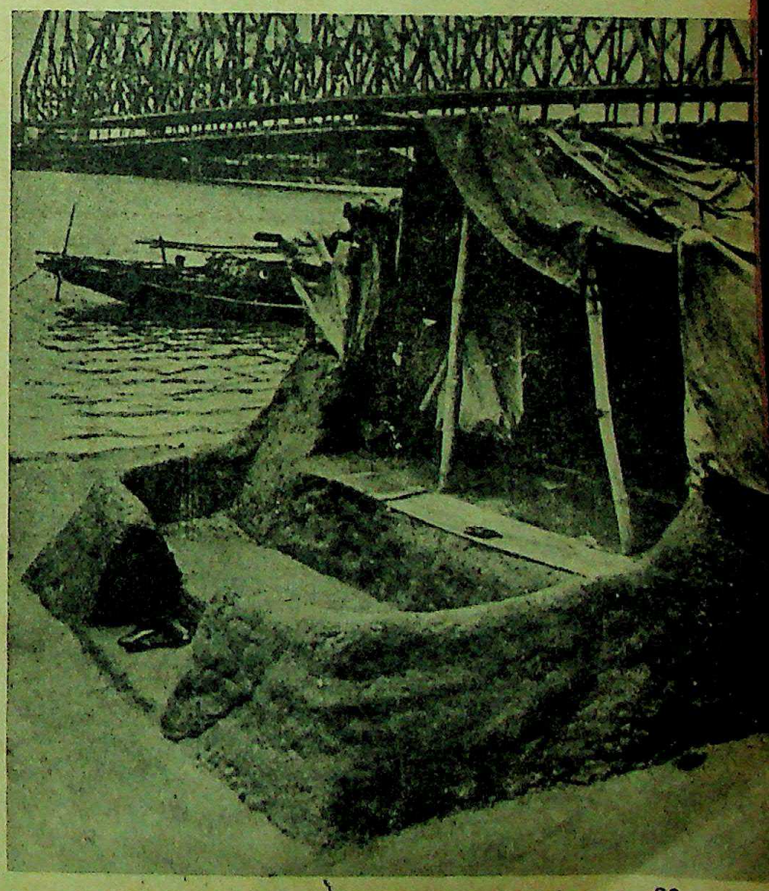
AT the airport a wreath of flowers is thrown over Vasco's head. Flags everywhere (not on his account). The worldchampionship table-tennis matches, now being held in Calcutta, are viewed as a political event. The International Table Tennis Association has excluded South Africa and Israel, but the Palestinians have been invited. Only Holland protests. The Brazilian contestants lack a few inoculations and are quarantined. It has taken only four weeks to build the modern table-tennis stadium. The city government of Calcutta with its three thousand slum districts, here called bustees, is proud of the achievement. Because of the table tennis tournament all the hotels are full, so Vasco is housed in the great apartments of the former viceroy's palace, since independence the residence of the provincial governor. Vasco's room is twenty feet high: the bed, under its canopy of mosquitonetting, is in the middle. Two ventilators and three electric fans keep the air in motion. On the writing desk, two inkwells from Queen Victoria's day. Vasco jots down notes about the farm cook Amanda Woyke. Her correspondence with Count Rumford. Both wanted to combat world hunger with giant kitchens, she with her West Prussian potato soup, he with his Rumford soup for the poor. Vasco writes: But the Kashubians couldn't get used to potatoes just as esmolina is repellent to the rice-eating Bengalis, even when they are starving. So the Kashubians continued for a long time to eat too little millet, until at last they consented to fill up on potatoes.

The governor's palace is known as Raj Bhavan. On every side, quietly moving servants in slitted red coats under white turbans. They fold their hands when they greet Vasco. The soldiers in the corridors salute. The cook has been in the house for thirty-six years. He has cooked for Englishmen and their guests. At table four servants wait on Vasco. The aged cook calls his cooking European. At breakfast (ham and eggs), Vasco is served the newspaper with the latest word of the table-tennis matches. Through an aide the governor requests the honour of Vasco's company at luncheon. Vasco dreads the meal with the governor. (Good God! What am I doing here!) He wants to go home to his Ilsebill.

But Calcutta, this crumbling, scabby, swarming city, this city that eats its own excrement, has decided to be cheerful. It wants its misery—and misery can be photographed wherever you go—to be terrifyingly beautiful: the decay plastered with advertising posters, the cracked pavement, the beads of sweat adding up to nine million souls. People pour out of rail road stations which, like Vasco only yesterday, have daily diarrhoea: white-shirted maggots in a shitpile with Victorian Excrescences, a shitpile that dreams up new curlicues every minute. And on top of everything betel reddened spittle.

On foot across the Hooghly Bridge and back. On the left side junk for sale: worn-out shoes, coconut fibre, school slates, faded shirts, primitive tools, kitsch from Hong Kong, native kitsch. The right-hand sidewalk is bordered by groups of peasants from the surrounding villages selling purple onions, yellow, sand-gray, or bright-red lentils, ginger root, sugar cane, molasses pressed into cakes, unhusked rice, coarse-ground wheat, chapatty. The bridge, which has no central support, vibrates under the two-way traffic of bare feet, trucks, rickshaws and oxcarts. Suddenly in the midst of the crowd Vasco is overcome with joy. He too, wants to chew betel. But when he looks down from either bridgehead, there is nothing but misery: he is aghast at the sight of hollowed-out women and old men with shrunken heads upon whom death has set its mark.

There are no separate slums, or bustees, in Calcutta. The whole city is one bustee, or slum, and neither the



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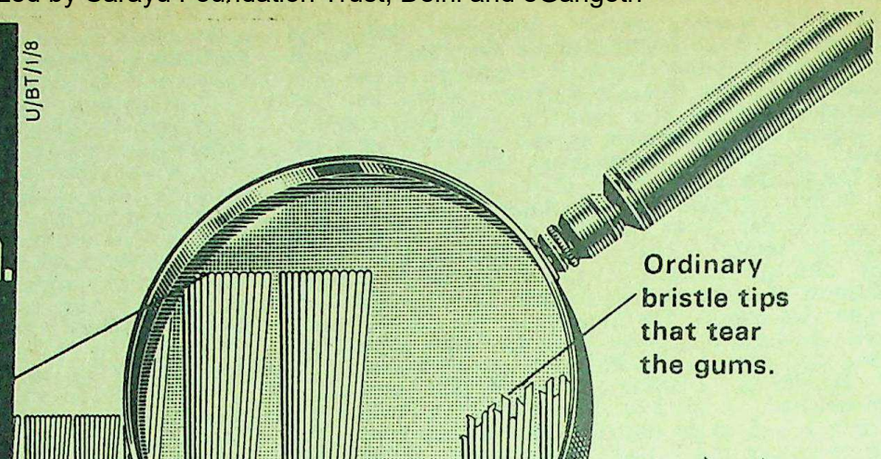

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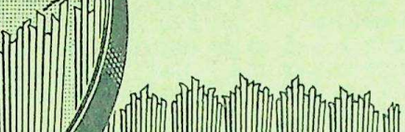

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middle nor the upper classes can segregate themselves from it. High school girls with their books can be seen plodding down the street among bundles of rags the same age as themselves, forming islands in the traffic, then merging again with the great, flowing mass. Wherever the traffic leaves a free space, there are people living in the roadway. Side by side with parks and rundown mansions one sees villagelike groups of cardboard and sheet-metal shacks. People flushed into the city by the last famine (just a year ago), those whom the bustees have expelled or found no room for stay on in such places. They come from Bihar; they are strangers among the Bengalis. At night they squat around fires outside the shacks and cook what they've been able to find in the garbage. The collecting instinct is all they have left. The fires are fed with cow dung or cakes of straw and coal dust. Here the Stone Age is staging a comeback and has already made deep inroads. The buses look like an archaeologist's dream. Vasco takes refuge in the governor's palace.The palace guard knows him by now.

On the programme: tea with a film maker who is flying to Chicago tomorrow to show American students his Calcutta film. Smilingly we converse—two sophisticated producers. Vasco asks about the possibility of a film in which a reborn Vasco da Gama visits modern India, fears the goddess Kali, comes to Calcutta, gets diarrhoea, and lives in the governor's palace. Then he talks about the cooks of his various time-phases: the neolithic Awa, the High Gothic Dorothea, the revolutionary Sophie, and the cooking abbess Margarete Rusch, for whose cookery a drop in the price of pepper was important. He mentions the Flounder and his activities since the Neolithic era. The film maker nods. Yes, he says, a similar fish in a similar function has been known in India since the Dravidian period, and this fish was hostile on principle, though ineffectually, to Kali.

Then the film maker talks about the next film festival and in passing, about the dead bodies in the streets of Calcutta, which are collected toward morning. It has always been this way. In 1943, when he was a child, two million Bengalis had starved because the British army had used up all the rice stocks in the war against Japan. Had a film been made about it? No, unfortunately not. You can't film starvation.

Wherever he goes in Calcutta, at the film makers, with Mother Theresa's nuns, at the governor's luncheon in his honour, everyone wants to know what his next book is about—as if that could make any difference to India.

Even on his visit to a bustee, the planner from the Department of Economic Planning asks him literary questions. Vasco explains himself in detail. The book deals with the history of human nutrition. It all happens in the region of the Vistula estuary, though actually it might just as well take place at the mouth of the Ganges or here on the banks of the Hooghly River. The goddess in his book is called Awa. Unfortunately he knows much too little about the Dravidian Kali.

Then Vasco takes refuge in statistical questions and gets answers he could have found in statistical tables. There are three thousand bustees in Calcutta. "We prefer not to call them slums." The population of the bustees ranges from five hundred to seventy-five thousand. That adds up to three million bustee dwellers. An average of eight to ten people to a room. Ten to twelve huts form an open square around a court. Excrement and kitchen waste flow down the main streets in open gutters. In this particular bustee the schoolroom holds some fortyfive children. A social worker is in charge of it. The same cheerfulness: so proud to have a school. Vasco tries to imprint the stench on his memory. Hallmarks of misery; the usual injustice. Extortionate rents are paid to hut owners who also live in the bustee. Everybody shits where he can and must. True enough, Vasco writes, but compared to Frankfurt am Main, the people here are alive. Later on he wants to cross out this sentence.

The bustee dwellers come from the countryside. To clean up Calcutta, says the planner, you'd first have to clean up the villages. So Vasco goes to the villages; mud huts under coconut palms. He sees the round storehouses, mounted on trestles to keep out the rats, but empty. A smiling peasant woman with a cluster of seven children sends her eldest boy up a palm tree. Vasco drinks the coconut milk and remembers. There's not enough water in the fields for the young rice plants. The roadside canal has been drained; it's supposed to be dredged no one knows when. The peasants are deeply in debt mostly for their daughters' weddings. They pay forty per cent interest. Untouchables are not allowed to help with the harvest. Men and women bathe in a number of pools where last month's rain water is fast evaporating. All bathe in their clothes. (Mohammedan puritanism followed by Victorian puritanism). All the children have worms. Vasco agrees: a beautiful village. He likes the coconut palms, the banana trees, the mud huts, the wormy children and the smiling women. But the village is sick and on its way to becoming a Calcutta.

China and Czechoslovakia are leading in the table-tennis matches. The newly built table-tennis stadium is almost empty, since the tickets are priced too high even for the middle class.

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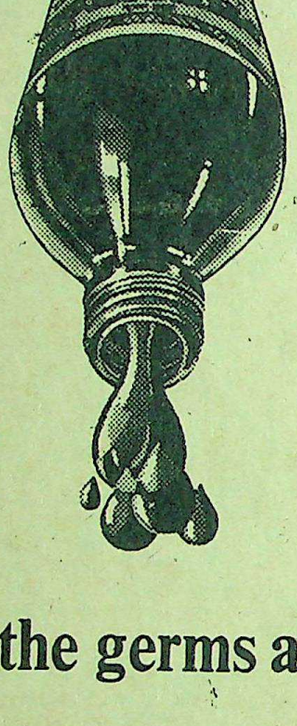
A few drops a day



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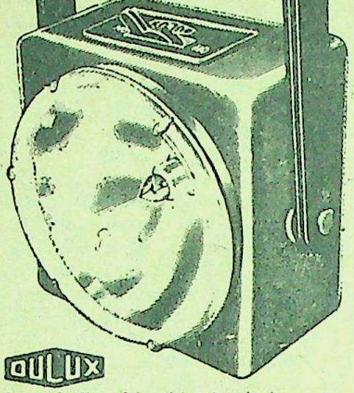

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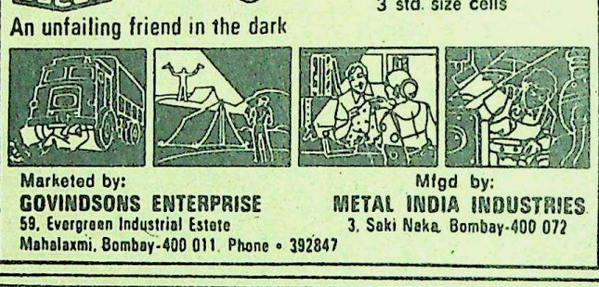

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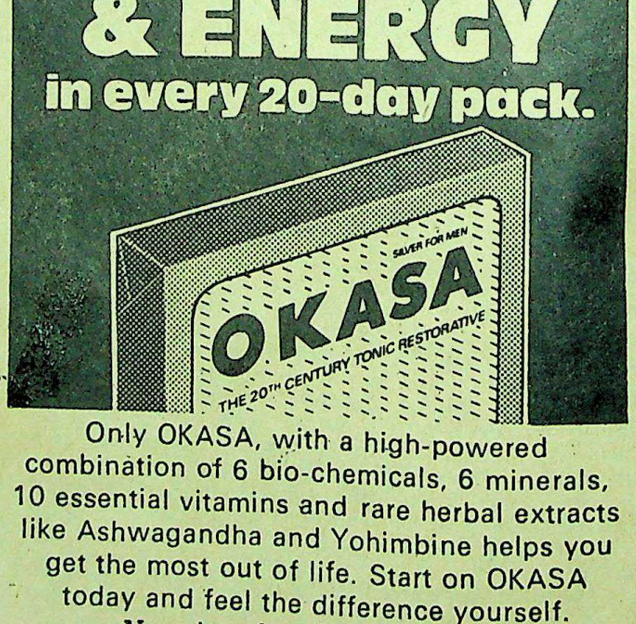

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AFTER his four servants have brought him the morning paper and served his breakfast (poached eggs), Vasco visits the former premier of the West Bengal People's Front government. He finds himself facing an elderly gentleman, bolt upright in a white cotton garment stirred by the draft. No, he doesn't belong to the Moscow-inspired party, he's a Marxist Communist. Without bitterness he names defeats. Vasco learns how the Naxalites have split off and regrouped as a revolutionary movement. So many intelligent young people, says the Marxist with regret, and adds ironically: Of good family. When they found they weren't getting anywhere—because all the stories about "liberated territories" were Chinese propaganda—the Naxalites started murdering their former comrades, some four hundred Marxists. No says the old man, Maoism cannot be transplanted to India. Basically Naxalite radicalism is just another gesture of bourgeois impotence.

In this country, Vasco hears himself say, I'd be a radical myself. He decides (so many characters swarming inside him) to invent for his book a conversation between Lena Stübbe, cook at the Danzig-Ohra soup kitchen and Comrade August Bebel, who happens to be on his way through (1895), in which they take up the question of whether working-class women should emulate "bourgeois" cookery, or whether they require a proletarian cook book.

The melancholy (Brahman) Marxist sits in a bare room and flexes his knees. From time to time a laconic telephone conversation. On the walls, side by side with three wooden wild ducks that pass as ornaments, a small picture of Lenin. Only last week there were two attacks on comrades. In front of the house is parked a black automobile, surrounded by the Marxist's bodyguards.

Next Vasco visits poets. They read one another (in English) poems about flowers, monsoon clouds, and the elephant-headed god, Ganesha. An English lady (in a sari) lisps impressions of her travels in India. Some forty people in elegant, spacious garments sit spiritually on fibre mats under a draft-propelled fan; outside the windows, the bustees are not far away.

Vasco admires the fine editions of books, the literary chitchat, the imported pop posters. Like everyone else he nibbles pine nuts and doesn't know which of the lady poets he would like to fuck if the opportunity presented itself. Why not a poem about a pile of shit that God dropped and named Calcutta. How it swarms, stinks, lives, and gets bigger and bigger. If God had shat a pile of concrete, the result would have been Frankfurt. Calcutta airport is called Dum-Dum. The formerly British munitions factory there is still producing. Christian hypocrites used to say that the enormous holes made by the truncated, expanding Dum-Dum bullets spared the victims the usual tortures (of belly wounds, for instance). The surviving Naxalites are imprisoned in Dum-Dum Prison. Hope has no place in a poem about Calcutta. Write with pus. Rip off scabs...

A nun from Wattenscheid, belonging to the Order of Mother Theresa, takes Vasco to a lepers' bustee. A child is lying there, half dead. With her white hand, the nun shoos the flies away the half-dead child. Vultures are perched on the tile roofs of the stinking slaughterhouse across the way. All you can do is walk through step across, look away.

Vasco no longer knows where he is or has been. Now in a day nursery—so affectionate these two-year olds, Now in a school, where the children sing something Catholic with closed eyes. Now in a foundling home... a childless Brahman couple adopt the newborn son of an untouchable mother. Vasco wishes them well. Now milk is being distributed outside a dispensary—all so inadequate. A resolute nun keeps the crowd in order. Sister Ananda tells me what Mother Theresa says about the problems of Calcutta. "Maybe we're only a drop of water in the ocean," she says, "but the ocean wouldn't be full without us."

No, don't look. Step across. Stop your ears with lead. Practise glassy-eyed indifference. Leave pity in your suitcase with you shirts and socks, or stick a bank note in your guidebook at the place where it says "Calcutta." Or look. Stop. Listen. Feel moved and ashamed. Show your red tongue, because pity is small change and quickly dispensed.

Now in Kalighat, where the ragged bundles that are picked up off the street at night are (for once) given ample helpings of rice at Mother Theresa's home for the dying. Next door (at last) the temple of the goddess Kali. A priest explains and Vasco pays him five rupees. In the sacrificial area blood covered with flies recalls the goats that were sacrificed this morning. Young women scratch little good-luck symbols in the blood drenched clay. Close by there's a tree for mothers who wish for children, lots of children, another child, more children, more and more children, a child (or two or three) year in, year out. The mothers hang wishing stones on the tree. The tree is full of wishing stones, all signifying children, more children. Wherever Vasco looks, flowery madness and Catholic type Hindu kitsch. The black Kali is hidden behind the crush of the faithful.

Vasco stands to one side. He wants to know why she sticks out her red tongue. The priest explains that after Kali had killed all the demons (and other counter-revolutionaries) she couln't stop killing and only came to her senses after setting her foot on the chest of her recumbent male aspect, Shiva. Then Kali was ashamed, and for shame she stuck out her tongue. Sticking out the tongue has been regarded as a sign of being ashamed ever since. Nowhere has Vasco seen a minister, governor, Brahman or lisping poet stick out his tongue. He has seen the pale tongues of cows grazing gently in garbage. He has seen how undernourishment turns children blond. He has seen mothers dipping their whining babies' pacifiers in brackish sugar water. He has seen flies on everything under the sun. He has seen life before death.

Vasco takes refuge in the newspaper. Side by side with a story about the strike of the food truckers he reads the latest about the tabletennis matches. The members of the Swedish team have the runs. After a short stroll around town they flee back to their hotel in horror. Now they talk of leaving ahead of time. And Vasco writes his Ilsebill, now in her third month of pregnancy, horrified half sentences on a postcard showing a glossy picture of the black Kali: "This place defies understanding. Reason won't get you anywhere. The lepers are worse than I thought. I've met a nun who believes with all her might and is always cheerful. The heat is something. Leaving tomorrow. Flying to the Malabar coast, where Vasco da Gama landed..."

Send a postcard with regards from Calcutta. See Calcutta and go on living. Meet your Damascus in Calcutta. As alive as Calcutta. Chop off your cock in Calcutta (in the temple of Kali, where young goats are sacrificed and a tree is hung with wishing stones that cry out for children, more and more children). In Calcutta, encoffined in mosquito netting, dream of Calcutta. Get lost in Calcutta. On an uninhabited island write a book about Calcutta. At a party call Calcutta an example (of something). Rethink the Frankfurt/Manneheim area as Calcutta. Misbehaved children, women like Ilsebill who are never satisfied and men who live for schedules —curse them, wish them all in Calcutta. Recommend Calcutta to a young couple as a good place to visit on their honey-moon. Write a poem called "Calcutta" and stop taking planes to far-off places. Get a composer to set all the projects for cleaning up Calcutta to music and have the resulting oratorio (sung by a Bach society) open in Calcutta. Develop a new dialectic from Calcutta's contradictions. Transfer the UN to Calcutta.

When Vasco da Gama, hardly able to remember his first landing returned reborn to Calcutta he decided to level the city with ten thousand bulldozers and rebuild it by computer. Thereupon the computer vomited up three thousand sixteen story bustees another vast slum only deep frozen and much lonelier beyond hope of disaster and totally isolated, since all noise had been absorbed. And then Calcutta died, though the living standard had been raised just above the destitution level. Very little was lacking only the things that matter. People who multiply, as a form of self assertion. All the same says Vasco to himself infant mortality has dropped. Or perhaps if all the existing statistical charts and tables were pulped a new study could be financed on the proceeds. Let's not waste another word on Calcutta. Delete Calcutta from all guidebooks. In Calcutta, Vasco gained four and a half pounds. ■

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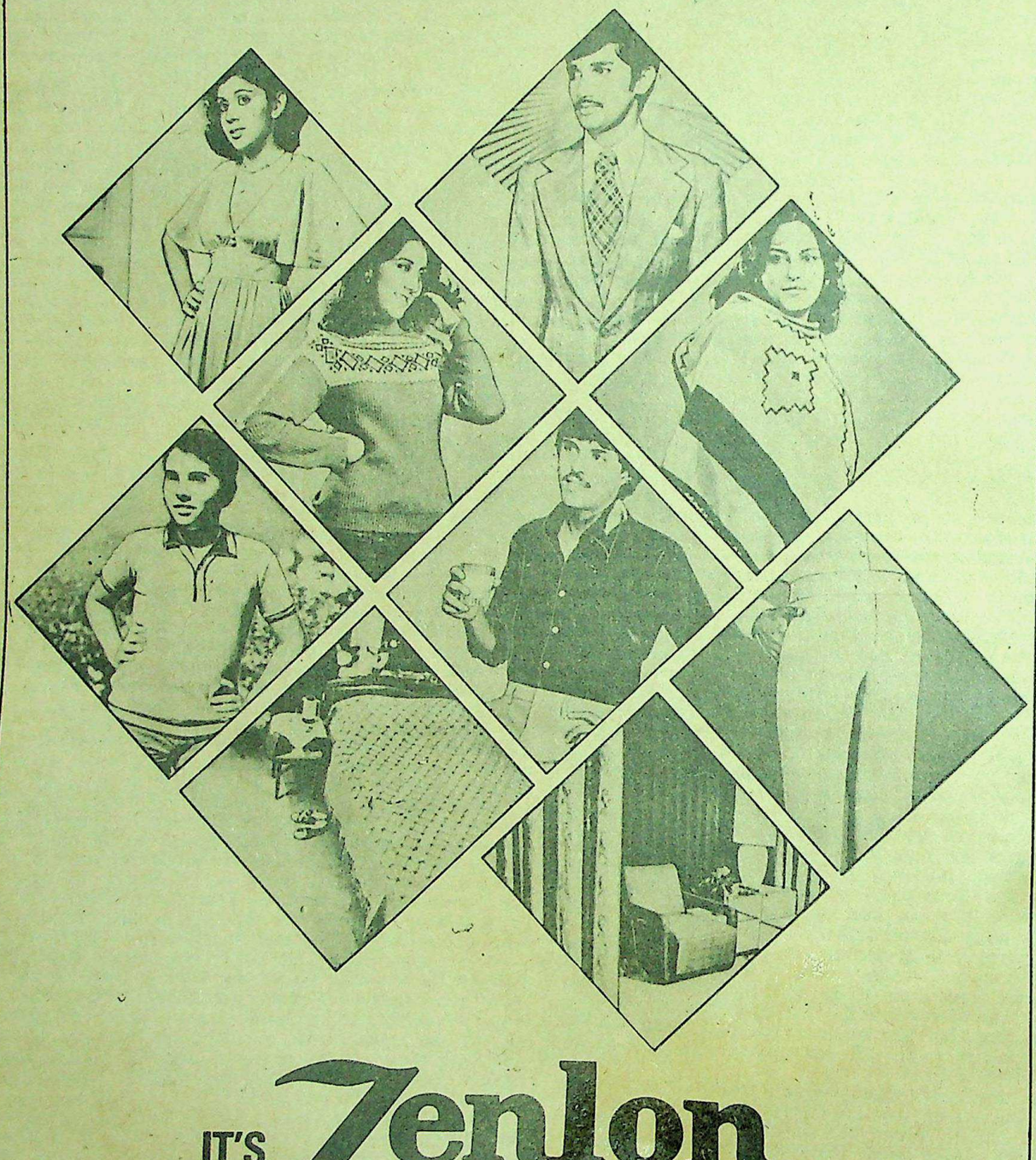
WHICH YARN CAN PRODUCE FABRICS AS DIFFERENT AS THESE



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Beginning November 4

This week the Sun and Uranus are in Libra, Neptune and Venus are in Scorpio, Kethu is in Aquarius and Mars is in Cancer. Jupiter and Rahu are conjoined in Leo and Saturn alone is in Virgo. The Moon will be moving through Taurus and Gemini from Aries.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) A week of mixed fortunes is in store for you. You are advised not to depend on others; learn to be self-reliant. A lot of obstacles will be placed in your path. Your words will not carry much weight. The second part of the week is more favourable for your ventures. It would be wise to postpone important matters. Financially, this will be a bad week. **Good dates:** 4, 5 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Do not hesitate to ask your friends for help. The problems which you are facing now cannot be solved without the help of influential people. For businessmen, this will be a busy week. New contracts and business deals are in the offing. Women and children will have an enjoyable time. Letters are not likely to bring good news. **Good dates:** 6, 8 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

GEMINI (March 23 — June 21) Be on your guard throughout this week. Do everything very carefully, otherwise you may have good reasons to repent in the near future. Businessmen are advised to pay great attention to minute details. Differences with business partners must be solved amicably. Avoid harsh words in your own interests. You may have to undertake a short journey. **Good dates:** 6, 8 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) An exciting week of fun and pleasure is in store for you. Soon everything should begin to proceed smoothly. Due to your forgetful nature you may lose a valuable object. Make a valiant effort to win over your enemies. A good week for speculation, gambling and betting. For romantic ventures, this is an ideal period. Stop worrying about debts. **Good dates:** 5, 6, 8 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) An unlucky week is forecast for you. New developments will need all your time and attention. Let your own intuition and hunches be your guide. Time is not yet ripe for you to achieve success. Avoid making nasty decisions. Financially, this will be a trying period. Domestic affairs, too, could pose a problem. Talk less and avoid all controversies. **Good dates:** 6, 7, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North and South

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) A misunderstanding with business associates could prove very expensive in the long run. Try your level best to reach an understanding at the earliest. You will need the help of your close friends. You may inherit some property. Businessmen will enter into new contracts. Avoid doubtful love adventures. A bad week for gambling. **Good dates:** 6, 9 and 10. **Lucky number:** 1. **Favourable direction:** North.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) This is going to be a thrilling week full of adventures. Your achievement curve is likely to soar up. Letters will bring good news. For sportsmen this period should prove very lucky. Businessmen will have a roaring time. The domestic scene will be a source of joy and happiness. Take the advice of your elders before launching a new venture. **Good dates:** 5, 7, 8 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Go ahead with your schemes and plans. The stars favour you as never before. A lot of good things will materialise this week. Most of your problems are likely to come to an end. Even your enemies will come forward to help you. Take advantage of the prevailing trend to fulfil all your ambitions. You may inherit some property. **Good dates:** 5, 6, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 6. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Curb erratic tendencies. Professional, domestic and social activities should prove very satisfying this week. You must make full use of the favourable stellar influences. The achievements of your children will bring happiness. Do not be afraid to seek favours from those in authority. Check extravagance and keep your temper under control. **Good dates:** 4, 5 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 5. **Favourable directions:** South and West.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Deal tactfully with those in authority and show proper respect towards women and elders. Your affairs will progress and you may gain unexpected benefits. Guard against deception and treachery. Refrain from hasty decisions as they may prove very expensive. Look after your health. Do not be afraid to seek favours. **Good dates:** 5, 6, 8 and 10 **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 3. **Favourable direction:** East.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) You will be praised by your friends and relatves. This promises to be a good week for love and matrimonial affairs. Your family has no worries. Avoid making hasty decisions and vocational changes at this juncture. Take care of your health. You will be able to overcome all your problems. Domestic affairs could pose a problem. **Good dates:** 4, 5 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable directions:** North-east and South

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Do not be afraid to adopt original business methods to maximise profits. Luck will smile on you this week. Members of the opposite sex will help you in unerpected ways. Exercise caution in love affairs. You need a long rest to regain physical and mental vitality. **Good dates:** 4, 8, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 6. **Favourable direction:** South

M. B. RAMAN

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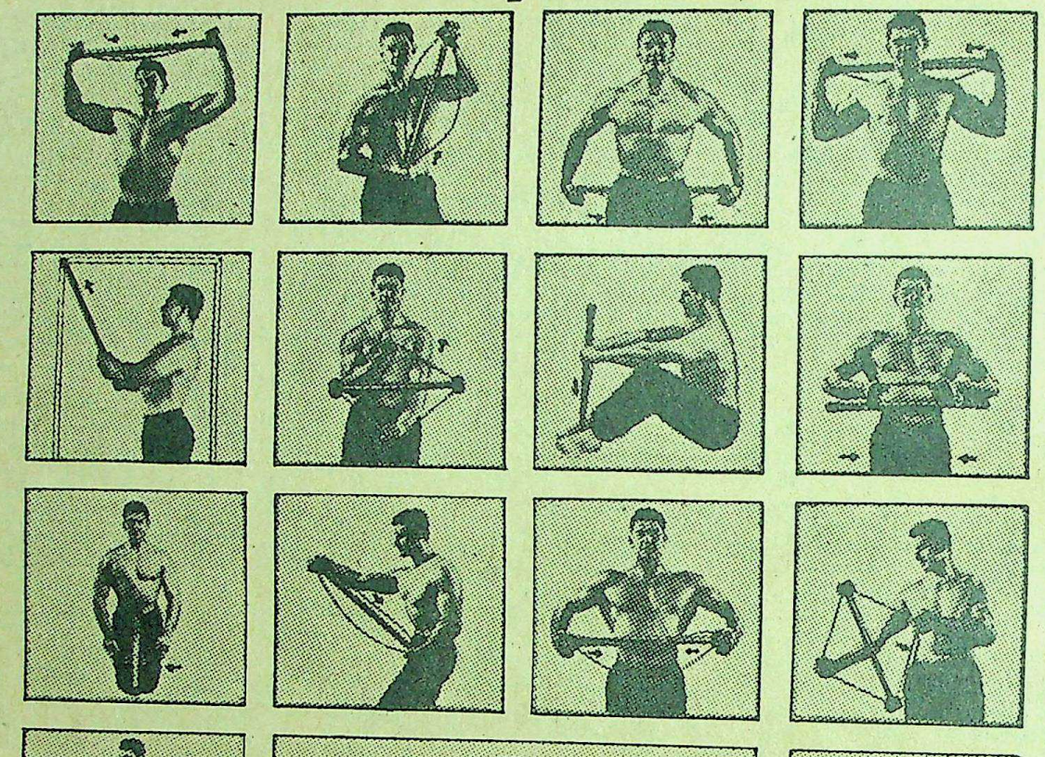
the Bullworker challenge

If within 14 days—no results...



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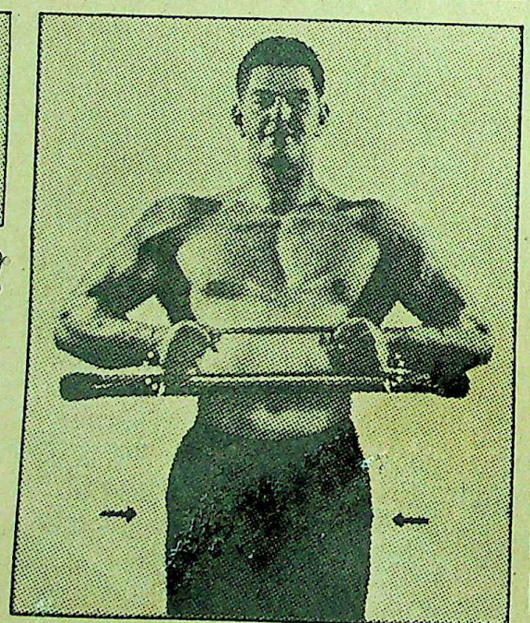

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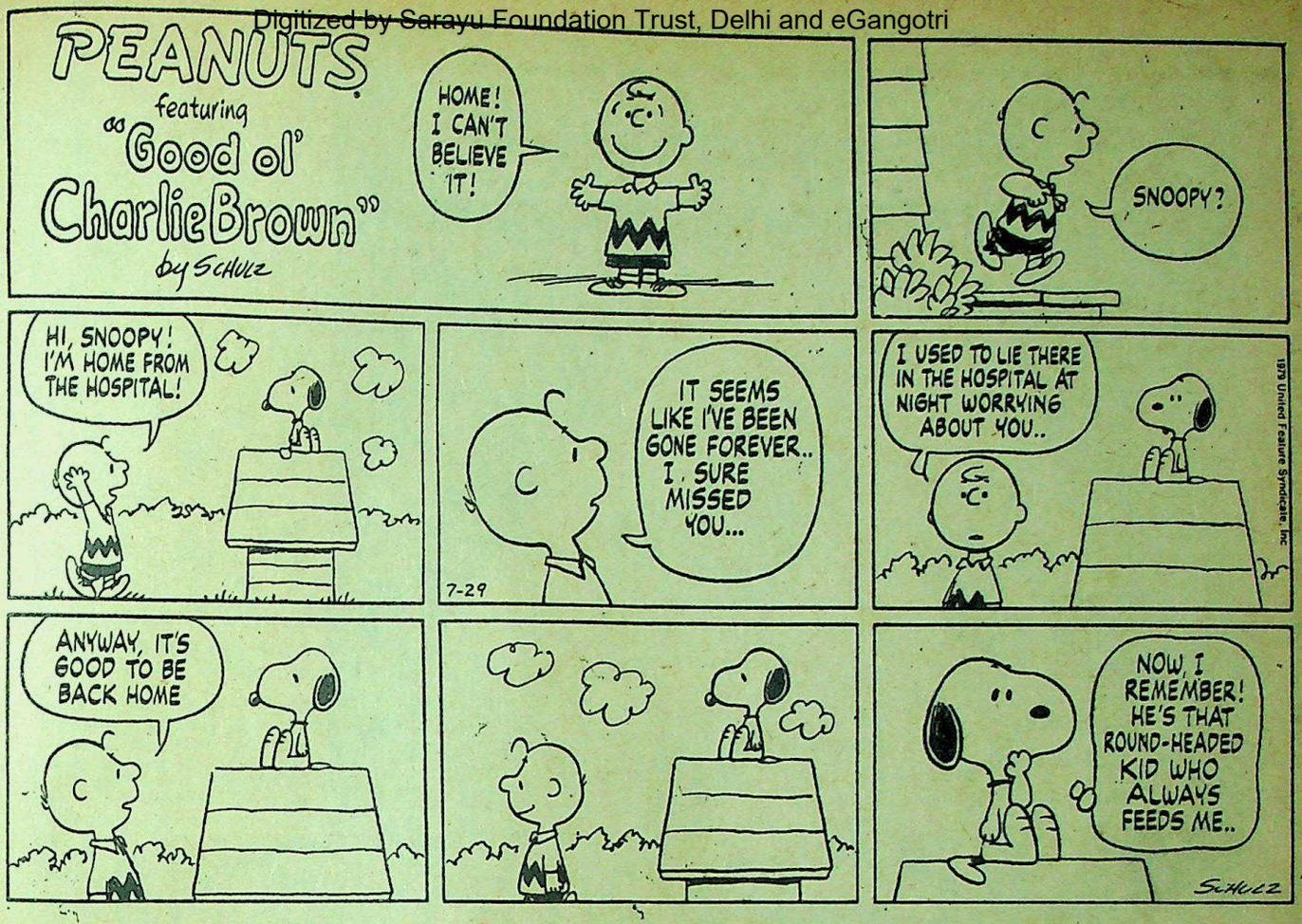

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The good taste of Mangharam wafers. You can hear it loud and clear.

Munch two for breakfast. Crunch two for lunch. Nightcap with two more. Mangharam Wafers. The taste is so good you can't stop with one!

In eight yummy flavours —

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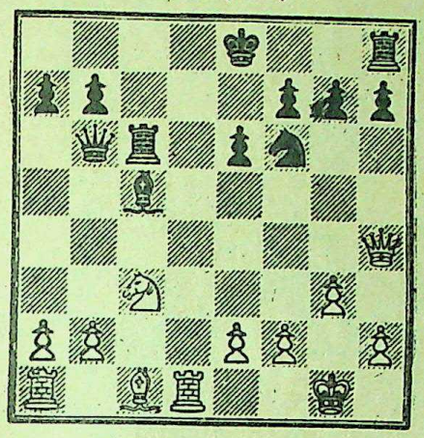
chess

Radulov (black)



Portisch (white) to move
Position after Black's 14th move

Game of the month – thunderbolt

The value of opening theory is much overestimated, but every so often someone comes up with a theoretical innovation which effectively decides the game on the spot. It is the risk one takes when playing theoretical lines that the opponent may have found in his home analysis something the books overlook, but such instances are relatively rare. The danger is no greater than that of crossing the road. Today's game, however, is an example of a grandmaster being run over. Black is happily following a line regarded by theory as perfectly satisfactory when he is suddenly hit by a thunderbolt, which the books had hitherto failed to mention. Bad luck.

White: L. Portisch (Hungary). Black: I. Radulov (Bulgaria)
Olympiad, Buenos Aires, 1978
Queen's Gambit, Catalan System

1. N—KB3, P—Q4; 2. P—KN3, P—QB4; 3. B—N2, N—QB3; 4. P—Q4, N—B3; 5. O—O, P—K3; 6. P—B4, P x BP; 7. Q—R4. The players have reached, by transposition of moves, one of the main lines of the Catalan system, which is in fact a Grünfeld defence with colours reversed.

7. . . B—Q2; 8. Q x BP, P x P; 9. N x P, R—B1; 10. N—QB3, N x N; The recommended improvement on 10. . . Q—R4; 11. R—Q1, B—K2; 12. N—N3 which led to White's advantage in game 17 of the first Korchnoi-Karpov match (Moscow 1974).

11. Q x N, B—B4; 12. Q—KR4, B—B3; 13. R—Q1, Q—N3; 14. B x B+ R x B; (DIAGRAM) Black seems well placed. If White defends his KBP, then Black castles with an excellent game, but . . .

15. B—R6! Now 15. . . B x P+ 16. K—N2, O—O; would lose to 17. B x P! K x B; 18. Q—N5+ K—R1; 19. Q x N+ K—N1; 20. Q x B, while 15. . . B x P+ 16. K—N2, P x B; also loses outright to 17. Q x N.

15. . . P x B; 16. Q x N, O—O; (Black's position is now a wreck).

17. N—K4, Q—N5; 18. Q—K5, B—K2; 19. P—QR3, Q—N3; 20. R—Q7, B—N4; Planning 21. N x B, R—B4; though he is still probably losing after 22. Q—K4, P x N; 23. R x QNP. Instead Portisch produces a neat, but strange finesse.

21. P—N3!? Q x NP; 22. N x B Now there is no reply . . . R—B4.

22. . . P x N; 23. Q x P+ K—R1; 24. QR—Q1, Q—B7; 25. Q—B6+ K—N1; 26. R(1)—Q4, Q—N3; 27. Q—B3, P—KR4; 28. R x P The rest is a mopping up operation.

28. . . P—K4; 29. R—KR4, R—Q1; 30. Q x RP, Q x Q' 31. R x Q, P—B3; 32. R x QRP, R—Q7; 33. P—K3, R—B8+ 34. K—N2, R(7)—Q6; 35. R—B5 Resigns.

Postscript: Lightning does strike twice! Barely a week after this game was played, Ljubojevic of Yugoslavia fell into the same opening trap against another Hungarian (Ribli) and lost even more quickly.

The Black squares

European Junior Championship at Groningen 1977-78.
White: Van der Bijl. Black: Taulbut.
Pirc Defence.

1. P—K4, P—KN3; 2. P—Q4, P—Q3; 3. N—QB3, B—N2; 4. P—B4, N—KB3; 5. B—B4, P—B4; 6. P—K5, KN—Q2; 7. P x P, O—O; 8. B—K3, KP x P; 9. Q—Q2, N—QB3; 10. P x P, P x P; 11. O—O—O, N—Q5; 12. N—B3, N—N3; 13. B—K2, N—Q4; 14. B x N, P x B; 15. N x P, N x N; 16. Q x N, Q—N3; 17. Q—K3, B—B4; 18. P—B3, KR—K1; 19. Q—B2, QR—B1; 20. P—KN4, B—K5; 21. KR—N1, KR-Q1; White resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

SUPPOSE that you are in Four Spades with the following cards:

♠ A 7
♥ 10 8
♦ Q J 9 6
♣ K 10 9 5 2

♦ 8 led — N / W E / S

♠ K 9 6 5 3 2
♥ A K 7 5
♦ A 4
♣ 3

With both sides vulnerable, the bidding has been:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	—	1♦
dble	No	2NT	No
3♠	No	3NT	No
4♠	No	No	No

(South's bidding is debatable: he might have overcalled with One Spade instead of doubling, and he might have passed 3NT.)

West leads his partner's suit and dummy's Queen of diamonds holds the first trick.

Your first idea, probably, is to ruff one of your heart losers and hope to lose one trump, one heart and one club. So perhaps you begin with ♠ A, followed by ♥ A K and a heart ruff. Not so good when the full hand is:

♠ A 7
♥ 10 8
♦ Q J 9 6
♣ K 10 9 5 2

♠ 10 8 4 — ♠ Q J
♥ Q J 6 3 — ♥ 9 4 2
♦ 8 — ♦ K 10 7 5 3 2
♣ Q 8 7 6 4 — ♣ A J

N / W E / S

♠ K 9 6 5 3 2
♥ A K 7 5
♦ A 4
♣ 3

In dummy after the heart ruff you attempt to come to hand with ♦ A. West ruffs and leads a fourth heart, promoting a further trump trick for his side.

The far-sighted play of a club from dummy at trick two is an improvement. East may win and give his partner a diamond ruff, but West *coupe avec son argent*, as the French describe it. Communications are now fluid. West may try a second club, but when the Ace appears declarer can ruff and play two rounds of trumps, abandoning the heart ruff. He loses one heart, the other goes away on the King of clubs. The play of a club at trick two is an example of the Scissors coup.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

The US Post Office does not normally issue stamps in honour of famous Americans until at least ten years after they have died. There have been exceptions. Presidents Kennedy, Eisenhower and Johnson were portrayed on memorial stamps issued within a few months of their deaths, respectively, in 1963, 1969 and 1973. Recent issues, observing the ten-year convention, have honoured Senator Robert Kennedy, Dr Martin Luther King and John Steinbeck, all of whom died in 1968. The Steinbeck stamp is the first in a new series which will portray literary celebrities. Its design is from a photograph by Philippe Halsman.

C.W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. What is Acid Fascism?
2. Who were the Black Hundreds?
3. What is boogie-woogie?
4. What are dormitory towns?
5. What is ecclesiology?
6. Who invented Esperanto?
7. What is a Freudian slip?
8. In computer science, what is a gate?
9. What is an Ion engine?

ANSWERS

1. A type of eclectic violence which represents an extreme development of the widespread use of psychedelic drugs.
2. Strong-arm gangs employed by right-wing organisations in Czarist Russia to demoralise political opponents after the 1905 Revolution.
3. A form of piano jazz.
4. A locality where town dwellers come in search of cheaper housing while continuing work in neighbouring towns or cities.
5. That part of Christian theology concerned with the Church.
6. Louis Zamenhof in 1887.
7. A momentary breakdown in the defensive position of a person resulting in unintended expression of speech.
8. The basic circuit element in a computer.
9. A propulsion device similar to a rocket.

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You don't have to choose between an oily hair style...

and a scruffy look.

Now you can get today's "no-oil" hair style and more...

New Code 10 Tonic Hair Dressing

holds and nourishes hair, controls dandruff.

With LO-7 and Panthenol

Today's look is the natural "no-oil" look. But you know what this does to your hair: the scalp dries, dandruff follows. This combined with the lack of nourishment can lead to hair loss.

"No-Oil" Style

Now there's Code 10 Tonic Hair Dressing. With Panthenol and LO-7. For the natural "no-oil" look. Without the problems. This is how.

Your hair stays in place with Code 10. Naturally. The way you want it. Without feeling sticky, oily.

And your scalp and hair get all the care they need with Code 10. It has Panthenol, the proven hair vitamin to help hair roots utilise the nutrients in the blood stream. This gives your hair natural health and full body.

Anti-Dandruff Action

Code 10 also contains LO-7... a proven anti-dandruff agent. It helps clear dandruff, and stays on the scalp to keep it away.

Code 10 Tonic Hair Dressing does all this for your hair...without costing the earth!

The natural choice for the natural style

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this india

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

HOLENARSIPUR: Girl students shut their eyes and stifled their screams and everybody else were just taken aback in the SSLC examination room. It was not the questions that caused the shock—it was a candidate. The room invigilator, who suspected malpractices by a candidate, Ubhaya Kumar, wanted to make a body search of the candidate for unauthorised material. The candidate's compliance staggered the official. Ubhaya Kumar stripped it is said. The authorities have instituted an inquiry into the incident, it is learnt—*Deccan Herald* (G. Muthuraj, Mysore)

VIRUDHUNAGAR: Residents of Meesalur, a well developed village east of Virudhunagar, have unanimously decided to boycott the coming elections to the Lok Sabha. They have also decided to put up a notice at the entrance to the village warning politicians not to enter the village for canvassing. "We are no more gullible. Politicians! Retrace your steps" the notice says. Mr A. Nammalvar, speaking on behalf of the villagers, said they had met recently and decided not to vote for any political Party as politicians had driven the country to poverty, depriving the villages of their serenity and making the rural folk migrate to towns for a living. Following the example of Meesalur villagers, people of eight other villages in Aruppukottal taluk have decided to boycott the polls. According to Mr S. Velchamy, president of Aruppukottal Taluk Farmers' Association, the farmers also have decided to boycott the elections—*Indian Express* (Syed Muthahar Saqaf, Killai)

PATNA: A block development officer in UP, has sold the whole stock of foodgrains meant for the food-for-work programme and pocketed the money. Giving this information, the Union Irrigation and Agriculture Minister, Mr Brahm Parkash, told newsmen that it had been mentioned by the concerned district magistrate in his report—*Times of India* (Hazel Gomez, Meerut)

BHOPAL: Fourteen-year-old Gulab Bai's parentage is in dispute. In fact, all her life till the dispute arose, she had spent with her parents—Girwar and Shetanabai—in a small village in Sehore district in Madhya Pradesh. Gulab Bai was confused when all of a sudden one day a man and a woman, namde Kaluram and Reshan Bai, came and claimed they were her parents. The "new" parents lodged a complaint with the police. They had lost their child in 1970 and had now found her with Girwar and Shetanabai, they said. The claimant mother also said she had identified some marks on the person of Gulab Bai which confirmed that the girl was their child. The Superintendent of Police, Sehore district, referred the case to the Civil Surgeon Sehore, to help identify the girl's true parents on the basis of blood groups. The Civil Surgeon forwarded the case to the Medico-Legal Institute, Bhopal for its opinion. The institute opined that though anthropologically Gulab Bai was the daughter of the parents with whom she was living, the serological study showed she could belong to any of the sets of parents—*The Hindu* (G. Muthuraj, Mysore)

BOMBAY: Mr Paresh Parikh, a 24-year-old engineer student of Baroda, claims to have written the longest letter—1,875 metres. Mr Parikh told newsmen that he had wanted to break West German Thomas Neahos' record—1,223 metres long—since 1973, when it was established. He had been looking for a willing recipient. The letter, written in six months and weighting about 10 kg will be a "wonderful birthday gift" to his penfriend in Lucknow. It includes all the major events in his life, including his views on prominent personalities—*Times of India* (Hans Kumar Bhatia, New Delhi)

DELHI: A premature baby, "born dead" in a Delhi hospital on October 16 was later found alive. When the mortuary staff handed over the baby, a boy to the father, the grandmother insisted on seeing his face. When they uncovered his face the boy's eyes were rolling. "He is alive", the members of the family shouted with joy. Though the police have registered a case against the staff of Kasturba Hospital the doctors described the incident as a case of "medical miracle"—*The Statesman* (Subir Kumar Pal, Siliguri)

MERCARA: The striking men students of the Junior College here have vowed not to shave until they have a new Principal in place of the Principal-in-charge, Smt Cauveriamma. The college is closed at the moment but the students say they will continue the strike even after the college reopened. Students' union secretary Nanaiah and some other union activists said their opposition to Smt. Cauveriamma stemmed from among other things, her objection to students growing facial hair. She forced some students to shave their beards and moustaches, they alleged. They also alleged Smt Vauveriamma wrote adverse remarks in the transfer certificates of students leaving the college—*Deccan Herald* (K. Vasanth, Karnataka)

Illustrations/Ahi Bhusan Malik

without comment

SHE (Mrs Gandhi) is a very shrewd and suspicious person—Channa Reddy

MR George Fernandes was pursuing the most rightist, pro-capitalist policy in the Industry Ministry when he headed it for over two years. Merely because he calls himself a socialist, he does not become one—Mrs Gandhi

I SAY that I am not only a leftist but an ultra-leftist—Charan Singh

EVERYTHING is fair in elections and Party politics—C. Subramaniam, Union Minister for Defence

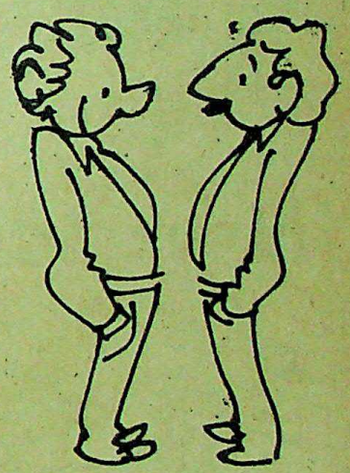
OPPOSITION to Hindi is in my very blood. So I have the right, nay, the duty to claim that without me there can be no anti-Hindi struggle—M. Karunanidhi

THE Central Government wanted this price increase to take place, and it has taken place—West Bengal Minister for Finance, Ashok Mitra's comment on inflation

I AM one of those who believe that people will not vote in such a way that no Party gets a majority—Chandrashekhar

WHAT it (the West) exports to our country is what ruins the country. It exports freedom—freedom for fornication—Ayatollah Khomeini

humour in real life



WHEN the idea of a holding company for public sector steel plants was all the rage, a steel plant official spent the better part of an evening at a party with his hands firmly planted in his pockets. His manner irked a guest who came and stood beside him, also with his hands in his pockets, and said: "Mr Sinha and I have decided to form a holding company"—Raghav Sen, Calcutta.

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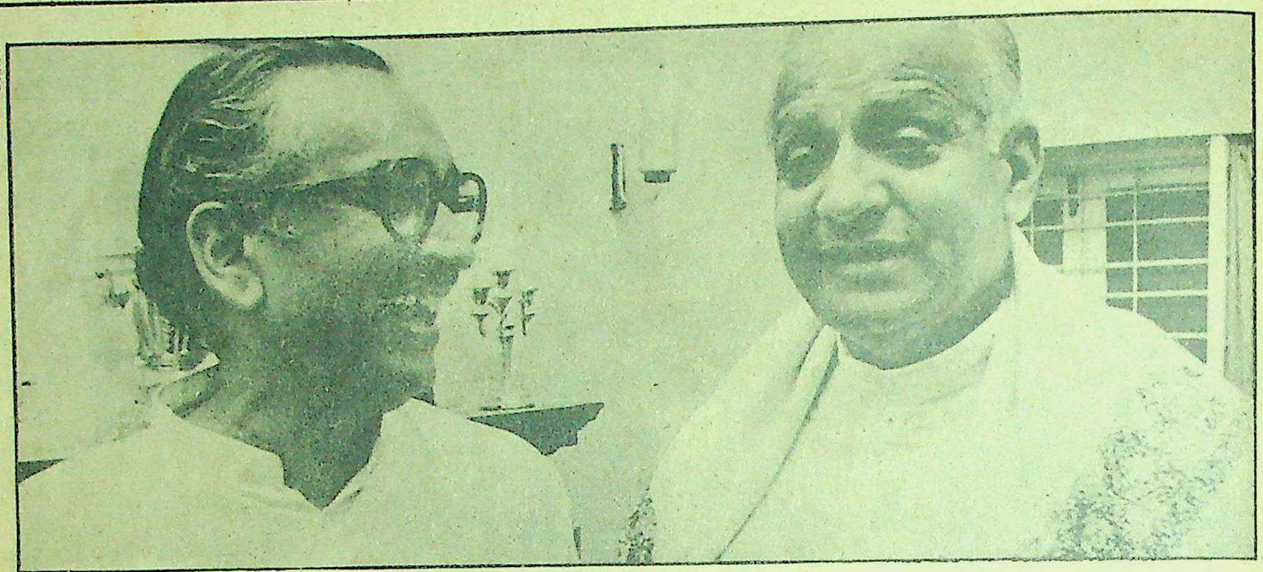

Bahuguna and Devaraj Urs: new equation ?

TOO TOUGH

PRIME Minister Charan Singh can be honest even at his own cost at times. The Lok Dal leader did some plain speaking when Congress president Devaraj Urs called on him on October 25. Urs arrived at 4.15 p.m., after his 90-minute meeting with Janata leader Jagjivan Ram. At five o'clock Charan Singh asked Urs to sit in at an interview with a senior journalist of a group of Calcutta-based newspapers. The Chaudhury used the newsman to convey what he thought of the Congress and its conduct as an alliance partner of the Lok Dal. Here are some of the answers which he gave, both for the benefit of the newsman and Mr Urs. On Tarakeshwari Sinha: "She was in the Congress (I) till the other day. I got her defeated in Samastipur (Mrs Sinha was Mrs Gandhi's candidate in the Lok Sabha by-election). She should not have made the statement against me. I expressed my differences with Nehru even when he was alive. Why should she open her mouth?" On the rumoured Congress-Janata alliance in some States which was putting strains on the ruling coalition: "My friend, I am not doing anything to jeopardise the coalition. Ask Mr Urs about his Party". The correspondent turned to the Congress president who sheepishly smirked and said: "I am not saying anything." At one stage the Chaudhury questioned the bona fides of Congressmen who criticised him for his views on land reforms. All Congressmen, he said in the presence of Urs, came from big landed families or represented high castes. "Look at their record in the field of land reforms in the last 30 years." But the real provocation which Urs stomached without even a feeble protest was when Mr Singh conveyed the distinct impression to the correspondent that at present he, more than anybody else in the country's political life, represented anti-Congressism.

UP THE BUREAUCRATS

IS the bureaucracy more powerful than the Prime Minister of India? Otherwise, how can an order of Prime Minister Charan Singh be flouted with nonchalance? The Prime Minister, after going through the BHEL-Siemens deal had ordered the removal of Mr V. Krishnamurthy from the position of Secretary, Heavy Industry Department, Ministry of Industry. To start with, Mr Krishnamurthy was asked to go on leave preparatory to his transfer to some other Department. Accordingly, Mr Krishnamurthy had gone on leave. But, lo and behold, he is back again as the Secretary of Heavy Industry Department. How could this happen? Top bureaucrats, including Mr Srinivasvardhan, Home Secretary, had a secret meeting. It was decided that the matter should be kept pending in view of the Home Ministry order that there should be no transfers at the top before the elections. The idea is to stall the transfer now and after the elections the political situation could be different.

OUTSIDERS, QUIT !

THE political orphan from Kerala, C. M. Stephen, who is now scouting round the country for a safe seat, made an initial foray into the rough and tumble of north Indian politics by inspiring rumours that he would be the Congress(I) candidate from New Delhi constituency. To get acquainted with the active workers of the Party in the constituency, Stephen got invited to the house of a journalist-politician who himself was an aspirant for the Party ticket from the same New Delhi constituency. One does not know whether it was by design or by accident but what happened at the dinner conclave of Congress(I) workers has given Stephen a fright. He was almost physically manhandled by Youth Congress(I) toughs who described his decision as a "cowardly act of running away from his old constituency in Kerala." Why should they surrender their seat to an outsider, they wanted to know. And what had he been saying when he had lingered on in the Congress(S) long after the split? In fact some Youth Congress (I) activists accused him of joining the Party only to become the Cabinet-ranking Opposition leader. Mr K. L. Bhagat, the Congress (I) boss, had a harrowing time in saving the situation. Now we learn that in order to appease an angry Stephen, the president of the New Delhi District Youth Congress (I) has been suspended from the Party.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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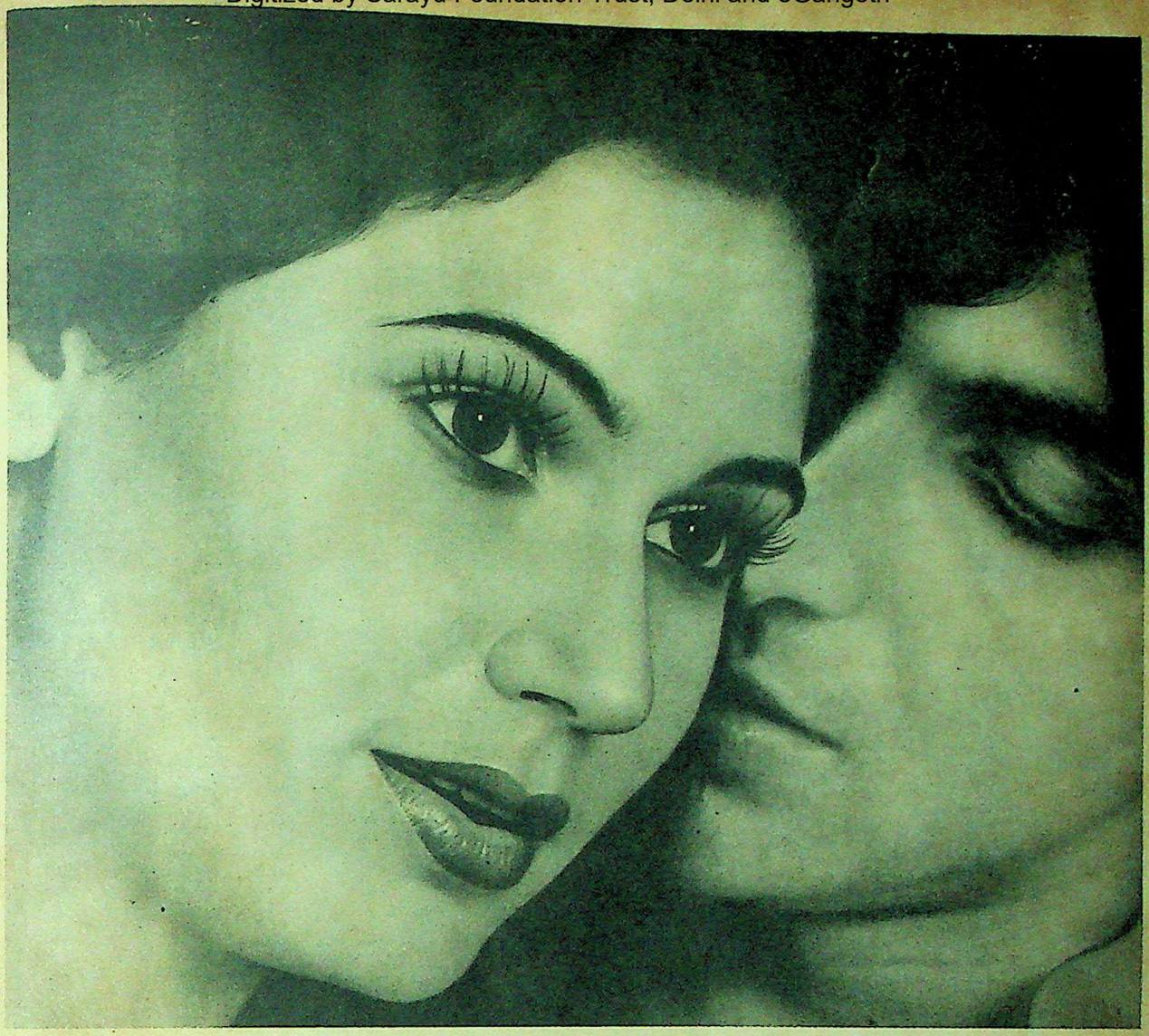

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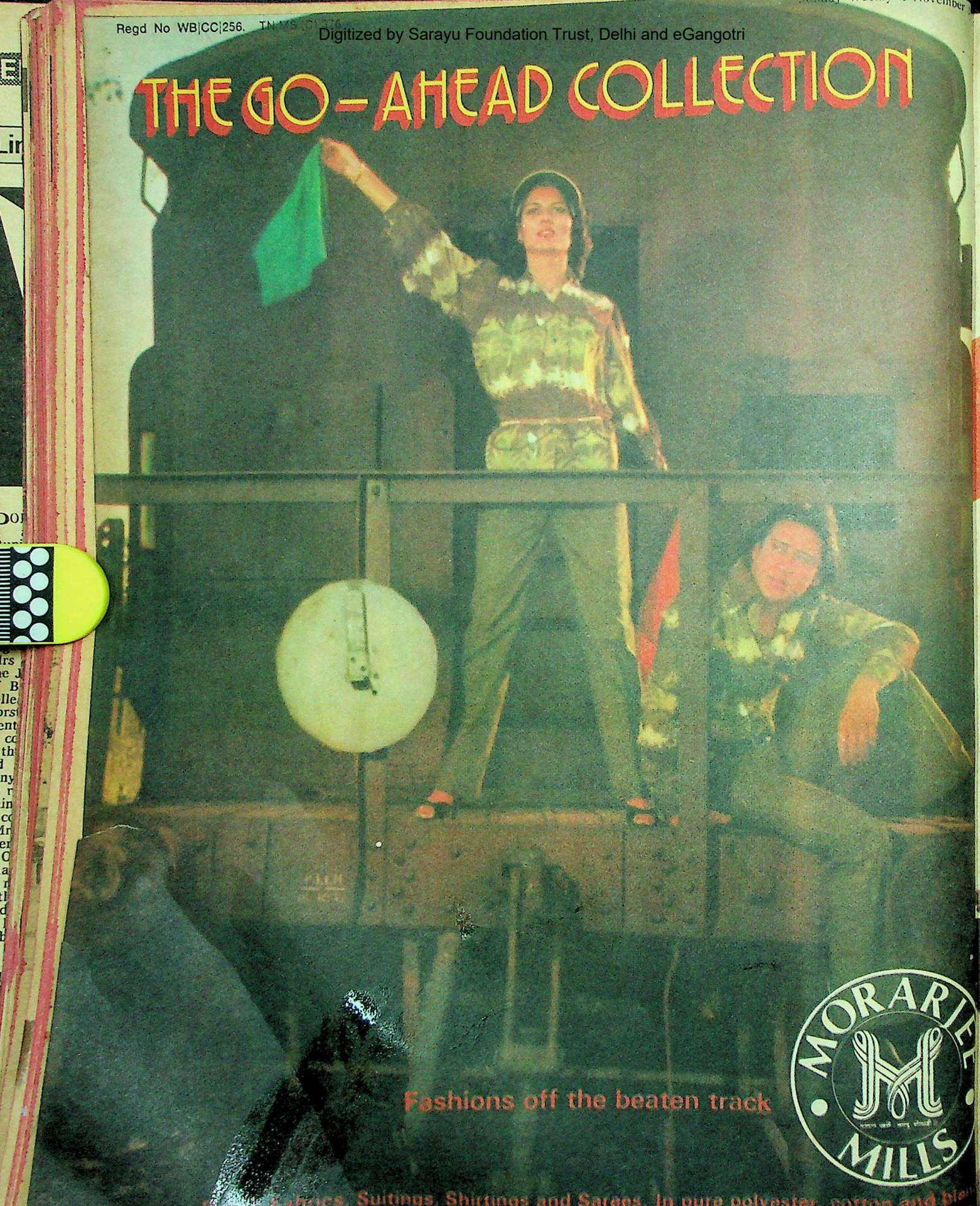

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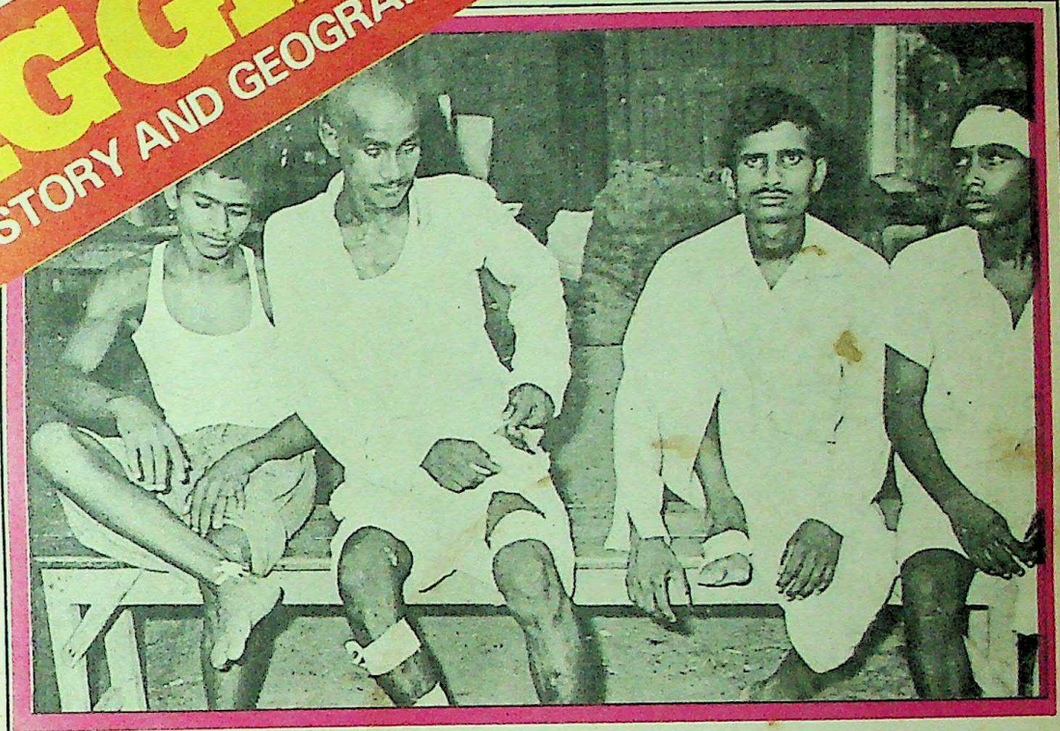
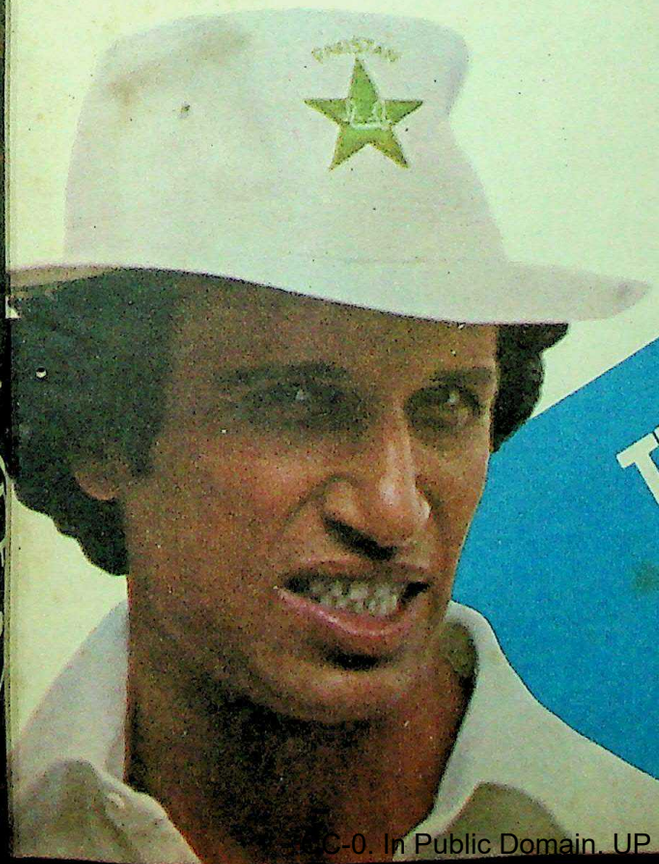
SUNDAY

RIGGING
ITS HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY



Victims of a bomb attack on a Bihar booth



THE BANGALORE TEST
ASIF IQBAL'S IMPRESSIONS

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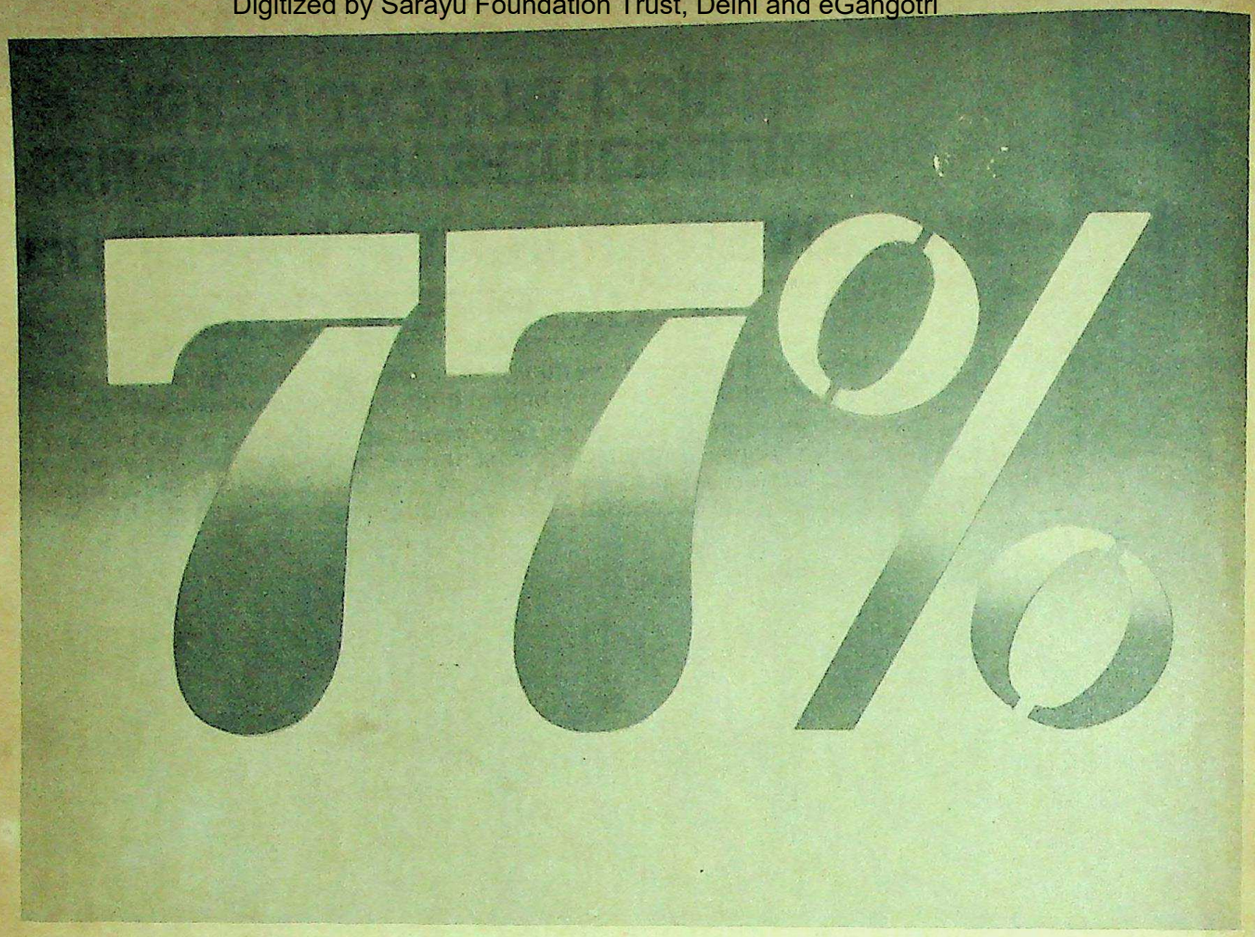

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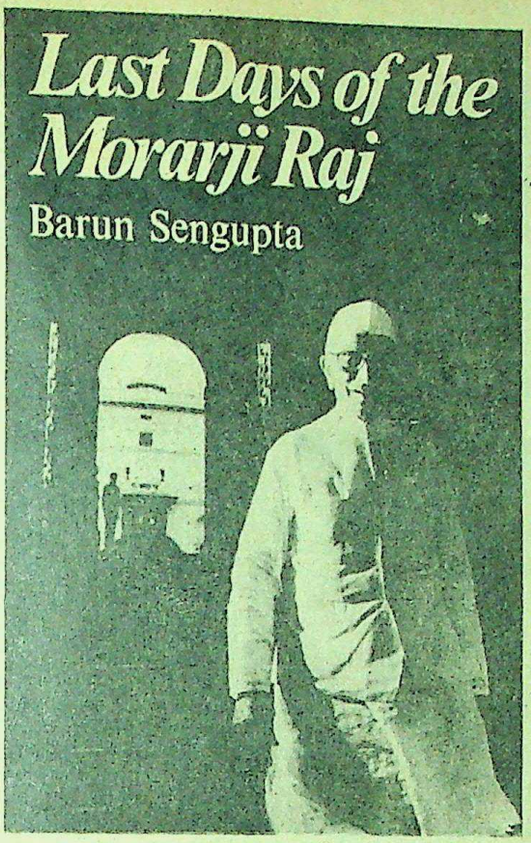

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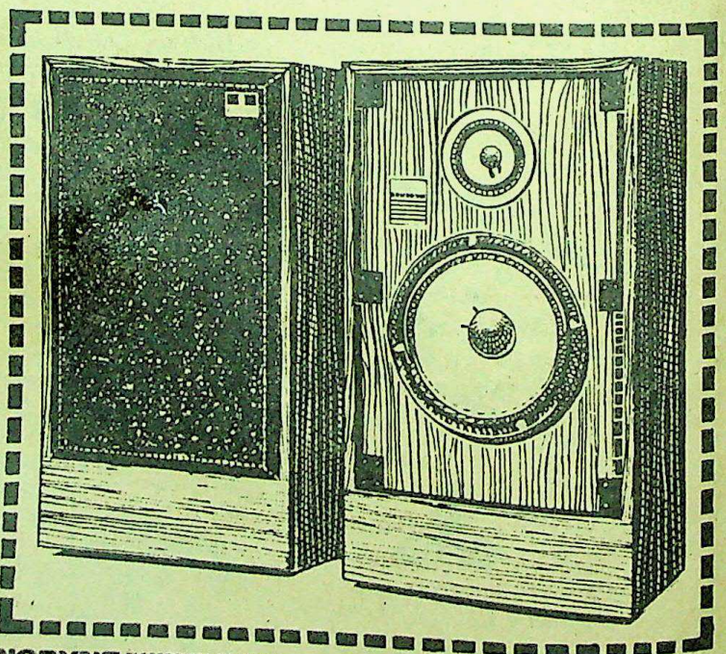

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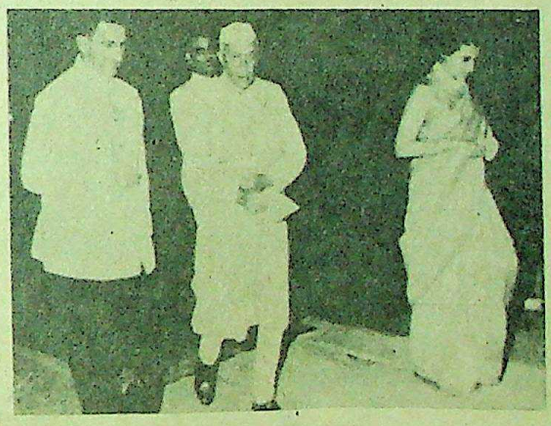

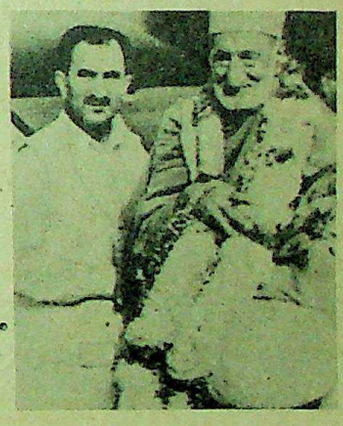

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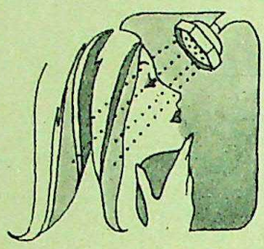

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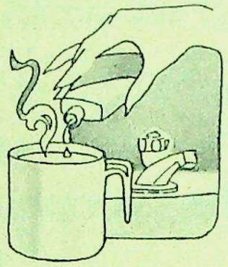

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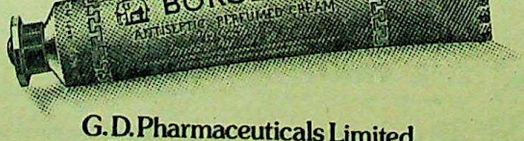

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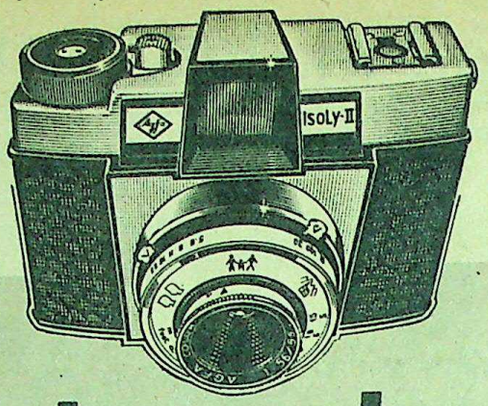

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ISSUE 25
RUPEE ONE
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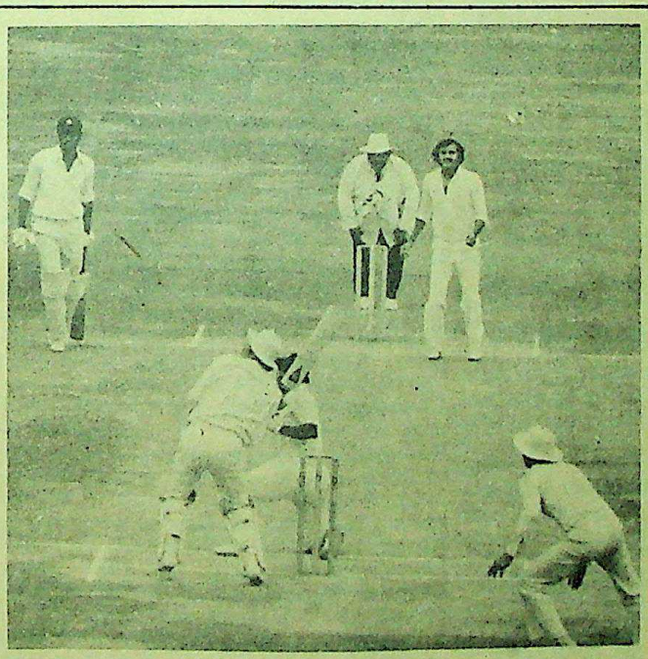
Rigging is going to be the bane of the 1980 elections. And preparations for this have already started. Politicians are even buying guns. Our correspondents report on some of the methods employed.

How is the RSS conspiring against Krishan Kant ? Will Kanti contest from Begusarai ? Election Special brings you the answers to all these questions. Plus an exclusive report on the relatives of prominent politicians contesting the elections.



The First Test between India and Pakistan at Bangalore resulted in a draw but not before the mammoth crowd had seen some wonderful cricket, interspersed with light-hearted antics. Roger Binny made a good debut on his home ground while Imran Khan predictably stole the hearts of the spectators. Strangely, no one seemed to mind that the game ended in a draw.

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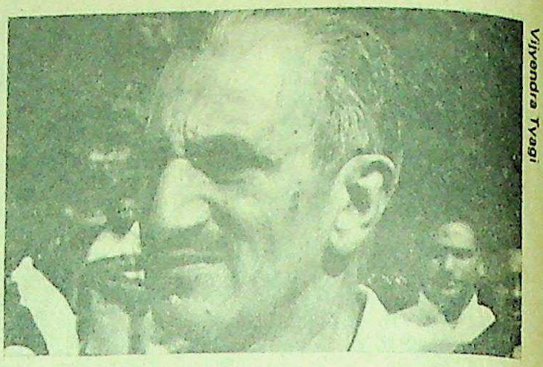
Yunus was not telling the truth

Say a host of eminent journalists who were criticised by Mohammad Yunus in his book "Persons, Passions and Politics"



Vijayendra Tyagi

KULDIP NAYAR: 'What has hurt me is that a reputable journal like yours should print lies'

I AM not surprised that Mr Mohammad Yunus, who has thus far felt ashamed to show his face in public because of the part he played during the Emergency, should now pick up the courage to write a book. He and others like him think that the people have forgotten their misdeeds. But they are in for a surprise.

What has hurt me is that a reputable journal like yours should print lies. But this is a matter which I shall take up with you later.

Mr Yunus has said that I was repentent of what I did and tried to make up with the then establishment through him. It is a lie. I am proud of what I write against the authoritarian forces, which Mr Yunus represents, and those who have followed my writings even after the release from jail know how I continued to write against authoritarianism all through the Emergency. In fact, soon after my release from jail I had a brush with Mr V. C. Shukla, the then Information and Broadcasting Minister, in the Press Club, Delhi. A Pressman asked him why the Government had ordered newspapers not to print anything about my case. Shukla said: "Kuldip Nayar's case was political". I got up and protested that the Minister had no business to say so when the court had said that there was no such thing and that the Government had detained me illegally. When he repeated the same charge, I said, "Prove it, or don't say it. I will not take this from you or anybody else".

It is difficult to catch up with the lies which Mr Yunus and his type tell. But then this is all that they do. He has concocted things and put words in my mouth to sell the trash he has written. All that I can say is that he is lying. The rest is between him and his conscience, if he has any.

Kuldip Nayar, now in the Indian Express, *went to jail during the Emergency because of his opposition to authoritarianism.*

INDER MALHOTRA

FOR a quarter of a century I have enjoyed the warm friendship of Mr Mohammed Yunus. It is for Khan saab to say whether this has been amply reciprocated by me. Since I have not discussed our warm friendship in public, I do not want to discuss publicly his present petulance. He may consider it justifiable but I believe it to be unwarranted. On personal matters, therefore, I will say no more.

As for Khan saab's insinuation that my friendships, perhaps, vary according to whether a person is in power or not, I will be content to be judged by my readers on the strength of my writings before, during and after the Emergency.

Inder Malhotra is the resident editor of the Times of India, *Delhi.*

ROMESH THAPAR

I REFUSE to even react to the allegations of Yunus. What journalists did during the Emergency is far less relevant than what Mohammed Yunus did during the Emergency.

Romesh Thapar is the editor of Seminar.

PREM BHATIA: 'Full of slander and half-truth'

MOHAMMAD YUNUS'S reference to me as an ungrateful old friend carries a few factual errors which should be corrected to put the record straight. For instance, I have known Yunus since 1932 (not 1934 as he says), when I first met him in Peshawar. I was a member of the Punjab University cricket team led by Jehangir Khan, and we went to play not against the Islamia College but against the Peshawar Gymkhana.

Contrary to his complaint, I did not drop him dead after March, 1977. Yunus himself vanished from public view immediately after the rout of the Congress Party and the fall of Indira Gandhi. Perhaps he was so shaken by the election results that he started avoiding old friends like me. I managed to get his new telephone number (675356) from a mutual friend but it was impossible to track him down. He was then living in a one-room apartment in Vasant Vihar.

That was around April, 1977, and the following month I went away to England to meet our daughter. Soon after returning to India I took over as editor-in-chief of *The Tribune* at Chandigarh. It was, therefore, not easy to see Yunus. In any case I was under the impression that he avoided people like me before whom he had made rather boastful forecasts about Indira Gandhi's victory. He once told me that she would romp home with 400 seats and that even Jagjivan Ram would lose his security deposit.

It is true that I visited him twice or thrice at his residence and in his office during the Emergency but that was not to ask for any favours, as he will recall. He was an old friend for whom I had much affection, in spite of the fact that he is far from intellectually stimulating. Yunus will also recall that he did me the honour of having had dinner at my house at

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least on two separate occasions in the company of several mutual friends.

I do not remember in what connection I said that he made me feel good as an Indian. It is possible that I paid him that tribute for the work he did on India's behalf as the Prime Minister's "special envoy" during the Bangladesh trouble. He stayed with me at Singapore when I was High Commissioner there, and I must say that he stood up for India with much courage if not with conspicuous tact.

Whatever my personal opinion about Yunus, he has been very unkind to suggest that I called him "names" behind his back. One felt sorry for him in his wilderness, although I did on a few occasions say that his election forecasts were cock-eyed. But my own were not very accurate either.

As for my having "begged for two diplomatic assignments", this remark is again wide off the mark. My first assignment as High Commissioner was given to me by Lal Bahadur Shastri. Yunus was then nowhere on the scene and certainly not in the then Prime Minister's confidence. My second diplomatic assignment, as High Commissioner in Singapore, was communicated to me by the secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs in very flattering language and expressing the hope on behalf of the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, that I would accept the job because the P.M. wanted somebody to "match his wits" against Lee Kuan Yew for whom she obviously had great respect and admiration and whose friendship she was anxious to retain. That letter should be on the files of the Ministry of External Affairs, and Yunus may wish to have a look at it if he is permitted to do so.

Yunus is not a very educated person, and I do not quite know who vetted the manuscript of his book, which is full of slander and half truths. But I would say this about him: he used to be a warm-hearted friend which partially compensated for his bumptiousness and vulgar tongue. Apparently, he is now back in business because he thinks that Indira Gandhi, to whom he had been very loyal is on her way to 1, Safdarjung Road. New Delhi.

Prem Bhatia, after a long and successful career in journalism and diplomacy, is now editor-in-chief of The Tribune.

AJIT BHATTACHARJEA

THERE is no truth whatsoever in the allegation in Mohd. Yunus's book that I offered my services to Maneka Gandhi's *Surya* magazine. The allegation was made originally by Mr Khushwant Singh in the *Illustrated Weekly*, but he did not deign to notice my letter contradicting it.

Ajit Bhattacharjea, the well-known biographer of JP, is now editor of the Indian Express.

RAHUL SINGH

I HAVE always known Mohammad Yunus for his warmth, generosity and blind loyalty to the Nehru family. After reading his account in *Sunday* I must regrettably add another quality—his mendacity.

Since Yunus mentions me, I must put the record straight. He said that a tape of a Press conference he gave during the Emergency to foreign correspondents was handed over by my father, Khushwant Singh, to Indira Gandhi, despite the urgings of Khushwant's wife, daughter and son not to do so. Here are the facts. Alan Bradford, an American correspondent for ABC television (and a friend of mine), tape-recorded Yunus's Press conference. He later played the tape back to me. I was shocked at its contents and, as an Indian, ashamed at the foul language Yunus had used. He had utilised the Press conference specifically to abuse the four western countries whose media had condemned the Emergency—namely, the U.S., Britain, Canada (which had questioned our nuclear programme) and West Germany.

If I recall right, among the things he said was that West Germany had no business to criticise us when it had killed six million Jews during the Nazi era. Referring to the U.S., he raked up the old joke that something was wrong with President Gerald Ford's head because he had played too much football. And to illustrate his remark about Britain, he related a vulgar joke in which the word "bitch" figured prominently (so much for Yunus's false claim that the tape contained no "abusive language").

Since the Press conference was official and had not been off the record, with Bradford's permission I then played the tape to my father to show him what kind of characters were running the country. Though he supported the Emergency, he was equally shocked and he took the tape to Sanjay Gandhi who passed it on to his mother. Yunus must have been given a severe dressing down, because shortly afterwards the Information and Broadcasting Ministry — which was virtually being run by V. C. Shukla and Yunus — sent Bradford an expulsion order. Bradford naturally came to Khushwant in distress, and my mother told my father that since he had taken the tape to Sanjay Gandhi it was Khushwant's moral responsibility to get the expulsion order against Bradford revoked. This my father succeeded in doing after threatening to resign as Consulting Editor of *Surya*, Maneka Gandhi's magazine.

I mention all this in detail, firstly, to illustrate the foul and vindictive atmosphere that pervaded the country at the time (and to which Yunus made his own contribution), and secondly, to expose the untruthfulness of at least one incident in his account. The reader may well ask that if he has been dishonest once, how much credence can we give to the rest of his story? He also writes about Indian journalists having "no principles" and being "self-interested ideological clowns". A scrutiny of Yunus's own performance during the Emergency would lead one to conclude that this description fits him more perfectly.

Rahul Singh, editor of the Reader's Digest *is Mr Khushwant Singh's son.*

HAMDI BEY

BECAUSE Mr Yunus does not know me personally he is not accurately informed about changes in my employment. I was not squeezed out of the *Statesman*. I was to have retired in March 1975 but the much and often maligned Mr C. R. Irani refused to sign the papers put up to him for my retirement by the personnel department as a matter of routine.

Mr Irani's refusal to retire a man who had throughout 1974 consistently reported against JP's movement in Bihar as undermining respect for parliamentary institutions would surprise his numerous critics. Mr Irani never concealed from me his support for JP but he never sought to curb my distaste for the movement. Yet during that critical year Kuldip Nayar and Saeed Naqvi were writing enthusiastically, sometimes dramatically, about JP's doings. Neither of them are any more in the *Statesman*. Their departure, though they are much younger than me, occurred about the same time as my leaving *Statesman*.

I left the *Statesman* of my own accord when in May 1975 Mr Aveek Sarkar made an offer. N. J. Nanporia, then editor of the *Statesman* and I were not getting on well. Nanporia was new to the *Statesman* and there were several of us who found him rather different from our ways of behaviour.

The columns of the *Statesman* are still hospitable to me. My relations with Mr Irani and Nihal Singh are cordial and remained so during the Emergency though in my writings I defended the Emergency as a logical sequel to JP's movement and censorship unavoidable in the face of the Press ganging up.

I fell in disfavour with my new employers—a fact about which Mr Yunus seems to have no information—after the March 1977 elections, and my job with them was attenuated and then finally terminated on December 31, 1978. One instance of this disfavour is that this statement, made in response to a request by SUNDAY, would be the first piece, if it is published, by me in that magazine after those elections though I had been a frequent contributor between June 1975 and March 1977.

Hamdi Bey was the Statesman's *special correspondent at Lucknow and Gauhati and later became an assistant editor with the* Hindustan Standard.

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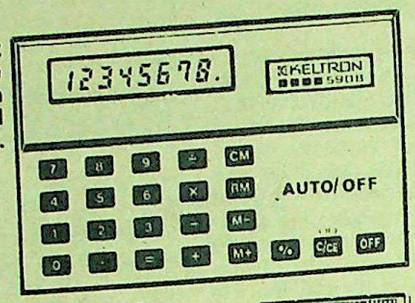
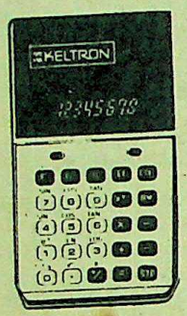
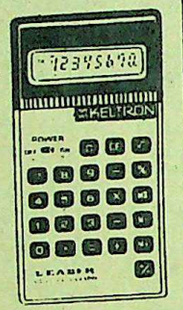


Leader An elegant pocket book L. C. D.





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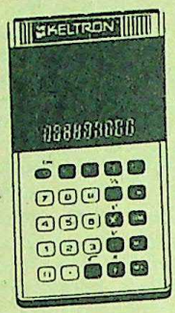

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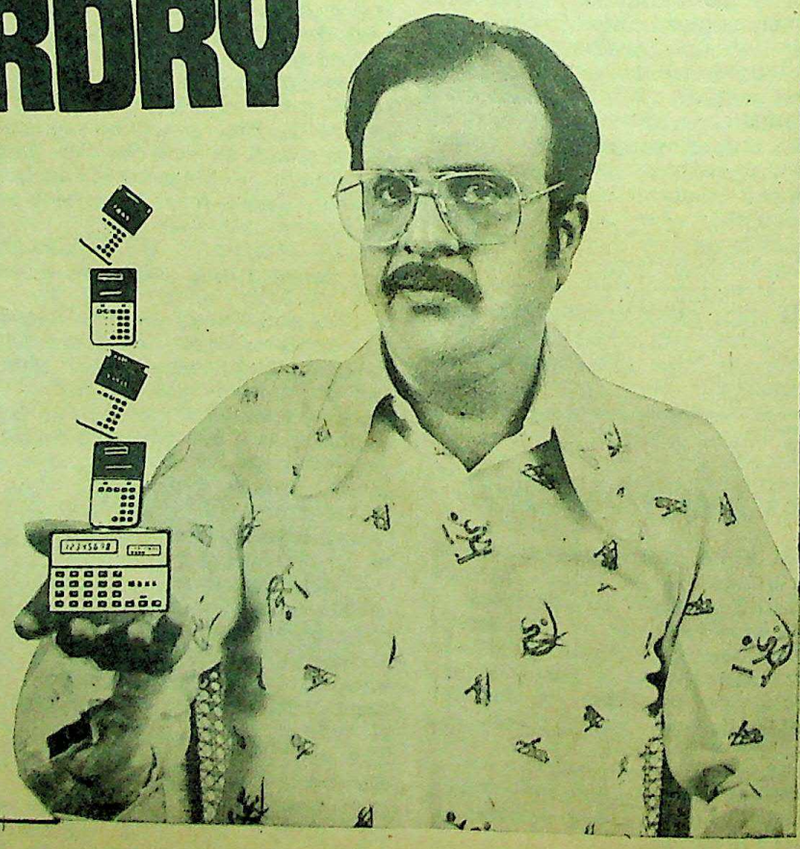

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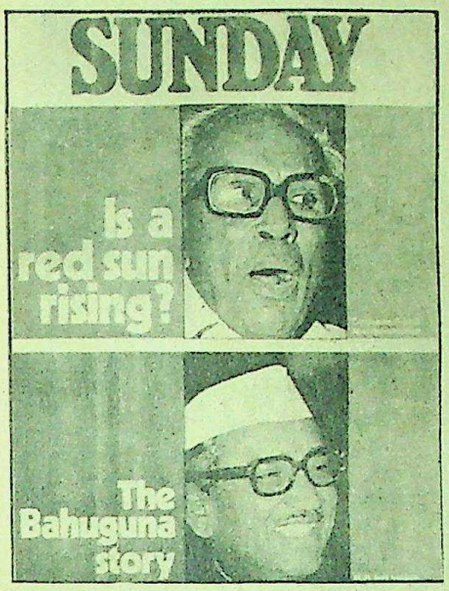

Wanted Indo-Communism

"IS a red sun rising" by Kewal Varma (November 4) was a well balanced and analytical article. Mr Varma has rightly pointed out how the Communist movement, even after 50 years, is dormant in Kerala and West Bengal. Advancement of national progress is impeded, due to the division of the human race into castes and so-called religions and cultural value systems in India. In this context, the Communists, must discover "Indo Communism" to solve the peculiar riddle of castes and classes, as Mr Varma has pointed out.

A socio-cultural revolution is the need of the hour and the path leading to such a revolution has already been laid in Tamil Nadu under the guidance of Periyar E.V.R.

V. A. Poonkudi Selvan, Thiruvaiyaru.

MR VARMA is wrong in stating that the CPI(M) did not join actively in the struggle against dictatorship and none of the important leaders were arrested during the Emergency. Jyotirmoy Basu, Har Kishan Singh Surjeet and many other leaders were arrested after the imposition of Emergency and so were hundreds of ordinary Party workers in West Bengal and Kerala.

The CPI(M) has struggled against dictatorship and the Party was the first to describe the rule of Indira Gandhi and her minion Siddhartha Sankar Ray as semifascist.

Pradeep Mayank, Lucknow.

MR VARMA's article was very appropriately timed, especially now that our country is in a political turmoil. Since Independence, whoever has been in power has never bothered to improve the living conditions of the rural areas. Our people are not at all interested who comes to power—they are more interested in living a healthy disciplined life.

B. N. Bose, Jamshedpur.

THE article failed to give an insight into the thinking of Indian Communists. Mr Varma points out: "The tragedy of Indian Communists has been that on the political plane, wherever there is a spontaneous national upsurge, they have a knack of remaining out of step with the mainstream." In fact, Indian Communists look for long-term values in any agitation or upsurge. Marx said: "Class conflict is inevitable in the transient phase of the development of the means of production." Indian Communists are waiting for that "transient phase" to start a matured revolution on the basis of class conflict which Mr Varma fails to grasp.

Sudhendu Ranjan Pandey, Bhagalpur.

IT is true that the "Communist Parties have been always making mistakes in India" as Mr Varma overheard in the CPI Congress at Bhatinda. Due to their blunders and splits, their strength has been decreasing constantly. Both the CPI and the CPI(M)'s relationship with Mrs Gandhi has been very well explained. They rescued her, either directly or indirectly, whenever she was in trouble.

The alliances which the CPI and the CPI(M) forge are simply breathtaking. They have aligned themselves with the most reactionary, feudal and communal forces like the Muslim League and the Kerala Congress at one time or the other since 1957. E. M. S. Namboodiripad and the CPI(M) leaders gave respectability to the Muslim League in Kerala by joining hands with them in 1957. Now the same Mr Namboodiripad calls Mr Koya a "Pro-Pakistani agent."

Besides, the Communist leadership is Brahmin-dominated and also includes rich landlords in the South. One fails to understand how Communism can thrive in India with such reactionary leadership. In fact, the CPI(M) Politburo does not have a single Muslim. This is a strange commentary on the 'communal' attitude of the Party.

Jubba Mahato, Bangalore.

MR VARMA has pointed out that the main difficulty of Communism in India is that it is a foreign ideology and thus cannot take roots in a tradition-bound country like India. But, Communism is a science and is not limited to any particular country. Before a class struggle a lot of struggles have to be waged.

Mr Varma thinks he may lose both bread and liberty under the Leftists. Let me assure Mr Varma and men like him that they need not be afraid of the Leftists unless they have connections with the vested interests.

Prateep Sen Gupta, Digboi.

No, never

GOING through the various articles on the Communists (November 4) one can rest assured that the "red sun" will never rise. A majority of Indians are subconsciously rationalists. Witness the strong and unwavering belief in a scientific law of cause and effect i.e. the law of Karma. Communism being illogical will never flowrish in India.

S. G. Balani, Bombay.

Vasco the vulture

ONCE again a "Vasco" has landed on our shares, determined to pick out maggots from festering wounds. It was interesting to note that naughty Vasco has been masquerading as a conceited and randy male, whose uninhibited (and unedited) designs would, by now, have registered with graceful ladies, who had offered delectable poetry, at the altar of a nordic God.

Incidently, Vasco has mentioned that he has collected a few pounds in body weight while "doing" Calcutta. Does not that remind you of an obdurate vulture, which gets its sustenance from dead bodies?

Damn it, old girl Calcutta, you asked for it!

Sudhindra Majumdar, Calcutta.

"DIRTY CALCUTTA" by Gunter Grass (November 4) was indeed a provocative article. I would not say it made very pleasant reading but the fact that the portrayal was true needs no argument in favour of it.

Gargee Dutta, Calcutta.

IT is astonishing to find such a pessimistic and obscene piece of literature as Gunter Grass's extract in a magazine renowned for its classy articles. The writer does not appear to have visited the better areas of Calcutta and the article leaves one feeling disheartened and hopeless.

Jacqueline Rosario, Calcutta.

GUNTER GRASS as Vasco has missed the human appeal of Calcutta. I am no Calcuttan but I have lived and loved the place. It is a friendly place and one where a woman need not be afraid of being treated with disrespect. I think it is also the people and their attitudes which make up a city not its dirt and squalor. Will some staunch Calcuttan come up with a more readable counter-viewpoint.

Priyamuada Balakrishnan, Madras.

GUNTER GRASS, in his brilliant account of poverty in and around Calcutta ends up confused and defeated. And yet he says: "Meet your Damascus in Calcutta". I feel that many of the volunteers from foreign countries are in fact meeting their Damascus in their service of the poor. The work for the poor in this city is the beginning of hope.

Jack Preger, Calcutta.

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RIGGING

ITS HISTORY

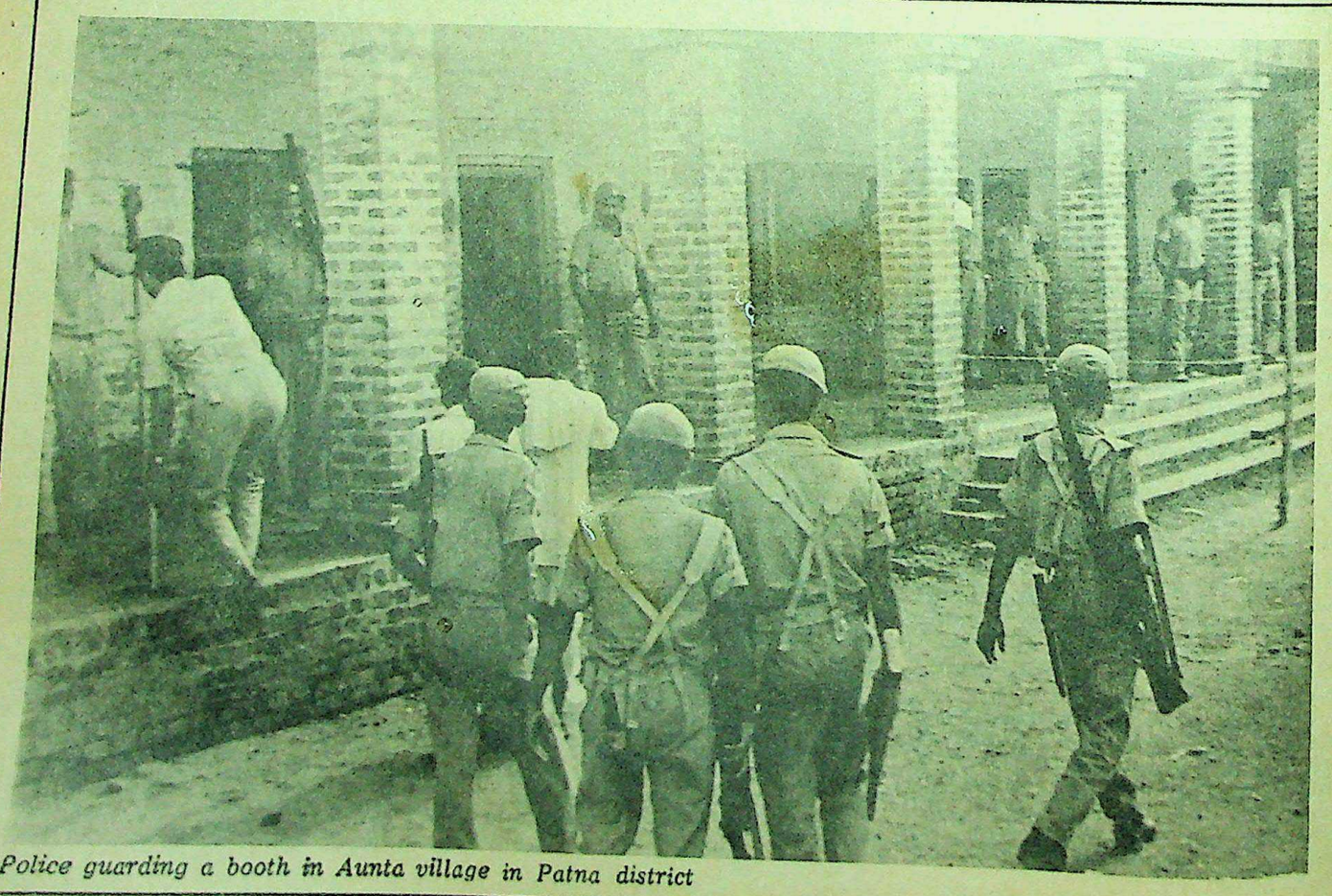
By RAJENDRA SAREEN

COME election time, and the thoughts of Party managers turn to rigging. Politicians in power explore the prospects of getting away with it. Those in the opposition tend to believe the very worst of their adversaries, investing them with a degree of cunning, competence and resourcefulness, which if a ruling Party really possessed it would have no need to resort to rigging. There are, however, exceptions to the rule when a ruling Party decides to go the whole hog to violate the entire body of law and legality to sustain itself in power. But that has its own limitations which render it counter-productive.

Rigging, like sex, induces an alluring temptation. But, unlike sex, it does not consummate. A study of the rigging operations during the various elections in India and the countries near about, points unmistakably to a curious conclusion: rigging has never helped a loser to win, save in the rare case of an evenly balanced contest. Rigging helps only the winner to win. In that sense, the resort to it is a manifestation of the sense of insecurity rather than a potent instrument of political skulduggery. Once a political Party has lost its rapport with the electorate, no amount of rigging can help it romp home to victory. And, conversely, when a political Party has emerged as a credible factor in the consciousness of the electorate, no amount of administrative razzle dazzle at the instance of a shaky ruling Party can prevent a winner sweeping the polls.

An interesting aspect of rigging is that it is not necessarily resorted to by only a ruling group. It can be an equally effective instrument in favour of a Party contending for power, even without an effort on its part, if the electorate is up in arms against the ruling Party.

Let us first dispose of the exception to the rule, of which there is just a single example in the history of Indian politics. This happened in 1951, when Sheikh Abdullah, ably assisted by those two brilliant strategists, the late Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and the late Mr D. P. Dhar, conducted the first elections to the J and K Assembly. All of the 42 candidates put up by the ruling National Conference in the Kashmir valley and one from Ladakh area were declared successful unopposed after the nomination papers of every other candidate had been rejected by the returning officers. A few days later another 22 out of the 30 candidates became successful from the Jammu province. The remaining eight candidates of the Praja



Police guarding a booth in Aunta village in Patna district

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Parishad left in the field decided to boycott the polls in protest against this highhandedness, and the National Conference captured all the 73 elected seats in the State Assembly. Nobody has been able to better that record in winning elections unopposed. But, such a coup d'grace became feasible only because of the fact that the entire Indian Press and political leadership preferred to turn a blind eye to that outrage in the name of 'patriotism'. Even so, the whole thing would have come unstuck if the electoral process had not been choked off.

A quarter century later Sheikh Abdullah won a convincing victory in the first truly free and fair elections in J and K and successfully humbled a powerful combination of central leaders and disgruntled local politicians. For the rest, rigging operations in India have run true to form. Whether it was in West Bengal and Bihar in 1971 and again in 1972, or UP in 1974, rigging only helped the winner to win.

The hazards of rigging are illustrated by the fate that overtook the late Mr Z A Bhutto. When the going got rough for his PPP in March 1977, he authorized selective rigging. Once it was known that this easy path to victory was available, some among his intrepid flock really went to town, and the whole thing stank to high heavens. At the conclusion of the polls, two things became clear. First rigging had been resorted to in some 50 odd seats. Second, Mr Bhutto's PPP would have won some 105 to 110 seats out of 200 even without any rigging. The groundswell of opinion against his strongarm methods of governance during his five-year rule found in the rigging a flashpoint that ignited a mass movement which culminated in a coup d'etat and Mr Bhutto ended up on the gallows.

But if Mr Bhutto was guilty of rigging the polls, Gen. Zia has gone a step further and given a new dimension to the business of subverting the sanctity of the electoral processes. He reneged, in October 1977, on his commitment to hold an election after it was clear that Mr Bhutto's PPP was way ahead of the other contenders, who had emerged as the General's Party. The murder case against Mr Bhutto, the disqualification proceedings against every senior and not so senior leader of the PPP to debar them from the contest, introduction of separate electorates, complete overhaul of the established electoral processes and practices, large-scale arrests and flogging of political workers have dominated Pakistan's politics for the last two years. But alas, the General is even more unsure of his ground today than he was in 1977. The result : indefinite postponement of the polls, which were originally scheduled for November 17, and complete ban on political activity. This is the most extreme example of a rigging operation which is currently going through the third year of its duration with no end in sight.

Police guarding booth

The Janata Party was the beneficiary of a massive rigging operation in 1977 in the running of which it had no hand. And even if it had been aware of what was happening and had wanted to stop that, the Party could not have done a thing about it. So great was the feeling against Mrs Gandhi in March 1977 that large numbers of people cast bogus votes in favour of the Janata candidates without any prompting from anyone. The polling staff turned a blind eye towards this. But, as it turned out later, the Janata candidates would have won any way, and even if the estimated 10% bogus votes cast in their favour had not materialized the results would still have been the same. Wherever the electorate chooses to give a winner a 50,000 or more vote margin, no amount of rigging can change that into a defeat.

One example that illustrates the point relates to the election of the CPI leader, Mr Sohan Singh Josh, who won the Taran Taran constituency of the Punjab Assembly in 1937 on a Congress ticket. Raja Raghbir Singh of Rajasansi in Amritsar district, the candidate of the ruling Unionist Party, announced his candidature with a massive feast where thousands were fed. His campaign was run along majestic lines with vehicles, placards, liquor and food in plenty. Mr Josh campaigned magnificently but without seeking to match his adversary's resources. His riposte was to ask every elector who voted for him to pay a rupee each to help him finance his austere campaign. Mr Josh earned a tidy sum, and won the election. But in 1946, Mr Josh lost as convincingly as he had won in 1937.

It takes a leader with tremendous guts to go to the electorate. On the eve of the 1952 elections most State leaders had developed cold feet because they were not sure of their ground. They approached the late Mr Nehru to postpone the polls to allow a little more time to them. Mr Nehru refused. The results far surpassed even the most optimistic estimates of the Congress campaign managers. Had Mr Nehru faltered then, that would have been the end of India's democratic aspirations, with disastrous consequences for the country's political unity and economic progress.

What Nehru refused to do, lesser men cannot afford to do. Therein lies the assurance for the safeguard of our democratic polity. Just as it is beyond dispute that poll irregularities and high-handedness are facts of our political life, let there be no mistake that the institution of elections has survived as an effective mechanism for the exercise of the people's right to choose their Government. ■

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RIGGING

ITS GEOGRAPHY

By KEWAL VARMA

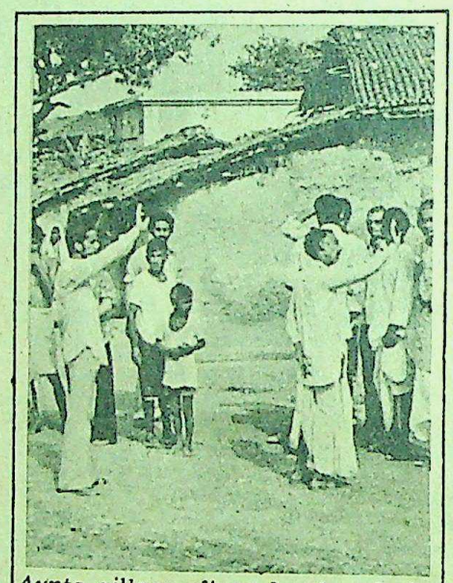
THE modus operandi of rigging differs from State to State, region to region. It is most widespread in western UP and North Bihar. In jat-dominated western UP, harijans in villages are invariably not allowed to vote. During my tour of the Meerut division to cover the 1977 elections, whenever I would ask a group of rural harijans for whom they were going to vote, invariably their reply would be: "Babuji, what is the good of telling you for whom we would vote. Who will let us vote?"

In Bihar, not only harijans but even people belonging to the backward castes are not allowed to vote. When there was a strong Indira wave in 1971, the Congress (O) could manage to win three seats there which were out of proportion to its real popular strength. In that election, the Rajput and Bhumihar lobby was supporting Congress (O). The tacticians of Congress (O) planned to win five seats, but unfortunately polling officers of two constituencies fell sick. Hence, only three Congress (O) stalwarts, Digvijay Narain Singh, Satyendra Narain Sinha and Shyam Nandan Mishra could win.

Generally, when in a region a single community is dominant numerically, consisting about 25 to 30 per cent of the population, and is politically and socially aggressive and economically well-off, the possibilities of rigging are quite strong. However, rigging is not really possible unless the administration either openly connives at or acquiesces to it. In western UP, jats are aggressive and well-off, thanks to sugarcane cultivation and the green revolution. There are not many jats in the civilian administration, but they make up this shortcoming by their numbers in the police and armed police services. These forces are also put on election duties.

In Bihar both the civilian administration and police forces are dominated by rajputs, bhumihars and their upper caste brethren, the brahmins and kayasthas. In the Samastipur byelection last year, the administration at the grassroot level was openly supporting the bhumihar Congress (I) candidate Tarakeshwari Sinha. One rajput DSP even physically assaulted a Janata MP when he was visiting a polling booth. It must be said that in small pockets, ahirs and kurmis who have acquired some newfound economic strength have started imitating the upper castes in this regard. But the largescale rigging is done by the upper castes.

The hard rural reality is that large sections of the population are hopelessly dependent, socially and economically, on the dominant castes. The poor virtually live on the crumbs thrown by the rich. They work on their fields and in their homes. Even the common land is virtually under the possession of the dominant sections. For all practical purposes, the poor are bonded labour. And the upper castes use this oppressive strength at the time of the elections. When some poor people tend to defy these strings, they are tamed with lathis and the police.



Aunta village after a bomb explosion during the panchayat elections

These strings operate independently of Parties. About 25 years ago, I went to cover a by-election in Punjab. The village was a stronghold of communists. At the end of polling, it became clear that harijans had voted against the communist candidate in favour of the Congress. When the comrades were reviewing the position, they would mention the name of the harijans, one by one, and say: "Let that bastard come to collect mustard leaves from my field, I will beat him up; he did not vote for us". However, it is a different story now: in most cases, the dominant castes have deserted the communists.

Rigging, West Bengal-style, is entirely different. The CPI(M) does detailed advance planning. It registers bogus voters in the voters-list, roughly 20,000 to 30,000 per parliamentary seat. Then its volunteers start moving from booth to booth casting these bogus votes. They remove the ink on their fingers with a special oil. On an average, a volunteer will cast six to seven votes. This is impersonation on a large scale, but it is possible only if a Party has a large force of trusted volunteers. No other party can match CPI(M) in organised cadre. Indeed, this is a display of CPI(M) discipline and strength.

The Congress adopted a different method in 1972. In some places, polling officers connived with the Congress and allowed its volunteers to "capture" booths. In other places, Congress volunteers exploded bombs to scare away the voters and the polling officers. Then they took hold of the bunch of ballot papers, stamped the Congress symbol on them and dumped them into the ballot boxes. In a number of booths, all the votes were "cast" within two hours of the start of voting. In the constituency of Jyoti Basu, for instance, the voting was over by 12 noon. It is estimated that mass rigging took place in at least 36 constituencies.

However, it must be noted that the Congress could resort to rigging only because it had enlarged its political support base by 1972. As a result of CPI(M)'s Big Brother attitude and its politics of violence, there was a revolution in the middle classes. This was evident in 1971 when Priya Ranjan Das Munsi defeated a highly respected CPI(M) leader Ganesh Ghosh. Between 1971 and 1972, the CPI(M) percentage of votes declined From 31.98 per cent to 27.25 per cent. The Party would have lost in any case; rigging was only overkill. But in 1977, the Congress could not resort to rigging except in the seat of Saugata Roy, because it had totally lost the support of middle classes. In 1977, there was such massive support for the Janata in the north that there was massive rigging in favour of the Janata Party. The Congress volunteers got so demoralised that they left the polling booths much before closing time.

General experience shows that where the dominant castes have even 40 per cent support, they can resort to rigging and raise their vote to 51 per cent. Whereas the have-nots can rig only if they already have 51 per cent popular support, and have lathis in their hands and strong organisation. Then they can raise their voting to 55 per cent or so. The brutal Indian reality is that might is right. Today, every candidate needs not only popular support, but also lathis and, in some places like Bihar, country-made guns—not to forget a strong organisation.

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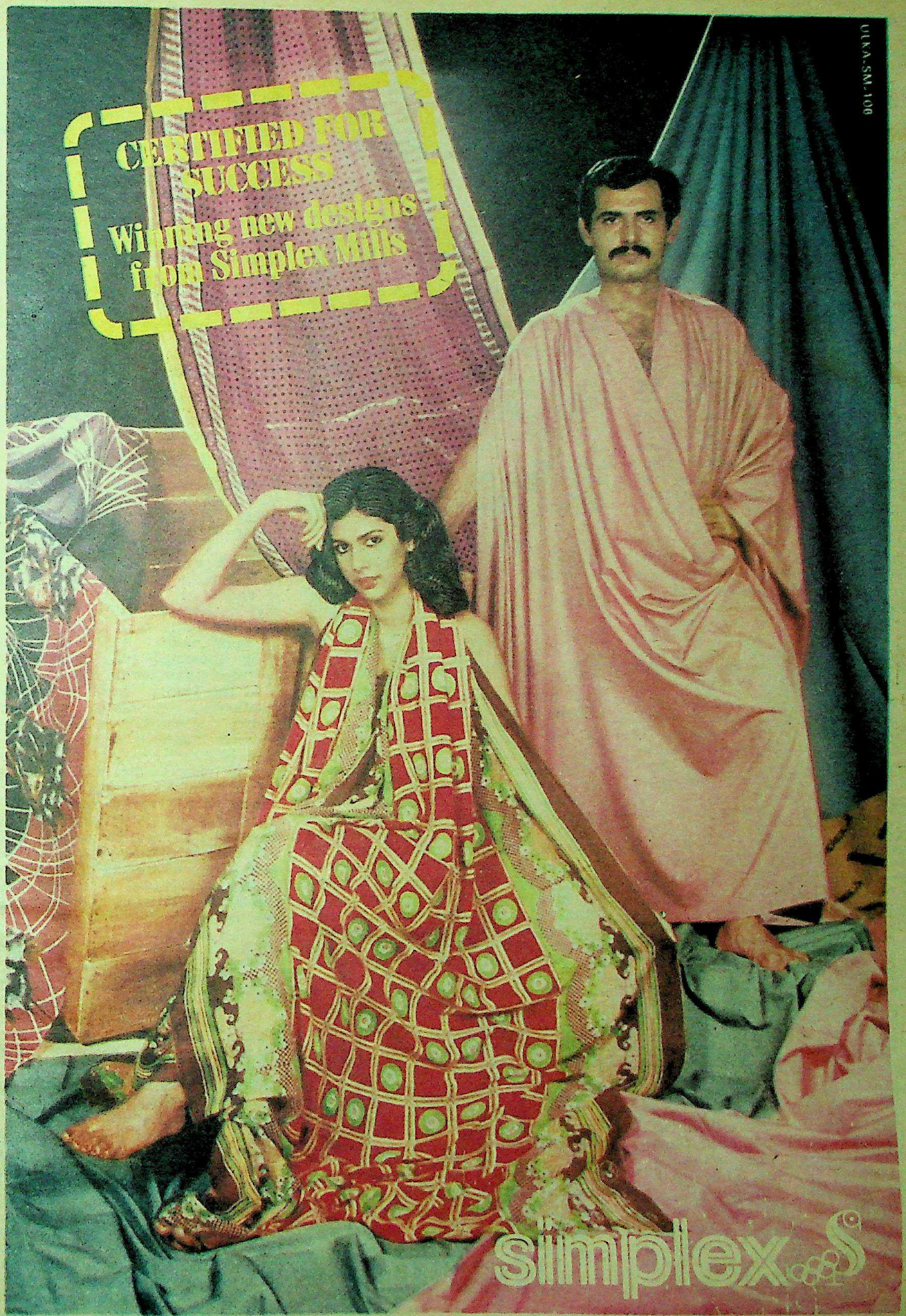

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'Dadas' down but not out

OLGA TELLIS reports on how block votes are purchased in Bombay's slums

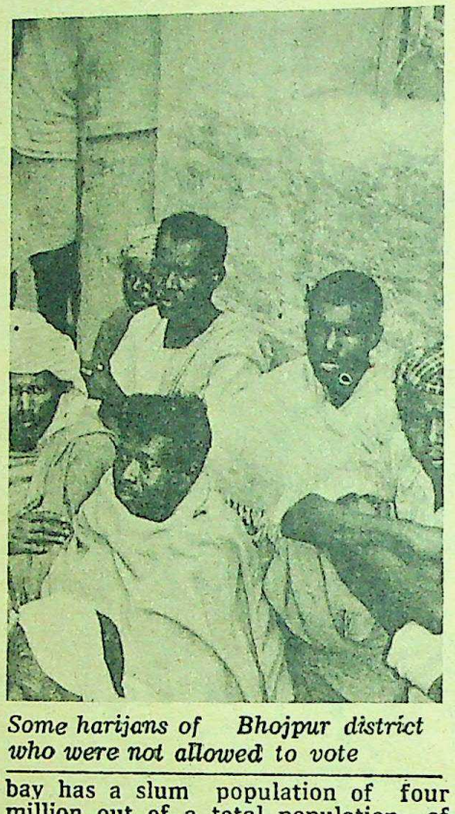
"I have 500 votes, what are you prepared to give?" asks a slum dada (boss) nonchalantly to a prospective candidate. The candidate if he is a greenhorn, is perplexed and may quote the sum at which he could purchase the votes. But if he is a veteran Parliamentary/Assembly contestant he just dismisses the dada as he knows that the dada influence is on the wane except in massive slums like Dharavi and along the Eastern Highway where slums are mainly dens of vice and violence.

There is a scheduled caste-inhabited slum in the Fort area that asked a prospective candidate for a 'mandir' in return for their support. Another near Cama Hospital wants a TV set in return for their 300 votes. Another at Mangalore Street wants a gymnasium. They never ask for anything that concerns the development of their zopadpattis, says one legislator All they ask for is social clubs, chairs, mandirs and carrom boards One slum at the southern tip of Colaba told a legislator that "we are with you, but just see that you give us water after the elections".

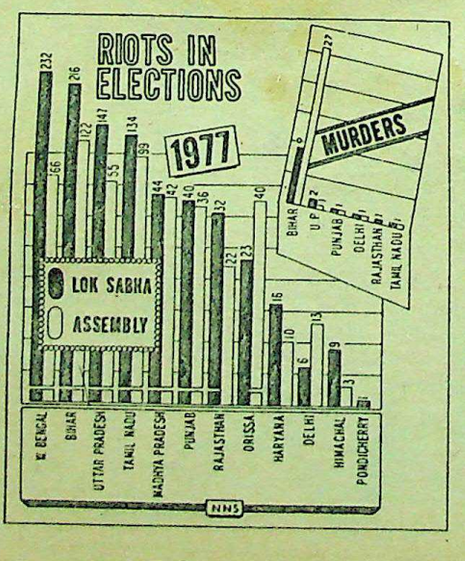
These are but a few, insignificant instances of how slum votes can be swaved and which has over the years given rise to a situation that is as perplexing as it is axiomatic — that slum votes can be purchased in bulk and that goonda power has a role to play in so called democratic elections. This blows the myth of democracy and its 'for the people-by the people-of the people' chorus because it is the dada who decides with his muscle power, in many cases, which way the votes will go and his decision usually goes in favour of the highest bidder.

However, this is also not wholly true right now. During the 1977 elections the late Mr. Gokhale was alleged to have given utensils and saris to slum families in his Bombay north (west) constituency and his resources, with four-colour posters and all, were far greater than the Janata's wealthy Mr. Jethmalani's. Yet the latter won that seat. One reason for this could be the Janata wave. When there are waves like the Indira wave of 1971 and the Janata wave of 1977 then the dada influence is negligible. In fact, it is said that Congress strongman Gulab Joshi of Vile Parle had to hide his face during the 1977 elections.

This time there is no wave, either for Indira or Janata, in Bombay city and so the possibility of dadas playing their role is not ruled out. Bombay has a slum population of four million out of a total population of 7.7 million. They are spread over 600 slum pockets from south Bombay to Thane in the easternmost suburb and Dahisar in the westernmost suburb. During an election they form the largest single bulk votes that can be garnered by prospective candidates. Slum voters also turn out in the largest numbers. It is estimated that voting is as high as 75 per cent in the slums. Of the four-million slum dwellers a minimum of two million are voters



Some harijans of Bhojpur district who were not allowed to vote



The dada is the godfather of the slum and people are prepared to listen to him because he is their 'sarkar'. When they don't have Rs 200-300 for the cremation of their loved ones he is the one who loans the money. He wields influence in the Municipal Corporation, police and even with the State Government, which is necessary because many of the slums are illegal and the only way they can get facilities like tap water, sanitary toilets and electricity is through the 'sifarish' given by their dada to the powers that be.

The dada influence is the strongest in Dharavi slum which has 1,20,000 people of all regions but predominantly from Tamil Nadu. In this slum there is plenty of room for rigging, according to people in the know of the ways and means of achieving this. The returning officer who is usually a Maharashtrian is not familiar with the tongue twister Tamilian names. They talk a language he does not know and this makes impersonation, one of the popular forms of rigging, a cakewalk.

Other areas where the dada influence holds sway are Jogeshwari, 10 km off the main road, Anandnagar which has 400 huts, Vikasnagar where illicit distilling goes on freely. It is understood that people in these slums own nothing legally and therefore they are at the mercy of dadas. If they don't do what he says he harasses them, their survival is at stake and so voting is influenced by these dadas who roam menacingly, showing their muscle power in their unnumbered cars.

In the slums from Trombay to Ghatkopar, populated by hapless quarry workers, the owners of the quarries determine the voting pattern of the people. These people, mostly from Andhra and the drought hit areas of Maharashtra, are at the mercy of the owner who pays them a pittance for 10-12 hours, work a day, yet demands his pound of flesh at election time. There are eight new slums of quarry workers in the Jogeshwari-Dahisar belt and four in the Kurla-Ghatkopar belt and two in Andheri.

THE Government is also a dada to its slum dwellers on Government and municipal land. For the last 25 years, for instance, there has been the gigantic, sprawling Daurinagar slums on either side of the Western Express Highway on Government land. They have had no facilities like electricity or tap water over the years. In fact, a huge wall was built to cover it from the eyes of the ever-complaining Prime Ministers and VIPs who have to pass the area to and from the airport. This area inspired Air India's hoarding 'An Air about India'. Only recently, after the announcement of the mid-term poll, has the Government sanctioned water connections. They have also put up four lampposts in the area for the over 5000 huts!

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Dadagiri, says one social worker, is not only physical but emotional. Party feelings are exploited to the hilt and so are caste feelings. For instance, the Tamilians vote the way the DMK or AIADMK brethren in Tamil Nadu tell them. The Haryana bhaiyas have their own Chaudhury who gives them a call from their gaon (villege). 'Dadas' also use the service of the "aunty" who runs speakeasies in slums. It is said that during elections even the grocer shops and bars do not take money from key workers of political Parties that dominate the slum. The aunty is given money by the dada and in return she permits the poster stickers and other Party helpers to have a free run on the bar.

There is, however, a distinct trend emerging in the slums whereby the dada influence is minimised, although not eclipsed, due to the rise of local committees. The Bharatiya Harijan Yuvak Samiti for instance, appeals directly to youngsters in the slums to vote intelligently. They are given talks on the backgrounds of various candidates, with promising results. This happened in Mithanagar slum in Goregaon. In the Mayanagar slum, young people boycotted the municipal elections because they realised that the dadas had fooled them over the years and they got nothing for the slum people besides promises.

Every suburb till Dahisar has its slums and through this belt on the Eastern Highway it's the same story of fear and of the dada. The slums of Ghatkopar, Kurla, Bhandup, Deonar, Chembur are in the grip of dadas.

The dada phenomenon in the slums, vis-a-vis elections, is a Congress legacy that was nurtured over the years as a shortcut to getting votes without really working for the uplift of the area. The political activists in the slum areas were replaced by the dada who, because of their shady, seedy background and involvement in the "underworld", makes it easier for the politician to deal with him. This in turn leads to the malfunctioning of democracy because dadas could also be used to create "artificial" waves in favour of the Party that paid the highest. Dadas set up 60 per cent of the slums and took over management in the rest of the 40 per cent.

The curbing of the influence of the dada in the last five years was brought about ironically by a Congressman, Mr. Prabhakar Kunte, when he was Minister for Housing. He pushed through a comprehensive Rs. 20-crore slum improvement scheme which led to the formation of various mandals, committees and created a general consciousness of their rights among the slum people. The slum people automatically created local committees to demand and see through the execution of what the Government promised by way of electricity, roads, sanitation, tap, water, etc., and this went a long way in checking the influence of the dadas.

Bihar is worst of all

ARUN RANJAN reports on booth capturing

ALL the political Parties in Bihar seem to have arrived at a consensus on one point : there will be rigging during the forthcoming polls, and they must try and ensure that in the areas where they command support, they do not allow their opponents to poll too many votes. How far the decision to return to boothwise counting will embarrass them into caution, or how many legal disputes will ensue after the results are announced, cannot be predicted, but if what happened in the past few elections, particularly in the panchayat elections of 1978, is any indication, then rigging has entered a new age. It began with "bogus voting", or illegal voting in the names of people who were dead or missing from the area but whose names remained on the electoral rolls. Then came the era of intimidation, with lathis, and bands of people roaming around in jeeps armed with bombs and guns. Now political goondas are taking up positions in certain villages, and forcibly preventing anyone from voting. Not every booth is captured, true — but about 30 per cent of the voting can now be presumed false.

Booth capturing is prevalent due to the weaknesses of democracy as practised. It shows the impotence of the administration and also reveals the callousness towards the people. The masses can prevent booth capturing if they are interested in preserving democracy, because after all, only about 10 people prevent about 5,000 people from voting, but they are often indifferent. It would, moreover, be too simplistic to blame only the administration or political Parties. In reality, this is the work not of a Party but of a small group of people who are mostly criminals, under the guidance of individual candidates. But Parties abet this by turning a blind eye; indeed, certain Parties have been admitting criminals as members either on a permanent or a temporary basis. This explains, too, the close affinity between politics and crime. Political gangsterism is proof of this. In 1978, there was an important by-election from Samastipur. The candidates were Mrs Tarakeshwari Sinha and Ajit Mehta (Janata), supported by Karpoori Thakur. The question was : Who would win? Most newspapers in their reports assumed that the

Politicians are buying guns

THE Home Ministry is worried about the situation in Bihar; the production of illegal firearms has doubled in the State. In the interior villages, ironsmiths normally turn out a variety of guns for professional criminals; now politicians are also placing their orders. According to one estimate, the number of small factories manufacturing firearms illegally is between 500 and 600. Of these, 250 to 300 are in the Nalanda-Monghyr belt. The rest are spread over villages in the districts of Patna, Aurangabad and Rohtas. According to intelligence reports politicians are ordering armaments at wholesale rates. Fantastic prices are being offered to ironsmiths and they are being given large advances. Many factories have shifted to larger premises.

During the Durga Puja vacation this year, many students stayed back in their college hostels. According to a hostel superintendent, many of those who stayed behind were campus goondas-cum-politicians. They spent their holidays collecting firearms. On investigation this allegation was found to be true. During the last two years, college hostels have played a significant role in the State's caste-ridden politicis. Many hostels have, over the months, collected lathis, spears and country-made pistols. Now, at the command of politicians student-goondas have converted their hostels into mini armouries.

One politician who returned from a tour of his constituency in northern Bihar confided to a journalist : "My trusted volunteers have refused to help me this time. They are afraid of the threat to their lives. For a small sum of money they do not want to risk their lives while capturing booths". The same mentality pervades the entire State. The atmosphere of violence and armed struggle has forced many volunteers and Party workers to withdraw from the fray. The vacuum is likely to be filled by hardened, professional gangsters. It is clear that guns, bombs and goondas will be used on an unprecedented scale in the coming elections.

ARUN RANJAN

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candidate who would be supported by the master booth capturer of Begusarai, Kamdev Singh, would emerge victorious. Till the time of polling speculations ran rife about whom Kamdev Singh would support.

This is the way a youth leader, Vijay Krishna, analyses the situation. He says that since the very inception of Parliamentary democracy in this country, bogus voting has taken place. During the Seventies, booth capturing came into its own. The reason was again simple — bogus voting involved a lot of trouble : making a list of voters, finding out who were alive and who would vote, substituting them with bogus voters, removing the indelible mark from the finger etc. In the Hindi speaking belt the biggest difficulty was organising bogus women voters. In some areas in Bihar and UP even prostitutes were used as bogus voters. There are even cases of men adorning burkhas and posing as women voters. All these problems, it was found, could be solved in one stroke, by capturing booths.

The art of booth capturing was explained in detail by an experienced politician : "Booth capturing is done in two ways — official and unofficial. The unofficial method is more in use. There are three methods of doing this. First, if you have many supporters, then you come early in the morning and line them up at the booth and cast your votes before your opponents arrive. Where manpower is evenly balanced, guns and bombs come into play. Some 20 to 25 persons get down from jeeps and trucks, start firing guns, and bursting bombs. When the voters flee in fear of their lives someone enters the booth and stamps all the ballot papers in his candidate's favour. The third method is used where your supporters are numerically few. Some are then placed in the queue, and they ocassionally keep on creating trouble. A good half an hour is wasted by the polling agent in trying to bring the situation back to normal each time there is a disturbance. Meanwhile polling remains at a standstill. If this happens about five or six times, a total of two to three hours is wasted. Not only this, all this can effectively prevent the supporters of the opposing candidate from capturing the booth. This is known as 'negative booth capturing' and is done by local hoodlums.

"Official booth capturing is an easier task. It is totally centred around individuals. There are two or three ways of going about this task. If your Party is in power, then you can easily manipulate the posting of magistrates, polling agents, policemen and district magistrates who are sympathetic to your cause. To prevent this, once the elections are announced, transfer of officials is restricted by the election commission. But the State Governments try to get around this rule by forwarding excuses or by transferring officials three months before the elections. At present, in Bihar, there is a controversy going on regarding the Inspector-General of Police, R. Lal, who belongs to the backward castes. The backward castes believe that if R. Lal remains the IG then they will get some official support. The forwards too fear that this may happen. One Minister has also submitted his resignation and announced that he would not withdraw it till the IG was transferred. If a candidate cannot get a suitable polling agent transferred to his constituency, then, on the night before the elections attempts are made to buy him off. The agent is given a splendid dinner, backed with alcohol. And the next day's programme is decided by promises of money and caste considerations. When even this does not succeed, then on the day of polling, the polling agent is threatened not to obstruct riggers or last-minute attempts are made to get him over to their side. The security arrangements for the presiding officer and polling personnel are so inadequate that even a small threat is enough to make them surrender. Some presiding officers are so clever that they know precisely which party is strong and they come to terms with it in fear of their lives."

In Bihar, some people are disappointed at the prospect of the polls being held on one day. Since armed gangs go around in jeeps and trucks capturing booths it may not be possible for them to do as much as they could if the elections are held on two days. Their modus operandi is : After having captured booths on one day, they go to another constituency the next day and capture other booths. Two candidates come to an agreement and get the same people to capture booths for them.

In some places help is required from the local people to capture booths. In such cases people from a particular caste capture booths for a candidate from their own caste like the bhumihars in Begusarai, kurmis in Nalanda, yadavs in Patna, brahmins in Mithila, rajputs in Aurangabad. Formerly, the rajputs and the bhumihars were the leaders in this field but now the yadavs and the kurmis have also learnt. Two things are clear from this. First, the politicisation of particular castes or groups in recent times. Second, this is also a symbol of change in political equations.

In 1971, in the Lok Sabha elections the Indira wave was backed up by booth capturing. In 1977, too, thanks to the public support the Janata Party enjoyed, it was possible for them to capture booths. This reporter's vote was cast by the Janata supporters in the Kadam Kuan area in Patna in the 1977 Lok Sabha elections. In the 1980 mid-term polls, booth capturing may well surpass all previous records. The backward castes are out to fight. In the final analysis, booth capturing simply proves that the politicians have lost faith in themselves, the electorate and in the elections. The eventual victim is democracy. ■

Photographs by Krishna Murari Kishan

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THE BANGALORE TEST

ASIF IQBAL'S IMPRESSIONS

Nikhil Bhattacharya

FIRST DAY

THE first thing I would like to mention is that when I went over to the ground it was really a heartening sight to see that it wasn't raining and that all the boys were doing some loosening up exercises and getting some batting practice. The look of a dry ground was very heartening because till yesterday we were thinking that probably we would have to struggle to play today. I had slight problems with my health overnight, and I wasn't sure whether I would be 100 per cent fit. The atmosphere was great because we knew there were going to be many people and, like in Pakistan, you could see that everything was buzzing. The moment we left the hotel we saw people going towards the stadium, something which one always associates with a big *majlis*.

The thing which appealed most was the moment you entered the stadium —I felt it anyway. As a player. That there it is, a full house and a full stadium. Nothing is better than to perform in front of a full house. The whole atmosphere of the stadium, with the sun shining, gave us some kind of inspiration, after having those three or four days of rain when we didn't play enough cricket. Everyone was trying to touch me, or touch the players. Everywhere there were shouts of "Good luck". There were shouts of "Hope you'll score a hundred". I think the crowd has been tremendously good, because as I was going down the steps towards the ground to meet the other boys, and to have a knock, I don't think there was even a single unkind remark. There were people always either wishing me luck, saying "We hope your team will do well" and "we hope you will do well". They were looking forward to seeing a good day's cricket from the Pakistani team. It's important, because that gives you inspiration and you feel that, look, we are away, it's not our home ground, it's not our country, and yet the people are so sympathetic, so friendly, always wishing you and hoping you'll do well. I think this will help the team's performance a lot and it

Nikhil Bhattacharya

Debutant Roger Binny hooks an Imran bouncer for a sizzling four

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was quite noticeable here especially.

As for the toss, which decides many a thing on a Test ground, before we went out to toss I went into the dressing room and I had a chat with the boys and I was trying to find out as to what we should do if I won the toss. Majid and I had a long talk about the look of the wicket and we were of the opinion that we should bat.

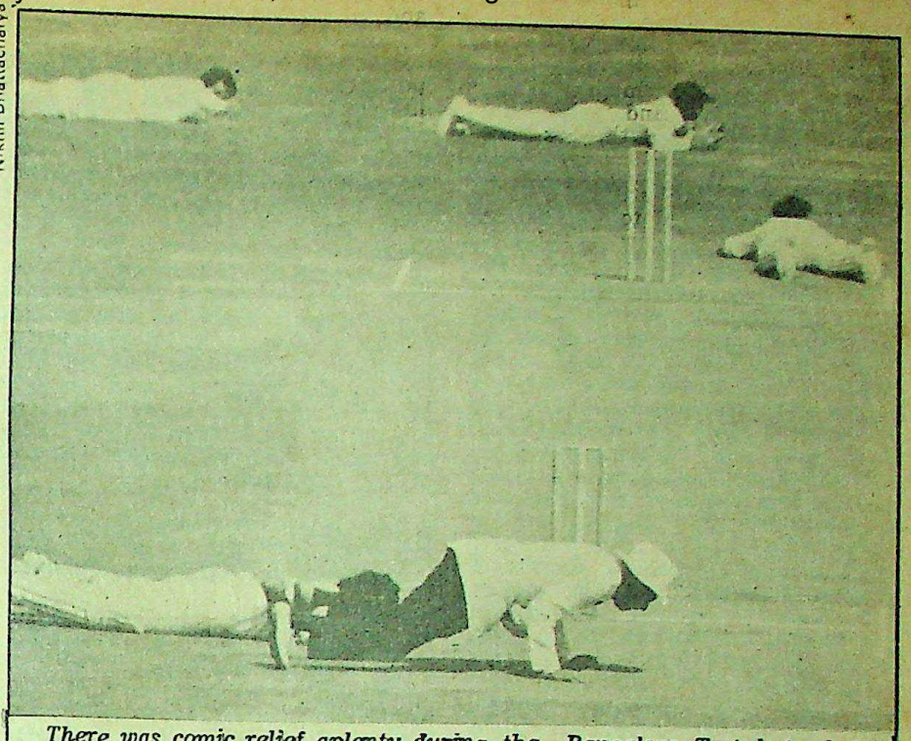
With that whole team of photographers trying to take snaps of both of us as we walked towards the wicket...I have never experienced tossing in a Test match because I have never captained Pakistan. Besides, the importance of winning the toss on Indian wickets is pretty great, I think, and that's why I can very well remember when Sunil spun the coin and I shouted "heads" and when it did land "heads" I suddenly got a shiver of excitement, or a shiver of tension. Winning the toss really pleased me And without hesitation I told Sunil that yes, we would bat.

I would say that it was a most satisfactory day, yes. I wouldn't call it an exciting day. It was a satisfactory day, because I think excitement comes when the thing is all over, when the Test is won or lost, or when the series is finished, that's when it comes. I think a captain's job is not only just taking his own decisions and looking after his own performances. More important than that is the performance of the other ten who are in the team, and looking after them, which I'm still in the process of doing. I think I was very happy at the end of the day although unfortunately we lost a wicket in the last over. I would have been happier if Raja were still there. In the very first three or four overs, when Majid and Mudassar were being beaten, we were sort of sitting on tenterhooks and I was sort of debating the decision, whether I had done the right thing or the wrong thing in electing to bat. When Majid was finally out, I was slightly unhappy because I thought maybe I'd made a wrong decision. I'm very happy now that I did make the right decision, because I think I did mention it to the boys before that the first few overs would probably help the bowlers more than the batsmen. Zaheer and Mudassar played exceptionally well, but unfortunately Zaheer got out.

SECOND DAY

PAKISTAN losing an extra wicket in that last over, with me having to face the last three balls of that incomplete over, had made things quite different. I reached the wicket, knowing that the ball just taken was a new ball and my feelings at that moment were, had we not lost that extra wicket, we would have had a lefthander there along with a righthander, and would have given the bowlers an unfortunate time.

Nikhil Bhattacharya



There was comic relief aplenty during the Bangalore Test but what took place during the first day definitely took the cake. Fifty thousand spectators were treated to the rare sight of all eleven Indian players, the two Pakistani batsmen and the umpires prone on the turf. For several moments no one knew what was happening but then they realised that a swarm of bees had caused the fifteen men to fling themselves flat on the ground. The interruption did not take long, but Zaheer Abbas did not realise that the danger had passed and Indian skipper Sunil Gavaskar had to walk over and pat him on the cheek as if to wake him up.

Today the nervous tension was much more, because yesterday I was just sitting in the dressing room or the pavilion, watching the boys play. But today I was right in the firing line. To start with, yes, I was...I did have a bit of tension. The team, however, was in high spirits, when we went for our morning training. It may sound superstitious: I normally don't practise—I think this goes for Zaheer too; we don't practise before our turn to bat comes.

When I was out I was not very happy because I think it's criminal to get out after getting going. It is better to be out for nought than get that many runs and get out. I got back to the dressing room. I conveniently dozed off for 45 minutes or so, only to hear now and then a loud cheer from the crowd and I knew obviously that another wicket had fallen, and the loud cheer was not because Imran had hit a six or someone else had hit a four.

REST DAY

ALTHOUGH it was supposed to be a rest day and we were looking forward to having a peaceful and quiet day, my day started at seven when the first phone call came. It was from some journalist who wanted to interview me. This was followed by about half a dozen phone calls. I had optimistically asked the hotel operater to "wake" me up at nine—and it was quite amusing that at nine o'clock sharp the operator phoned and said, "This is your morning alarm". And all these other calls had come before!

We were supposed to go and offer our Friday prayers. And because we felt that if we all went together there would be a lot of chaos, we went to different mosques. I, along with some of my very old schoolfriends who had come all the way from Hyderabad, not only to watch the Test but also to be with me, some of them I was seeing after 20 years, we went to the Jama Masjid. We arrived just about a minute before the prayers were due to start. I was in my national dress — salwar kameez — and I was wearing a pair of dark glasses with my Namaz cap on top, thinking that I was very well disguised. When I entered they were about to start their prayers and I thought I could quickly sneak off just afterwards, but that was not to be because I suddenly heard one whisper — 'There's Asif' — and the word spread. And as soon as we finished our prayers we wanted to sneak off, but there was no chance. As soon as I finished they crowded around and kept touching me almost to make sure that I was for real. And suddenly rupee notes were coming out of their pockets for autographs, and there was a lot of confusion. A funny thing happened as we were leaving. The person I was with took out what we thought

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was the token for the slippers we had left outside the mosque, and instead the passes for the racecourse came out. And suddenly we heard, "My God, look at them! Here they are at the mosque, and straight from here they're going to the races!"

We did go straight to the races. I had a lovely day, starting with the fact that I managed to speak to my wife and kids, who are in London, the first thing in the morning. They're following the Test from there. I went to the races where I was to present a cup, and I also won a couple of races myself. So I had a very good day. In the evening we had this team dinner just to find out how the first two days had gone, and if there were any suggestions on how to tackle the Little Master Gavaskar and the others, how best to contain them. And then Taslim Arif — who is the best singer Pakistani cricket has produced — came up with the idea that Sunil bats with a 45 degree angle bat, and Dilip Vengsarkar bats with a 90 degree angle bat and the field should be placed accordingly. So Mudassar suggested that instead of going to the cricket ground with a cricket kitbag we should take a geometry box with us. In the end we decided that since the wicket might provide a little bit of turn to the bowlers from the beginning — after using the quickies for three or four overs, we would immediately start giving the spinners a go.

THIRD DAY

Today, what with the rain clouds hanging overhead, we offered a prayer that it shouldn't rain at all when the pitch was completely covered. As it turned out, there was no rain, and when we went to the ground this morning to start the match the clouds were pretty high and there was not much chance of rain, despite our prayers.

The day began on a very quiet note, with both Sunil and Vengsarkar playing confidently. Both of them carried their bat upto lunch although Imran bowled well. But he wasn't getting much out of the wicket. We thought 'Right, we're out here for the whole day, and we should try and do our best and try and get at least Sunil out as fast possible'.

We tried various ways, and at times we were thinking of making quick changes to give almost everybody a bowl—luckily Pakistan has got many allrounders who bowl in some form or the other—just to rattle the rhythm of the batsmen. But we had no luck at all till lunch. And when we got back to the dressing room we kept on talking, hoping and praying that we could get Sunil out. We would really solve many problems for ourselves, and then we could concentrate on Vishy. Sunil is such a fine player of quickies and specially on a wicket that is giving no response at all to the bowlers, so we thought that we would just try and keep on plugging at him.

We did manage to get both Sunil and Dilip out in the lunch to tea period. When we saw Yashpal coming to bat it was quite surprising, because Yashpal did not field at all in the whole two days of our innings. He fielded for maybe two hours, and yet he came out to bat—and the ease with which he batted made me feel that he must have made a remarkable recovery from the backstrain or whatever he had. He played well, and so did Vishy, although he gave plenty of chances to the bowlers by playing all the strokes that he had—and yet he was still there at the end of the day's play.

FOURTH DAY

On the fourth day the morning started when I learned through the hotel telephone operator that it was Imran's birthday. The operator said that he had been trying to get through to Mudassar Nazar, who is Imran's roommate, but since the morning the whole telephone system had been jammed with calls for Imran from various places and various people. Everybody wanted to wish him. I noticed when I went towards the coach that there were two girls carrying beautiful bouquets of flowers to his room. When Imran came to join us he said his room was full of flowers and messages. I thought it was a really nice gesture from the people of India. In the coach, Javed Miandad, who is always trying to create mischief of some kind, said, "Imran, it must be nice to be 30" knowing fully well that it wasn't his thirtieth birthday. This made everyone laugh and put us in a very good mood.

At about 10 o'clock we were informed that we would not be starting on time because of bad light. Play began eventually at 10.35, and I was really surprised even at that, because I thought the light wasn't fit enough. But the umpires decided so we went out and in the second over we had Vishy out, off Ehteshamuddin, caught behind, and that was Ehtesham's first Test wicket. I thought Vishy must have had very good eyesight, because in that light he managed to get a nick on the ball. But after that it became almost certain that we wouldn't be playing because it was getting dark.

We went back to the dressing room where there was a birthday cake for Imran Khan which the hotel had sent, and we had this party with all of us standing around and singing 'happy birthday'. Imran cut the cake and then half of it was sent to the Indian dressing room. And Sunil, Vengsarkar, Doshi and Kapil Dev came to wish Imran. After that, we started playing indoor cricket with a tennis ball. And then we started counting the telegrams Imran had received, and it went into hundreds.

FIFTH DAY

On the last day of a Test match one usually feels sort of tense and excited. Either you're going to win or you're trying your best to save the match, but knowing that there wasn't even the remotest possibility of finding a result it was very difficult to gear oneself up to participate in the rituals of the day.

As a captain I felt that all I needed to do was try and get the boys some practice and with that in mind, I decided that it would be better to try and give the boys bowling practice and do some match practice which is very vital in fielding and bowling. The only thing that was quite noticeable was the dampness all around the field but not actually on the wicket. The boys were also quite surprised that more than half the stadium was full even before the match started, although we had been told by the England team that was here in 1975-'76 that when they were playing in Calcutta and England needed 18 runs to win on the last day there were nearly 80,000 people watching.

I had a very attacking field almost for the whole of the two days that India batted but today I had a slightly less attacking field, and although the Indians at stages were scoring very freely yet we managed to get them all out before they surpassed our total. Of the bowlers in our team, I think the unluckiest one was Iqbal Qasim who, despite his exceptionally good line and length, didn't manage to get any wickets and it was quite funny that Majid — who is a non-regular bowler now — kept getting wickets. Every time he got one Iqbal was running to him and saying "For God's sake rub something on my left shoulder for luck so that I can also get at least one wicket". Majid I thought deserved the wickets he got, however. With Imran rattling Dilip Doshi's three stumps off the ground he neared his own personal achievement of getting to the hundred wicket mark. He needs two more wickets and he was very keen that I declare the innings after about 45 minutes of batting when after scoring 60 to 100 runs India would be in no position to score those runs and he could have a bash of a four to five over spell and he could try and get those two wickets to get his 100th wicket. All very well to think of as a joke but in a Test match you don't really do this kind of declaration.

When it all ended it was a kind of disappointment but also it was a relief knowing that it was my first Test and that I hadn't lost. I won the toss which, I think, was the first round that I won and then we did have a very slim lead against India which also gave me confidence. With this in mind and with the players more confident now with the shivers of the First Test over I think we can look forward to an exciting series.

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OTHER TESTS

TAVLEEN SINGH reports from Bangalore on the tamasha

CRICKET fever spreads faster than flu and although the hysteria that had gripped Delhi from the moment the Pakistani team arrived had softened, South Indian style, by the time we got to Bangalore, there was little doubt that the fever still raged.

Dark clouds blotted out Bangalore as we landed and more than one of my fellow passengers looked distinctly anxious despite the cheery banner at the airport entrance saying 'The Test match begins at the West End, welcome to the Indian and Pakistani teams'. On the flight from Delhi were the Pakistani ambassador, Mr Abdus Sattar, and various cricket lovers and organizers for whom Bangalore meant only one thing—the first Test between India and Pakistan. A group of youths with vastly flared trousers and very dark glasses played spot the celebrity' while we waited for our luggage. "Look, there's Prasanna, he used to be my hero. And isn't that Polly Umrigar?"

The teams were staying at the West End—one of those old fashioned places with gabled roofs and sprawling grounds that remain from the Raj. The grounds and the hotel corridors were spilling over with youthful enthusiasts, many of whom seemed not to recognize Zaheer Abbas who sat in the lobby talking to former Test cricketer, Vijay Mehra. Zaheer looked relaxed and not unduly perturbed at all by Test-eve tension. He said he was excited rather than nervous because it would be his first Test match in India. "I keep wondering what the crowd will be like. I'll tell you one thing, if they are sporting and cheer for us as well, they will see some of the finest cricket ever." Imran, who was being followed around by his usual bodyguard of girls, said that he was not feeling anything special, but on Asif's face were clearly visible signs of tension. "Of course I'm tense. It's because this is the first series in which I have been given the captaincy. All I can say is that the sooner it starts the better it is."

The West End hotel seemed to have become a separate world—the password to which was cricket. If you knew the password you belonged and were able to share in the extraordinary camaraderie and warmth that held the world together. Women, I quickly discovered, were not accepted, except in terms of extra-curricular activity, or on the fringes as groupies. For me there were many explanations to be made—what was I doing in Bangalore, what did I know about cricket, what possible kind of story could I be doing? The more explanations I made the more dubious glances I got.

G. Sharma

On the evening before the Test while the two teams met separately to discuss strategies and pre-Test problems over dinner, the cricket correspondents, from India and Pakistan, met in the hotel bar to discuss former series and old times. They admitted that the current series had generated much more excitement than almost any other in recent history. "It's like what it was when England used to play Australia in the old days," said Dicky Rutnagur, a veteran of many Tests. I told him that I was quite keen to spend some time in the dressing room with the players to pick up reactions and that kind of thing, only to find yet another place, along with the team bus, in which women were not allowed.

"My dear," Dicky said, as if explaining to a child who has yet to learn the rules, "there is no question about a woman being allowed into a dressing room. In all these years there have been only two occasions when I have seen a woman in the dressing room, once in Bombay when a poor bloke had a stroke and was brought into the dressing room. He, in fact, died, so his wife was allowed in. The other time was when Nottingham had a woman physiotherapist and even she only managed to get into the dressing room at Lords because the team said they wouldn't go without her".

Women, I found the next morning, were a rarity in the Press enclosure as well, and if I caused a few eyebrows to shoot skywards, there was a minor tremor on the second day when a sexy little number in tightly draped sari appeared in the enclosure without notebook or Press pass and apparently with cricketers rather than cricket on her mind.

THE morning of November 21 was an answer to the prayers of the approximately 50,000 people who had taken leave, reported sick, bunked school and gone through God knows what else to see the beginning of the Test. After four days of rain, there were almost clear skies and dry weather.

The players were in the field practising for over an hour before the match was due to begin, and the already packed stadium roared approval every time one of the stars did his bit. The excitement was contagious, and by the time Asif Iqbal and Sunil Gavaskar began their walk to the middle of the field for the toss, it was as if nothing else in the world was as important as the result. Zaheer need not have worried at all about the crowd's sporting spirit, they were so enthusiastic about the Pakistanis that I began to wonder which side they were in fact on. A large proportion seemed to have put national considerations aside and opted for the favourite team which was clearly Pakistan. Mainly because in terms of stars they were way ahead, with Gavaskar and Kapil Dev being hardly any competition at all for Zaheer, Asif, Imran and Javed Miandad who, according to one consensus in the ladies' toilet, was the most popular.

For my part, as a non-follower of cricket, I kept trying to analyse what it was about the game that made so many people in the world firmly believe that there was no better way to spend five whole days of one's life. Failing to find an answer, I asked a hardened cricket correspondent, who said, "Well, they've stopped throwing Christians to the lions so, there has to be some other kind of mass entertainment". A cynical simile, but a good one.

Most of the cricketers said later that it was only inexperienced players who got really nervous, but Javed Miandad admitted that when he played in Australia it sent a shiver down his spine, because the crowd was so vocal and so aggressively one-sided. "Imagine a crowd of over 70,000 people shouting , 'Kill, Lillee, kill'." Gavaskar said that when they had been in Pakistan last year they had also faced a one-sided crowd, "Whereas look at the crowd here, they seem to us to be cheering more for the Pakistanis than for us".

The Pakistanis seemed to appreciate the support, and not once did they refuse to sign the hundreds of autograph books that were constantly being thrust under their noses. Although Imran Khan was put off now and then and said he had shortened his signature to just Imran. The college girls who swarmed around him did not

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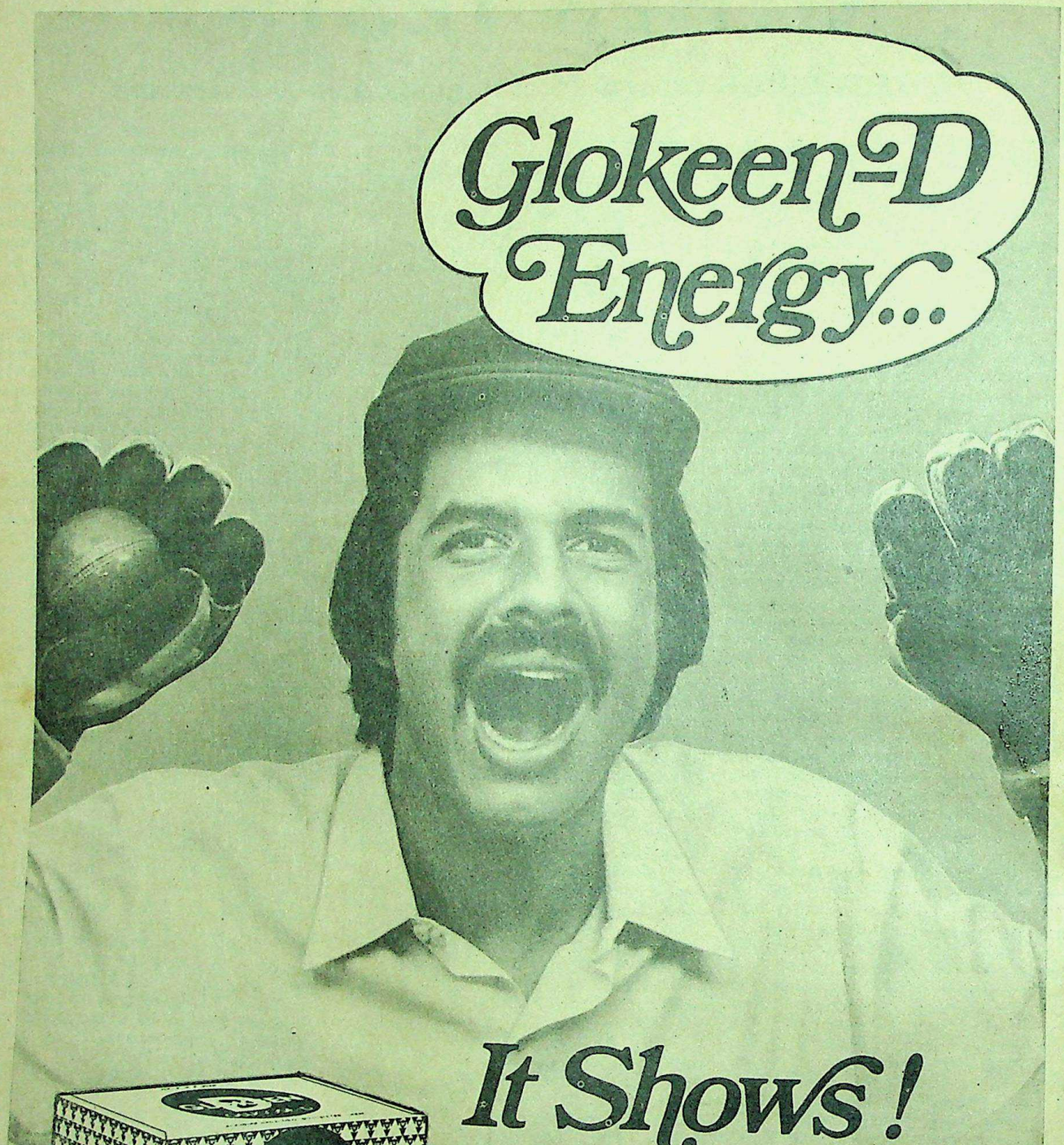

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seem to mind, "Because he is so handsome," they said, "and of course because he's a good bowler". A Pakistani correspondent said that they had consciously built Imran up when they covered the matches last year. "Imran is a phenomena for the subcontinent. He is tall, fair, good-looking and he's a fast bowler. India hasn't seen a fast bowler since 1932," he said.

The Indian team was, naturally, not attracting as much attention but, according to Gavaskar, nobody minds. After all this was the first Pakistani team here in nearly 20 years. The Indian team did not get this kind of attention in Pakistan last year; there were no hero-worshipping girls, mainly because there were no visible girls at all. "I remember at parties like this (the Pakistani ambassador was hosting a dinner) Bishen would always begin, 'Ladies and gentlemen'. He stopped doing it after a while because there were never any ladies."

Socially, Bangalore had little to offer, compared to the 'Grab-a-cricketer' approach that is currently to be seen in Delhi. Nevertheless, there have been the occasional forays into discotheques with such exotic names as 'Peacock' and 'Topkapi' and the teams have been kept on their toes by the cricket groupies that have become part of the fixtures at the West End hotel.

The game did begin, the cricket groupies continued to haunt the West End, increasing daily as the match drew to a close, and cricket fever remained unabated. The morning of November 24 began with the arrival of SUNDAY which had the effect of a minor bomb shell among the Pakistanis and made me realize that India and Pakistan are separate. My story on "Night cricket for the Pakistanis" caused many of them to tell me that stories like this were often misunderstood in Pakistan, and as a cricket correspondent added that the last time the team had done badly in England, reports of carousing had reached the homeland, and some people had demanded stern action against the players. I would like to clarify here that the emphasis of my story was meant to be not on their womanizing so much as on Delhi women's 'Pakistan cricketerizing'. In fact, to set any lurking doubts at rest, I would like to add that what is particularly impressive about the team is their professionalism.

I spent the third day of the Test sitting with the Indian players, the only other non-player in the enclosure being Mehmood, the filmstar. There was virtually no conversation or comments of any kind till Gavaskar got out for 88 towards the end of the day, when there was a sudden buzz of nervous conversation and a deepening of tension. Applause for the Indians was thankfully louder than it had been for the Pakistani batsmen despite the fact that a portion of the local Muslim population had decided to be distressingly religious in their support. The people that have been most embarrassed by this kind of religious rather than genuine support, are the Pakistani players themselves and they were often heard telling their fans off.

The fourth day of the match was distinguished more for being Imran's birthday than for any other reason since there was hardly any cricket, thanks to bad weather. Imran received hundreds of telegrams, hundreds of cards, several cakes and several bouquets of red roses, personally brought by several female fans. But he did not get what he most wanted: five wickets faster than any other bowler in the history of Pakistani cricket.

I write this as the last day's play comes to an end with Zaheer and Miandad batting and the crowd yelling for Gavaskar to bowl. From the excited shouting and cheering, it appears that they do not seem to mind the match being a draw. Tomorrow, Bangalore can go back to thinking about things other than cricket: riots in Hyderabad, elections in January or whatever. At the moment, with only about an hour of play left it is still difficult to believe that this cricket field can stop being the hub of this city so soon, or ever.

Between the overs

NOT one of the 50,000 spectators at Cubbon Park seemed to mind that the First Test ended in a draw. They certainly didn't have much to complain about, even though practically a whole day was lost to rain. They saw the Pakistanis build up a huge total despite the early loss of Majid Khan and then saw India come perilously close to matching their opponents' score before the tail folded up 15 runs short of the target. When the tourists went in to bat once again on the final day, the spectators entered into the spirit of things and treated the proceedings like festival cricket, urging Gavaskar to allow Vishwanath to bowl and then imploring him to take a shy at the wickets himself. Gavaskar sportingly obliged in both respects but prankster Javed Miandad had other ideas. When the crowd bayed for Gavaskar in the dying minutes, he shook his head in disagreement and pointed to Kirmani instead.

Miandad, who mixes his brilliant strokeplay with natural showmanship, proved beyond doubt that he is the live wire of the Pakistani team. In his first innings, he was rapped on the pads by a delivery from Shiv Lal Yadav and the crowd appealed lustily for lbw. Without a moment's hesitation he took a few steps towards the pavilion, in jocular response to their shout. Later, when he miscued a shot off Binny, he stuck out his tongue in self mockery and caught the umpire looking at him. He instantly looked contrite and made a sign of apology, while his fans screamed for more. On the last day, when he was at the crease once more in Pakistan's second innings and the crowd jeered him because of his slowness, his reaction was to hold out his bat to a section of the stands and ask them if they could do better. On one occasion, when a stray balloon drifted onto the field during a dull period of the Indian innings, he chased it and placed his white cap on top of it. But despite his best efforts, the balloon refused to stay still and he had to burst it and replace the cap on his head while umpire Gothoskar tried unsuccessfully not to grin. Incidentally, it seem that his favourite T-shirt for warming up is one with a typical Packer slogan emblazoned on it — "I'm into cricket, balls an' all."

That there is nothing more enthralling than a duel of talent between a fast bowler and a batsman was borne out in this Test. The crowd sat as if spellbound while one-time Packer speedster Imran Khan, who was used in short spells by his captain, pitted his skills against those of diminutive Indan skipper Sunil Gavaskar. The latter was reading his adversary perfectly and did not seem at all intimidated either by his pace or the way he was swinging the ball. It did look as though Sunil had a life at 48 but the only other mistake he made was his last when he played forward to Abdul Qadir and gave Javed Miandad a catch.

The Indian middle order rose to the occasion of trying to overhaul the Pakistani total magnificently but the last four wickets fell for the addition of only six runs. Yashpal Sharma, who was among the runs consistently against the Australians — except at Kanpur — played yet another valuable innings.

Roger Binny made an impressive Test debut on his home ground, cheered all the way by the crowds. Although he had no luck with the ball, he made adequate amends with his batting. From the very first ball he faced, he was sighting the ball well and his second scoring stroke was a boundary off medium pacer Ehteshamuddin. He would have had a six to his credit as well, but a powerful shot off Wasim Raja landed barely a yard inside the boundary line. It did not take him long to start stroking freely although eventually it was Imran who lured him into indescretion. He bowled a bouncer with the new ball to the Bangalore all-rounder, who got quickly into position and hooked the ball to the boundary. But it was the very next ball, an identical delivery, that had Binny mistiming another hook to be caught by Ehtesham. His was a sound innings in every respect and it was a great pity that he should fail by only four runs to score 50.

Judging by the First Test, it seems we are in for an enthralling series.

DAVID Mc MAHON

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The need to stop Muslim communalism

By M. J. AKBAR

NINETY per cent of this country is sane, and it is this 'silent majority' of Hindus and Muslims and Christians and Sikhs and others which constitutes the great strength of our society. Ten per cent is paranoidly communal or oppressive, and that poses the greatest threat to the liberalism of our society, and to the unity of our country.

The price for the history of the 1940s has not been fully paid, and perhaps it will be a long time, and another generation will have to be born and die before this cancer of the heart which has already taken such a dramatic toll can be controlled and operated out of the body politic. The RSS and the Jamaat-e-Islami cannot be the doctors to do this. The RSS chief Guru Golwalkar has publicly stated his desire to subjugate the minorities in his *Bunch of Thoughts*. Nor is the RSS in a position to repudiate Golwalkar, even for cosmetic purposes, even as part of a grand strategy towards achieving "power in ten years", as its indoctrinated cadre will revolt against any display of weakness—after all, their strength lies in their fanaticism, and for the convinced and dedicated, revisionism cannot be the answer to any challenge. Indeed, the RSS prides itself on the challenges it has faced and survived. The revisionism which the RSS leadership indulged in during the Emergency, by appealing to Mrs Gandhi for mercy (it was Balasaheb Deoras who wrote the letters to Mrs Gandhi) has become a source of embarrassment which the RSS people try and avoid discussing these days.

But the biggest impetus to the RSS comes not from the adversity faced during Government crackdowns; its source of growth lies in one source of its birth: Muslim communalism. It is true that Muslim communalism does not have the strength or the organisation of Hindu communalism; it does not have the brazen spokesmen of the RSS calibre; it does not have the power and the structure which the RSS has constructed particularly since March 1977; and its venomous power is not as channelised or as effective. But the absence of these traits does not make it harmless. Not merely do Muslim communalists endanger themselves by their activities, but they lend an awful stench to a community already sinking in the mire of much greater problems, that of poverty and ignorance. And this, in turn, fuels baseless myths and sometimes legitimate fears on the part of the majority. After all, under the surface of Hindu-Muslim relationships there is always a keg of powder; it requires only one person's mischief to light it.

AS all the world and its meanest uncle knows, there is a cricket series going on between India and Pakistan at the moment. Despite all the apparent and the sincere bonhomie, all the applause and the genuinely warm affection that promises to make this one of the best tamashas ever, there is an underlying tension, a dark, brooding tension which no one will admit to because it is so embarrassing, and could be so potentially destructive. And that is communalism. The problem might not have been so serious were elections not around the corner; but now there will be many people waiting to exploit this subterranean tension in order to achieve electoral gains. We have already seen how the Congress (I) has tried to use the seizure of the Holy Kaaba to wean Calcutta's Muslims towards its side: hopefully, the condemnation of this by the Congress (I) high command will dampen such enthusiasms within its rank and file. But a greater danger lies in the cricket: particularly now that the transistor radio has made cricket a national frenzy.

Some Muslims themselves will give enough cause for resentment. Disturbing reports have already reached us of a number of Muslims loudly rooting for Pakistan in the Bangalore Test in an obnoxious display of communalism. Bangalore has just undergone a communal riot in which, according to Mr Khushwant Singh in *New Delhi*, "The facts clearly made out aggression on the part of Hindu militants to gain political capital for the forthcoming election. Muslims who had used a plot of land as an Idgah for centuries wanted to build a college on it. This was challenged in court by a local Hindu politician. The court upheld the Muslim ownership. Frustrated by the judicial verdict this politician character organised the local *goondas* to disrupt the Id-uz-zoha prayers by driving a herd of swine into the congregation. For once I felt that this kind of conduct should have been punished in the traditional way: blackening the faces of the miscreants and parading them around the country"

But whatever the provocation, counter communalism is not the answer. This sort of thing only tends to lend credence to RSS accusation that the loyalty of the Indian Muslim cannot be trusted. The truth is that just as the RSS represents a small, albeit very vocal and dangerous, percentage of Hindu opinion, the Muslim communalist is also only to be found on the fringe of the community. And it must be up to the Muslims themselves to keep extremists in check.

We are passing through uncertain times, when intemperate wolves are on the prowl, when decency and sanity are under attack. The leaders, having failed to provide food, and having few remedies to alleviate hunger, are turning to social issues to take them back to their corrupt and heartless capital cities that control the country. What an irony! In a country where 48 per cent is living below the poverty line, and more are sinking under that thin dividing line every day, social wars rather than class wars will probably determine the fate of the next lot of leaders.

Nobody likes to write about these truths: it is somehow considered "not done" to call communal people communal. And when Muslims display unpalatable traits, as they often do, they must be censured as much as anyone else—mollycoddling will not serve. In this particular instance, it is not a question of somebody supporting the Pakistan side or not. they are a fine cricketing team, and marvellous human beings. And thousands genuinely want them to display their exceptional talents. But it is when support for them is not given on the grounds of their abilities, but as a sign of anti-Indianism that one must draw the line. There are many Tests ahead, and maybe the least important of the tests will be the battle of wits and skills between the players. The larger test will be for our society. The handful of Muslims who are trying to make this a communal battle, are anti-social criminals.

It is time for the sane 90 per cent, who form the true India, to stand up and get vocal. Battles are not won by silence — or by looking the other way.

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Spot report

Chandigarh

The conspiracy against Krishan Kant

THE RSS issue which the Janata leaders have been so vehemently proclaiming a dead issue, still seems to be the main dissenting point in the Party. There is fresh proof that the RSS issue is proving unpalatable to large sections of the Janata. In Chandigarh, for example, bitter infighting has broken out between the pro and anti-RSS factions of the local Janata Party.

In a letter to the Janata Party president, Chandra Shekhar, the president of the Chandigarh Janata Party has stated : "You must have seen reports in the newspapers about the so called Janata workers meeting where a resolution was adopted taking 'Strong exception' to the nomination of Shri Kishan Kant from the Chandigarh constituency asking the High Command to change it 'before it is too late'. If it is not changed they will put up Shri Ram Swaroop Sharma against the Party candidate.

"The fact is that the nomination of Shri Krishan Kant, as the Janata Party candidate from Chandigarh by the Central Parliamentary Board has been generally welcomed by the people of Chandigarh... Nevertheless, a disgruntled section of the erstwhile Jana Sangh local leadership, which has been active in replacing Shri Krishan Kant for the Party ticket due to self-centred policies and ideological considerations, has not ceased its anti-Party activities, even after the Janata Party's declaration of candidature of Shri Krishan Kant from the Chandigarh seat. It is the same section which has been carrying on a vilfication campaign against Shri Krishan Kant among the people of Chandigarh and organising demonstrations, whispering campaigns, meetings, Press publicity, public statements and Letters to the Editor. One of the highlights of the campaign was the ugly demonstration against Shri Krishan Kant even on the occassion of the anti-Betrayal Day rally as early as August this year, in the presence of Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee ...

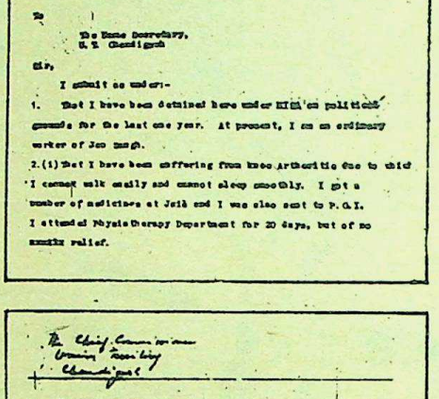
"Dismayed by the enthusiastic response that the Janata Party and its candidate is getting from the people of Chandigarh and frustrated by the denial of the Janata Party ticket to the ambitious leader of the erstwhile Jana Sangh, this section of the so called local leadership called a meeting of professedly Janata Party members, but in reality a section of the RSS-Jana Sangh elements on Sunday, November 11, 1979 and threatened the Central leadership with the declaration of the candidature of Shri Ram Swaroop Sharma, who was president of the erstwhile Jana Sangh and presently general secretary of the local Janata unit. The meeting was unauthorised and by no stretch of imagination could be described as a Janata Party workers' meeting... In the efforts to defy the Party decision the local former Jana Sangh elements are being encouraged by some national leaders of the erstwhile Jana Sangh as well as leaders from Punjab and Haryana..."

Angered at this posture adopted by the RSS elements the local Yuva Janata has started distributing photostat copies of letters written by certains members of the RSS group during the Emergency to the Government authorities begging for mercy. One of them, written by Prem Sagar Jain, an ex-president of the local Jana Sangh unit reads : "I am a detenu here under MISA for the last one year in sub jail Chandigarh. At present I am an ordinary member of the Jana Sangh, but three years back I was president of the local unit.

"As already stated in many memorandums, I fully agree with the 20 point programme of our Prime Minister and after seeing its implementation I honestly feel that this programme has done a lot for the poor, backward classes and downtrodden people. (The) morale of the nation has become high and there looks a sense of discipline in every sphere of life. (The) economy of the country is on a strong footing where agricultural production, industrial production has increased manyfold. I don't think there is anything more which our Party wants to do. The urge of the Party has been fulfilled by the policies of our Prime Minister. There should be no place for sectarian and communal politics... I have been suffering from knee arthritis. I was sent to the PGI by jail authorities. But after 20 days treatment no relief was felt. I am a patient of acute bleeding piles... In view of the above facts I have decided not to take part in any political activity in the future. So I retire from politics. Kindly consider my case of release sympathetically. I assure you that I will abide by the conditions if any imposed my me."

The Janata Party leadership and the local Yuva Janata unit have, however, decided to support Krishan Kant

UDAYAN SHARMA



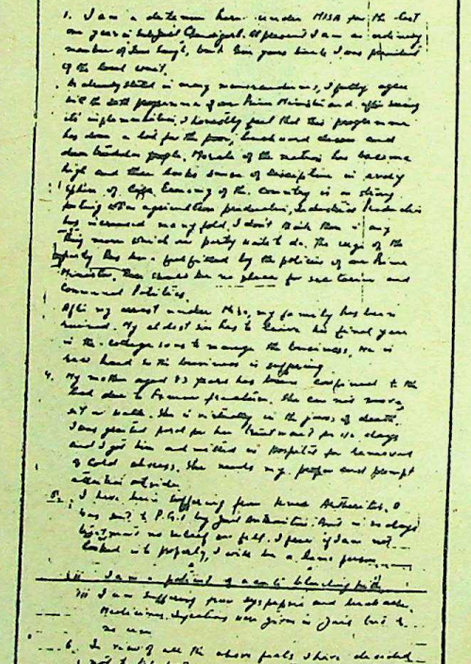
To
The Home Secretary,
U.T. Chandigarh

Sir,

I submit as under:-

1. That I have been detained here under MISA on political grounds for the last one year. At present, I am an ordinary worker of Jan Sangh.

2.(i) That I have been suffering from knee arthritis due to which I cannot walk easily and cannot sleep smoothly. I got a number of medicines at Jail and I was also sent to P.G.I. I attended Physiotherapy Department for 20 days, but of no avail.



Photostat copies of the letters written by Prem Sagar Jain

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Maharashtra

Hema cuts short Palkhivala

JUDGING by the large crowds — around 75,000 strong — and the fact that they did not have to hire crowds and lorries, the National Party's first public meeting rivalled the maiden election meetings of the Janata and Congress (I). The crowds thronged Bombay's Shivaji Park to see their favourite stars in person. Mr Nani Palkhivala, who is accustomed to making long-winded speeches on the lawns of the cricket club, had to cut short his speech to give way to Hema Malini to propose the vote of thanks. The misconception thus continues in the popular mind which equates the National Party with a group of glamorous filmstars rather than a hitherto apolitical group 'forming an alternative to the corrupt politician' as Mr Palkhivala described it.

The National Party, in September, had grandly announced that it would contest 500 seats in the Lok Sabha elections. But Dev Anand was not so optimistic when this reporter contacted him at his special Party office at the Sun'n Sand. He had earlier, at the rally, announced: "Whether the men we back are five or 15 they would be men of character and integrity". He told this reporter, "Anyone who is brilliant, a professional, and not a seeker of power we will back". And how many such brilliant professional non-seekers of power were the National Party planning to back? "Well, we have Mr Upendra Trivedi contesting from Gujarat, and we will possibly back Mr Nani Palkhivala if he is willing". Who else? "There are three people from Delhi, we are having negotiations with them... I can't divulge their names just yet but they aren't professional politicians and they certainly aren't filmstars". The rumour is that one of these could be Justice V. M. Tarkunde, the civil rights lawyer.

With all the ballyhoo in September about the National Party being the 'third alternative', after the Congress (I) and the Janata, it has finalised just one candidate for the elections, possibly the only person yet who has met its stringent demands on the sort of people it wants to back. With the sort of line they were trying to hand out, that of a fresh alternative to the octogenarians that are in the fray, they have yet to get rid of either the showbiz image of the Party, or the capitalism that their right-wing laissez-faire draft manifesto propagates. They have joined with Mr Ramakrishna Bajaj's group comprising traders, industrialists and 'intellectuals', and are trying to justify their alignment with these people and the common man by saying, as Mr Anand has in a recent statement, that "though we are big-budget filmmakers we know what the common man is thinking. Don't forget, we make films for him every year..."

Dev Anand has gone on record as having said that almost all the Parties have offered them seats, "as if to say that all that we want is to get into Parliament. They don't realise the higher purpose of forming the National Party: that of eliminating the people who have feathered their nests for 30 years at the expense of the common man. These are the people who we have to throw out, by getting the National Party in power". However, he told me that "we have not completely ruled out the possibility of having understandings with the established Parties or established politicians. As things stand today we are trying to get good people and we will make a few concessions if we have to". He said that the National Party campaign would begin in earnest by December 1. "I'm doing my best for the Party. I've been president for only five weeks though the Party has existed for two months, and I'm working on two fronts—getting members enrolled and getting candidates".

The National Party has 15,000 members in Bombay alone (the membership fee being Re 1) according to Mr Anand but this is a pitifully small figure if one remembers Mr G. P. Sippy's statement that within two weeks of the establishment of the Party they were expecting to get one million people enrolled. Will the dream merchants, be able to make their own dreams come true?

ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA

Bihar

Will Kanti contest from Begusarai?

WILL Kanti Desai contest the Lok Sabha elections from Begusarai? According to some Janata leaders in Bihar, Kanti may get the Janata ticket to contest from this constituency. And, apparently, there is some basis to this. Maheshwar Prasad Singh, organising secretary of the State Janata Party and a close lieutenant of Satyendra Narain Sinha, chief of the Janata Party in Bihar, has sent a letter to Kanti saying that the people of Begusarai want him to contest from this constituency. He also sent duplicate copies of this letter to Jagjivan Ram and Chandra Shekhar. According to a Janata MLA from Bihar and a confidant of Maheshwar Singh, Mr Jagjivan Ram, on receiving the letter, started pursuing the matter from Delhi and advanced Kanti's name as a possible candidate from Begusarai and even mentioned it to Chandra Shekhar. The Janata leaders in Bihar, who had so far not been taking the matter seriously, suddenly decided to do so. Some other Janata leaders at the Centre also sent directives to the Bihar Janata leaders to treat the matter seriously. The bhumihars in Begusarai were quite happy at this development since they consider Morarji Desai to be a bhumihar. At a controversial meeting held in the last week of November to decide the candidates for the elections, the issue of Kanti contesting the elections from Bihar had come up. But as no decision was reached, the proceedings of the meeting were forwarded to the central parliamentary board of the Janata Party.

Maheshwar Prasad Singh is believed to be very close to Morarji Desai. An incident which took place some years back shows how this happened. Maheshwar Singh had gone on a visit to Delhi and was staying with Tarakeshwari Sinha. At dinner one day where a common friend of Tarakeshwari and Morarji Desai was present, Tarakeshwari Sinha started criticising Morarji. This angered Maheshwar Sinha, who left his food, packed his bags and left. This common friend who was present, reported the matter to Mr Desai who was pleased with Maheshwar Singh. Since then the two have been very close. After Ram Sundar Das became the Chief Minister of Bihar, Maheshwar Singh, on the basis of his relationship with Morarji Desai, started flexing his muscles and tried to dominate both Ram Sundar Das and S. N. Sinha. When Karpoori Thakur was the Chief Minister, Maheshwar Singh was his most vocal critic. In fact, he came into prominence when he started issuing statements criticising Karpoori. It is rumoured that Maheshwar Singh is going to be appointed as the chairman of the Bihar Water Development Corporation. Whether Kanti contests from Begusarai or not, Maheshwar Prasad Singh is certainly gaining in the bargain.

ARUN RANJAN

Continued on page 36

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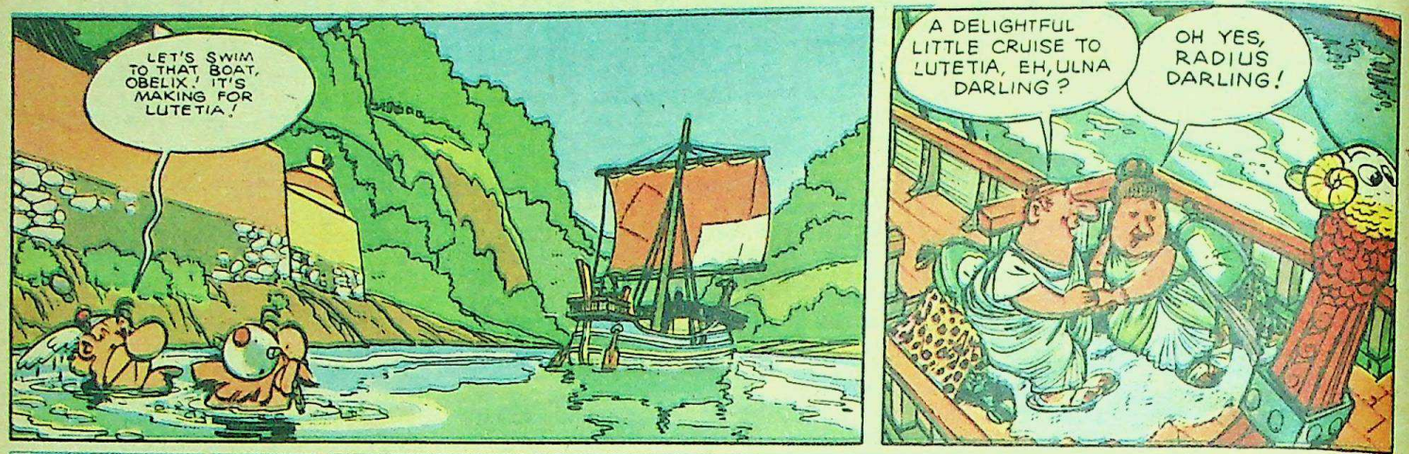
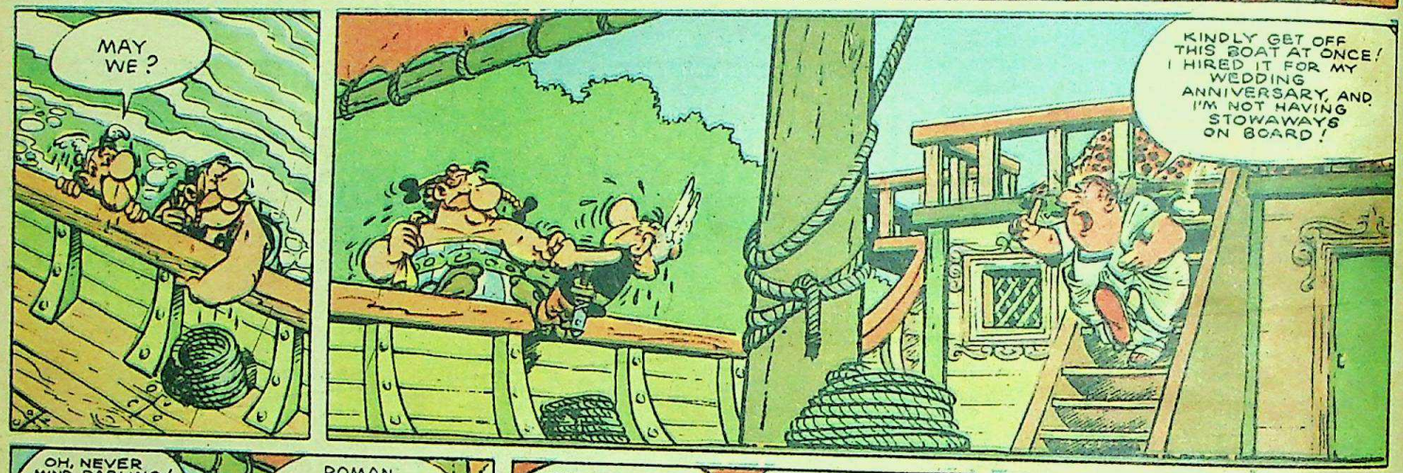
Asterix and the BANQUET

by GOSCINNY and UDERZO





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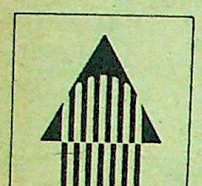
Asides

The importance of being relative



POLITICS has a habit, once it enters a family, of staying spreading and trickling down generations. So much so, that Indian politics today seems to be dominated by groups of blood relations who, for better or worse, consider themselves eminently qualified to guide this nation's destiny.

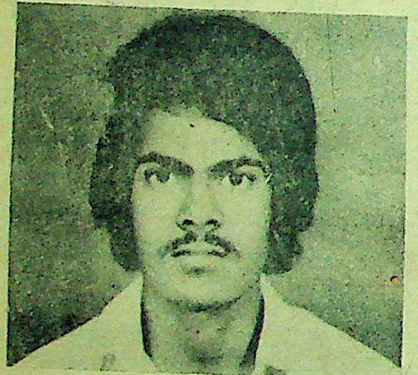
Apart from the most obvious instances of Indira and Sanjay Gandhi, Morarji and Kanti Desai, Jagjivan and Suresh Ram, there are several other families that come to mind. Pandit Kamalapati Tripathi of Varanasi had reared his three sons with the hope that some day they would emulate their father. The price he has had to pay for this is a divided house today. He is facing a revolt from his second son. Mangalapati, a businessman in Delhi, and his wife, Nalini, popularly known as "choti bahuji," who do not agree with his Congress (I) links. Supporting Kamalapati in the family fight are his eldest son, Lokpati, himself a former UP Minister, and his wife, Chandra, popularly called "bari bahuji." Mrs Chandra Tripathi wants to be the Congress (I) candidate from the family's traditional constituency of Chandauli. But Nalini has publicly challenged her "bari bahuji" and threatened to oppose her sister-in-law if she contests. Though both women wielded strong influence on their father-in-law for years, matters came to a head when Nalini began suspecting him of favouring "bari bahuji" and Lokpati. Nalini has been promised a Lok Dal ticket by none other than Mr. Raj Narain himself, who is being accused of having incited her to revolt. In a public statement Nalini said : "If the Congress (I) fields Mrs Chandra Tripathi from any constituency, I shall also fight from the same constituency against ner ... Though from the very beginning all my esteemed family members have been actively associated with the Indian National Congress led by Shrimati Indira Gandhi, I felt that owing to vested political interest it has been evident in the Congress (I) that some persons belonging to one family are getting special preference in allotment of tickets (with the result that) the image of his great organisation has been damaged before the common electorate ..... While announcing this decision to contest against a member of my own family, it gives me pain but I feel it my pious duty to declare this for the sake of purification of politics ..." "Chhoti bahuji" can depend for support on her youngest brother-in-law, Mayapati Tripathi, who heads the Yuva Bahini, a wing of the Youth Congress (I), and who accuses his father of having surrenderd to Sanjay Gandhi.

Another example of a powerful "bahuji" is Shiela Dixit, daughter in-law of Uma Shanker Dixit. Shiela, endowed with good looks and an elegant carriage, has been a considerable help to her father-in-law in his political life. She is friendly with Mrs. Gandhi. Another example of personal friendship growing out of political association was that between Prabhavati Devi, wife of the late JP, and Mrs. Gandhi. The two were so fond of each other, that they always made it a point to meet when they were in the same town or city.

When Devi Lal was the Chief Minister of Haryana, it was Om Prakash, his youngest son, who controlled the levers of power...and so brazenly that it earned him the epithet "Masterji." Om Prakash was alleged to have placed his proteges in the Assembly and Government committees, and held "durbars" at dak bungalows wherever he travelled in the State, as though he was as important, or more important, than the CM. "If I was there, I would have saved the Government," he is allegd to have said about his father's defeat in the trust-vote that eventually saw the fall of his Ministry. Chaudhury Charan Singh is known to be unhappy with the way Om Prakash behaved; the PM had a good deal to be unhappy about. Among other things, Om Prakash was arrested in connection with a case of alleged smuggling of watches. The incident had prompted Devi Lal to publicly disown his son, but the young man is irrepressible. Lok Dal spokesmen credit him with the view that the Chaudhury is incapable of governing the country.

Pratap Singh, Devi Lal's eldest son, is, on the contrary, opposed to both his father and younger brother. Indeed, he has almost habitually opposed his father in politics, having first fought the elections as an independent candidate, later joining the Congress (I), regretting the action and finally shifting to the Janata. Politically, Om Prakash is as much of a problem to Devi Lal as

The voter



M. S. SHANKAR, 23, a freelance journalist in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh says "I'll vote for the Indira Congress not because of the dynamic leadership of Channa Reddy or for his caste politics in the State, but because only she can run a Government at the Centre for five years without making the voter go to the polls before the term is over. We have gathered enough experience from the Morarji Desai Governmnt and from the Charan Singh Government. We want peace in the land where we live. And only Mrs Gandhi can provide this".

MRS H. GILL, 40, is a college lecturer in Bombay. She has decided to vote for the Congress. She said : "I will vote for the Congress. I shall do so because, I think, the Congress has the same views as the Congress (I) minus Mrs Gandhi and her son Sanjay. I admit that Mrs Gandhi has a good personality and has the capacity to govern the country, while the Congress has no charismatic leader. But in Mrs Tarakeshwari Sinha, it may have a fine leader. I would like to see a woman holding the Prime Minister's post".

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Sanjay is to Mrs. Gandhi and Surender Singh is to his father Bansi Lal. Though Surinder Singh was among the few Congress candidates to win a seat in the 1978 Assembly elections in Haryana, his activities have been a constant source of embarrassment to Bansi Lal.

Jagjivan Ram's son Suresh, of the Suresh-Sushma scandal fame, is an MLA in Bihar. He is known to be Babuji's most efficient negotiator and is responsible for all arrangements made for meetings between Babuji and most other leaders. He had earlier been offered a Rajya Sabha seat but refused it. Suresh was the man behind Babuji and the Shahi Imam getting together at a recent "dinner" because of his good relations with the Imam. Babuji listens to his son's views. Suresh's wife, Kamaljit Kaur, who sued him for divorce following the Suresh-Sushma affair, is now a Lok Dal ticket-seeker, perhaps anxious to wreak vengeance on her husband and father-in-law. Mrs. Kaur has in fact, contested against Suresh in an earlier election.

Kamala Bahuguna, wife of Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna, is an example of how powerful the hand of a wife can be. Mrs. Bahuguna, who was herself an MP from Phulpur (UP) in the dissolved Lok Sabha, was responsible for bringing her husband and Mrs. Gandhi together on various occasions due to her personal equations with Mrs. Gandhi. So efficient is she in organising election campaigns and such is her popularity, it was even said she would defeat her husband if she contested against him in Allahabad.

Similarly, among Charan Singh's advisers, the most trusted and influential is Gayatri Devi, his wife, popularly known in the Lok Dal fraternity as "Mataji". She is said to have persuaded her husband to take a number of politically crucial decisions, including leaving the Congress to form the SVD in 1967 a gamble that paid off and many o the Chaudhury's decisions when he was the Home Minister. She is also said to have objected to Mr. Raj Narain's frequent visits to the Chaudhury's house and even told him not to come too often.

There are countless other cases, of well-known and not so-well-known politicians sharing common lineage. Abida Begum, widow of Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed is a Congress (I) ticket-seeker in the coming Lok Sabha elections, Sheikh Abdullah and Begum Abdullah, Kashmir's most powerful politicians, have a son, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, who was educated abroad, and is being discussed as Kashmir's next Chief Minister. Mrityunjay Prasad, son of the Late President Rajendra Prasad, who was previously in the Congress (O), won on the Janata ticket from Bihar in the 1977 Lok Sabha, elections. He is a very austere person, talks very little and is often seen in the Central Hall of Parliament sitting quietly by himself. The 76-year-old Maniben Patel, daughter of the late Vallabhai Patel, was elected on the Janata ticket to the last Lok Sabha from Mehsana in Gujarat. Rasheeda Haque Chaudhury, wife of the former Industries Minister, Moinul Haque Choudhury, had won on the Congress ticket in the 1977 Lok Sabha elections from Silchar in Assam. Harkishen Shastri, son of the late Lal Bahadur Shastri, is likely to contest the coming elections but is not sure which Party to join. The late Zakir Hussain's son-in-law, Khurshid Khan, is a well-known supporter of Sanjay in the Congress (I). Sumitra Kulkarni, grand daughter of Mahatma Gandhi, is a member of the Rajya Sabha. In Tamil Nadu, the former Chief Minister Karunanidhi's son, Muthu, is in acting, and per se, in politics. Muthu is married to a harijan, and his father carefully quoted this fact repeatedly in his public speeches. Muthu fell out with his father and at one point, Karunanidhi, blaming MGR for leading his son astray, had to call in the police when his son arrived in a drunken state at home.

In West Bengal, two of the most respected leaders are brothers—Ajoy and Bishwanath Mukherjee. Ajoy Mukherjee was a former Chief Minister, and his brother is in the CPI. Bishwanath Mukherjee, who, except for the last Assembly election, had never succeeded in winning had even stood against his brother once in 1962. His wife, Gita, will be standing as the CPI candidate from Panskura, having got one of the three seats given to the CPI after the Party came to an electoral understanding with the Left Front. Siddhartha and Maya Ray, who were with Mrs Gandhi during the Emergency, when Mr Ray was the Chief Minister of West Bengal, are now in the Congress, having fallen out with Sanjay, who opposed Mr Ray. Kamaraj's nearest relation, his nephew, Ashai Thampi, was the only DMK candidate to have got elected in 1977. He had defeated K. Manoharan, now Tamil Nadu's Finance Minister. The President of India, Sanjeeva Reddy is the brother in-law of the great communist leader, Nagi Reddy. Mohan Kumaramangalam, the former Congress Minister who died in a plane crash, was the son of Dr Subbaroyen, the former Central Minister from the then Madras State in Nehru's Cabinet. The son of C. Keshavan, former CM of Kerala, K. Balakrishnan was in the RSP, and in fact, was jailed when his own father was in power. The family, however, remained intact. The list is endless.

NIRMAL MITRA

Next Week
SUNDAY

EXCLUSIVE!

Kamal Nath's Secret Talks

By Barun Sengupta

This exclusive and sensational extract from the forthcoming book, Last Days of the Morarji Raj, is going to bring the skeletons tumbling out of the cupboards.
Read it first in SUNDAY.
Next week, and the week after.

To ensure your copy, book it with your nearest newsagent.

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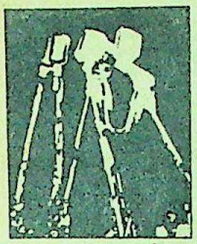
Tamil Nadu

Old war, latest battle



THOUGH it's a parliamentary election, the focus here is on two local political bosses who hate each other's guts: MGR and Karunanidhi. "On Ayudha pooja day merchants open new accounts—"we're only renewing old accounts," declared Karunanidhi on September 30 while felicitating Mrs Gandhi in Madras. He called Mrs Gandhi an "incomparable leader of this country". Though Karunanidhi justified his Party's alliance with Mrs Gandhi as a paramount thing in the national interest ("We have judged the Janata Government for two years. They will never be able to provide a stable Government"), his main concern was to break the alliance between Mrs Gandhi and MGR's AIADMK. Naturally he didn't grudge allotting 24 out of 40 seats (from Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry) to the Congress(I) whereas the DMK and the influential Muslim League will share the others. "How could Karunanidhi be so magnanimous?" a reader asked Cho, the politician-journalist. "To defeat MGR, Karunanidhi is even prepared to surrender all seats", quipped Cho. The last general election returned only one DMK contestant; surely this time the Party will do better. "People seem to forget that the DMK's friendship with Mrs Gandhi dates back to 1969 when 24 DMK members of Parliament stood by her," recalls Murasoli Maran, MP. "We made no demands then; we never asked for Cabinet berths and our friendship continued till 'interested' parties started interfering", he said. "Two years of illwill shouldn't stand in the way of our ten-year-long friendship," chimed in Karunanidhi, who has already asked his Partymen to forget the "misdeeds" of Mrs Gandhi: like sacking his Government in 1976 and setting up the Sarkaria Commission.

In the meanwhile MGR, often accused of slippery politics, has allowed the Left Parties, the Congress and the Janata to join the AIADMK-led front against Mrs Gandhi. The man who used to swear by Mrs Gandhi till the other day, now calls her a betrayer, a person who has made peace with a corrupt politician whom she had thrown out of office just three years ago. All of a sudden MGR too has discovered the word "authoritarianism".

DMK leaders did try to get the CPI and CPI(M) to join them in an alliance, trying to capitalise on their disillusionment with MGR's "anti-labour, anti-farmer, anti-student" policies, despite the presence of Mrs Gandhi in his alliance. Explained Maran: "In 1967 the DMK and the Swatantra Party had an alliance to fight the Congress; at the same time the DMK also had an alliance with the Marxists. We could work out a similar arrangement this time". But the moment Mrs Gandhi blamed the CPI for pressing her to set up the Sarkaria Commission, the local CPI boss Kalyansundaram lost no time in expressing his disgust. "I had submitted a memorandum against the DMK Ministry in 1972. Mrs Gandhi waited till 1976 to set up the commission," he wryly observed. Surely Mrs Gandhi's remarks prompted the

Karunanidhi

CPI to stay out of the DMK as well. The CPI and the CPI(M) thought of a third alliance for a few weeks. The idea was to rope in the Congress (which had some well-known MPs, like C. Subramaniam and R. Venkatram in the dissolved Parliament) and the non-existent local Lok Dal.

In the meanwhile the CPI also tried to break the AIADMK-Janata alliance but MGR seemed to have suddenly developed an affection for the Janata and refused to budge. In the meanwhile Devaraj Urs flew to Madras, had a long chat with MGR and on October 25 instructed the Congress to make an alliance. "It's not a programmatic alliance," he said, "and we will have only a seat understanding". Urs also said that MGR is not against his kind of land reforms. A couple of days later, the CPI(M), whose alliance with MGR during the Assembly elections had turned sour, and which had accused MGR of feasting on the blood of peasants and workers, also joined him, forgetting the presence of the Janata in the alliance. "After all, the Tamil Nadu Janata doesn't have the Jana Sangh in it", quipped a Party boss, and added cynically "Even if it were so, don't you think authoritarianism is more dangerous than communalism?" Once the CPI(M) joined the alliance the CPI walked in too, and MGR is now confronted by all the alliance members, demanding a number of seats. The AIADMK is going to contest at least 24 seats, the Janata has asked for eight and the Congress wants at least 10. The Janata leaders argue that in the Assembly elections their Party polled 16.40 per cent votes against AIADMK's 38.10 per cent, Congress-CPI's 20.10 per cent and DMK's 24 per cent). The CPI and CPI(M) have asked for three seats each.

And there's Nedumaran's Tamil Nadu (Kamaraj) Congress, a very minor Party formed in protest against Mrs Gandhi's alliance with Karunanidhi, and Kumari Anandan's Gandhi-Kamaraj Congress. Though Kumari Anandan is in a mood to go it alone, MGR has been trying to bring him into the AIADMK-led alliance. Last year, Kumari Anandan walked out of the Janata, protesting against P. Ramachandran's lack of vision and inefficiency: surely if his Party contests against the Janata in the southernmost constituencies, the Janata will certainly find a challenge.

The DMK leaders go around saying that Mrs Indira Gandhi will not only bring stability at the Centre but will also help Tamil Nadu achieve more in the industrial and agrarian sectors. Corruption is a major issue: Karunanidhi and the Congress (I) leaders accuse MGR of allowing his Partymen to mint money from hooch dealers, liquor smugglers and corrupt businessmen. He is also accused of neglecting the farmers and letting the police after them even without much provocation.

And MGR's AIADMK, too, harps on corruption. That the Sarkaria Commission had strongly indicted Karunanidhi was bad enough and now that Mrs Gandhi has committed the mistake of aligning with the DMK, it is a unmitigable evil, MGR says. Of late he has also been warning people against allowing a single dynasty, a single queen mother and a single prince to rule the country. Even if he himself has a chance to rule for more than a decade, he would come out and fight against himself, asserts MGR. MGR's alliance partner is the Janata Party, and Congress (I) leaders say that this just proves that MGR, who had shown very little concern when Muslim minorities suffered during communal riots in Pernambet and Dharmapuri, does not really care for the minorities.

The Christian voters are also warned not to vote for the AIADMK led alliance—for secularism seems to be the concern only of the Congress(I) and the DMK. References to O. P. Tyagi's Freedom of Religion Bill are constantly made in Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari where the Christan population is quite substantial.

ARTHUR PAIS

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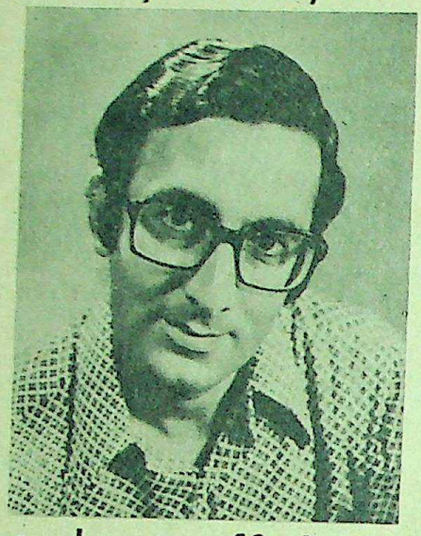
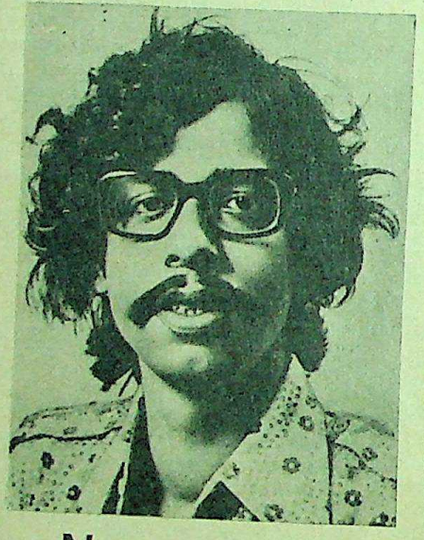
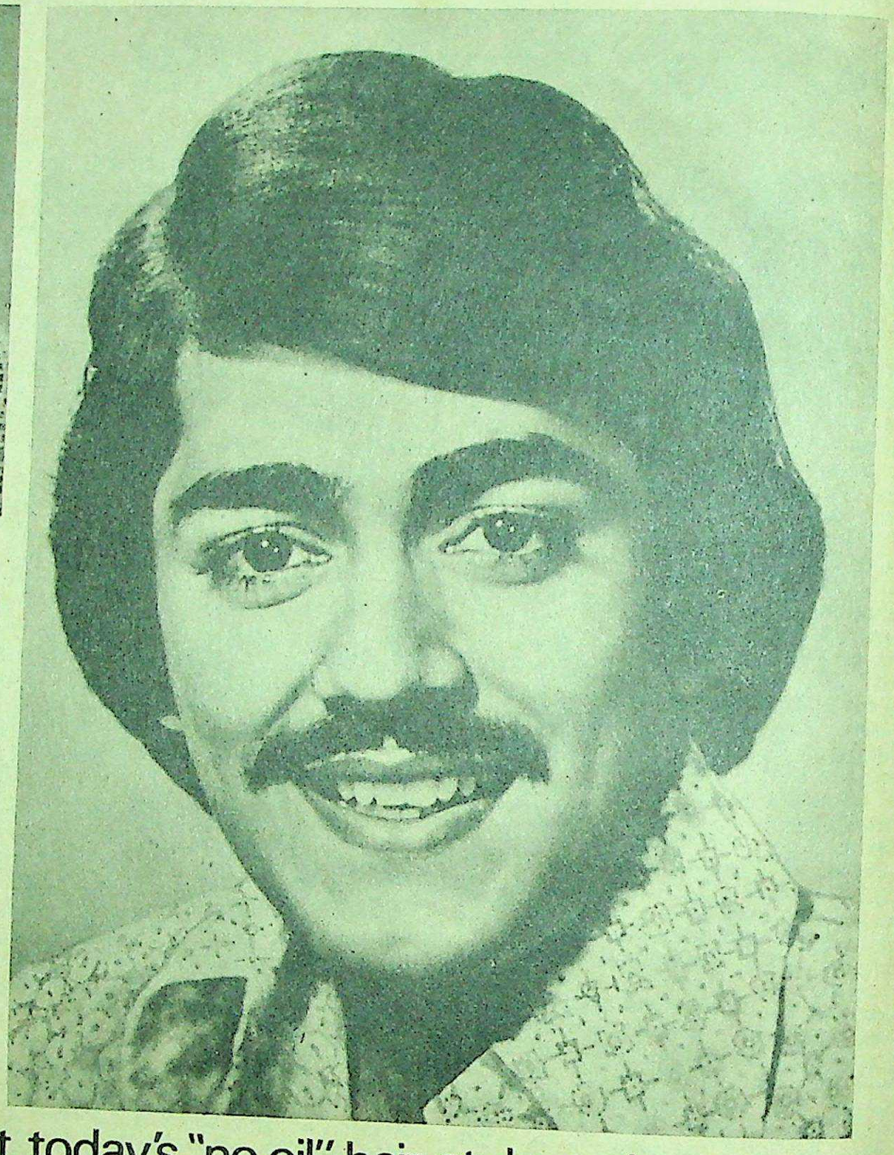
You don't have to choose between an oily hair style...



and a scruffy look.





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Courage of convictions

NOT everyone may regard Rajmohan Gandhi as a true journalist. But that is only because a "working journalist" within the meaning of the Act has come to mean a professional hack who ostentatiously denies conviction while never ceasing to serve his master of the day through clumsily slanted stories. This is then flaunted as the objectivity that is regarded as essential to the reporter's existence.

The special correspondents and representatives stationed in New Delhi by most of our national dailies offer ample evidence of this parody of impartial coverage. Under Mrs Gandhi's last incarnation as Prime Minister there flourished a "kitchen cabinet" of newspapermen who faithfully mirrored her views as their own in the columns of *Blitz*, the *Deccan Herald* and the *Times of India*. That coterie may have vanished, but you need only read G. K. Reddy in the *Hindu* to guess at the Government's future actions. Dilip Mukherjee once did it in the *Times* with almost equal sophistication. Saeed Naqvi serves the same purpose on the *Indian Express* but far more bluntly. Nothing could be more blatant, however, than Abu Syed's *Current* which makes no pretence whatsoever of concealing a loyalty that shifts with the political wind.

Men like Rajmohan Gandhi are rare in this self-seeking and hypocritical circle. His commitment to Moral Re-armament may not appeal to many people. His crusading zeal may sometimes seem almost boyish in its fervour. But there can be no denying that his *Himmat* was among the few publications in this country (all of them small magazines) courageously to challenge the Emergency dispensation. Believing what he writes, his position is not movable. His attitude to politicians, whether in office or opposition, is determined by a personal code of ethics that may or may not be acceptable, but is never inspired by the hope of gain. Bernard Levin of the *Times* (London) and Peregrine Worsthorne of the *Daily Telegraph* are similarly two Fleet Street men whose views are often resented, but whose integrity is never questioned.

All the more reason, therefore, to welcome Gandhi's decision to contest the Lok Sabha polls from Jabalpur on the Janata ticket. The *Himmat* chief editor is not afraid to announce his stand and not apprehensive of the possible consequences of such a public declaration. Arun Shourie and Nayantara Sahgal, both prominent in the *Express* for their fulminations against Mrs Gandhi, or for that matter, A. G. Noorani who takes a swipe at her in any publication that will offer him space, would also command the same respect if they cast off the protectively misleading cloak of journalistic objectivity and cared to emerge in their true political colours.

This applies no less to journalists who take advantage of the same artificial immunity to support Mrs Gandhi in a manner that suggests only personal and political loyalty. Two such names for Congress (I)

Rajmohan Gandhi

tickets that are being bandied about at the time of writing are those of Vishwabandhu Gupta (*Tej* and *Sun*) and Khushwant Singh of *New Delhi*. Their advocacy may be perfectly legitimate. But paeans of praise should not be inflicted on readers in the guise of non-partisan coverage. That is where the dishonesty lies. Maneka Gandhi and her *Surya India* at least make no bones of their loyalty. Neither does K. R. Malkani in *Organizer*.

Other journalists who might be persuaded to creep out of the anonymity of the woodwork and declare themselves at the hustings by the time this is published are B. G. Verghese, Romesh Thapar and Kuldip Nayar. Some would add Atal Behari Vajpayee, M. L. Sondhi and Rajinder Puri to that list; but they are really politicians first and newspapermen second, if at all. Vajpayee, like L. K. Advani, has spent too long away from the *Organizer* to claim any kind of credible professional status. Puri's columns in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* and later in *Blitz* are already a distant memory. They were in any case, a product of the political euphoria that followed the rout of the 1977 elections rather than valid journalism.

Verghese, Thapar and Nayar can best be described as maverick Janata camp followers. Like Rajmohan Gandhi, they too would be admired if they came out into the open. But the crucial difference between them and Gandhi—and this will probably prevent them from running the risk of hoisting political colours — is that the *Himmat* editor has not grown corns from perching on the fence.

The need for clarity, for an unambiguous defining of where people stand, is all the more necessary because the industry itself is (possibly always has been) surreptitiously playing politics in a big way. It did so during the Emergency, not by open editorial criticism which would have been unexceptionable, but by pouring money into the Janata kitty, clandestinely printing and distributing Jayaprakash Narayan's speeches and by helping what was then the Opposition in various substantial ways. However laudable such underground action might be in terms of defending democracy, it is not a newspaper's rightful function.

The Press in India is not an insurgency force. Nor should its institutional views and actions be governed by the private animosity that might exist between a proprietor and Mrs Gandhi or the no less irrelevant friendship between the owner and Morarji Desai. Even less germane are the personal equations between senior journalists and individual Ministers or officials.

But these connexions dominate the collective attitude which is furtively expressed only because the Press lacks the courage of its convictions. Rajmohan Gandhi must again be saluted for dispensing with such pernicious subterfuge. Honesty demands that other journalists who share his commitment, no matter on which side of the fence, follow his example.

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MY STORY

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Success, a sense of belonging,
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& recognised
in the society,
but
I did not have
the courage,
the confidence,
and the ability.

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AMBIKA ARTS

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Calcutta Muslims go on rampage

They damage property, and themselves

Police action during the demonstration

FRIDAY, November 23, 1979. 3.30 pm. Policemen take up position before the American Cosulate on Ho Chi Minh Sarani in central Calcutta. The main gate of the consulate is locked from inside. Within ten minutes the area before the consulate is cordoned off by the police. Some distance away a two-thousand strong procession of Muslims carrying black flags to protest against the invasion of the Grand Mosque at Mecca is seen, led by the Congress (I) leader Subrata Mukherjee and the Central Calcutta District Congress (I) minority cell convener, Ishret Nazir Azad. About 300 yards away from the American consulate, at the crossing of Camac Street and Ho Chi Minh Sarani the police stop the procession. Slogans are raised: 'Down with the CIA and Jyoti Basu'; 'Curb American imperialism' and 'America stop evil designs'. Amidst the slogan shouting an effigy of US President Jimmy Carter is burnt. Suddenly two crackers which had perhaps been stuffed in the effigy go off with deafening bangs. The police immediately start a lathi-charge to disperse the procession. The lathi-charge halts the procession and some people even flee, leaving shoes and chappals behind.

Meanwhile some persons from the procession try to advance towards the consulate gate. The police, attempting to stop them, fire many rounds of tear gas shells and when that does not cow down the demonstrators, the police fire a single round. This happens when a police wireless van is attacked at the crossing of Kyd Street and Free School Street, quite far away from the American consulate. The firing takes place before a deputy commissioner of Police. Within about 15 minutes the police are able to remove the demonstrators from the consulate area. This angers the demonstrators who retreat in a disorganised manner. Some move off towards Mullick Bazar, others towards Park Street and Kyd Street. Some of them run to Theatre Road, near the Russian consulate. By then it is almost dark and the streets are filled with people returning home from offices. To confuse matters further, there is a power cut. In the darkness two trams and a Calcutta State Transport bus carrying passengers are set on fire at the crossing of Park Street and Acharya Jagadish Bose Road near Park Circus. Passengers leave the vehicles in panic and in the melee some are seriously hurt. Shops hurriedly pull down their shutters and those who are not fast enough have theirs looted. Some fire brigade personnel who arrive on the spot to put out the fires are beaten up by the violent crowd.

While the mob turns more and more violent and fires rage, Mr Subrata Mukherjee and Ishret Nazir Azad visit the American Consulate to present a memorandum. The memorandum states that "the incident of Kaaba Baitullah (Holy place at Mecca) in which so many innocent Muslims including the Imam of Kaaba Baitullah were mercilessly killed inside the Holy Place is painful to all of us...We highly condemn the Government of USA for their conspiracy into this painful incident and from the humanitarian point of view the Hindu, Muslim and other castes also condemn the Government of USA." Emerging from the American consulate, Subrata Mukherjee, before a handful of bystanders and the police, says in a loud voice: "Mr Jyoti Basu's police have beaten up innocent people with lathis and fired tear gas shells on them. They have even fired bullets. Jyotibabu give us the reasons for this police torture and harassment."

Mr Subrata Mukherjee and Ishret Nazir Azad complain that at least 200 people have been injured in the lathi-charge. I try to check this statement from the police headquarters in Lalbazar but the Calcutta Police Commissioner, Mr Sudhanshu Sinha, has no idea how many persons have been arrested. Some people, however, had set fire to trams and buses. According to him, when the procession started from Haji Mohammad Mohsin Square at about 3.00 pm it was a peaceful one. The demonstrators' original plan was to go to the American consulate on Ho Chi Minh Sarani via Dharamtola Street. Suddenly the procession changed course. Why it did so was not disclosed by those who led the procession. Eventually the procession reached the consulate via Free School Street through Camac Street and was stopped before the consulate.

Later on the same evening I contacted Mr Subrata Mukherjee on the phone and asked him about the burning of the vehicles. He said that members from his procession had nothing to do with either the burning or the looting. The Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, was out of Calcutta. CPI(M) leaders, worried about the unfortunate incident, contacted Mr Basu and asked him to rush back. The Chief Minister returned late at night and went directly to the CPI(M)'s Party office on Alimuddin Street. Earlier the senior CPI(M) Minister, Mr Krishnapada Ghosh, told newspapermen: "Whoever is trying to disrupt communal harmony by violence and anti-social activities will be dealt with severely."

Was the intelligence department of Calcutta Police aware of the plans of the demonstrators? It was only at

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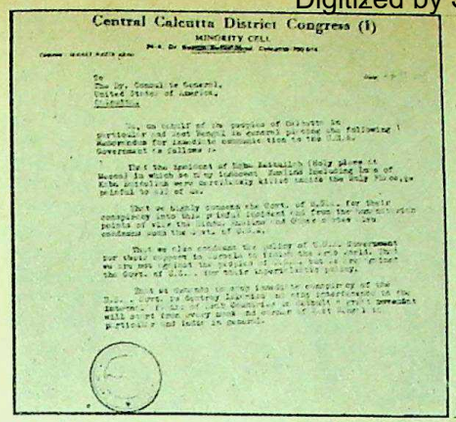
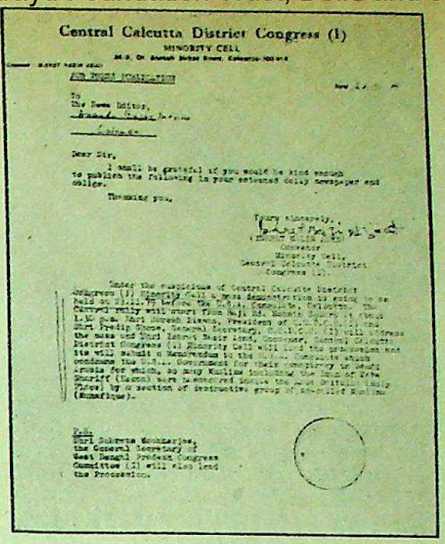

Central Calcutta District Congress (I)
MINORITY CELL


Central Calcutta District Congress (I)
MINORITY CELL

Facsimilie of the memorandum issued by the Congress (I) Minority Cell and the note calling for the demonstration

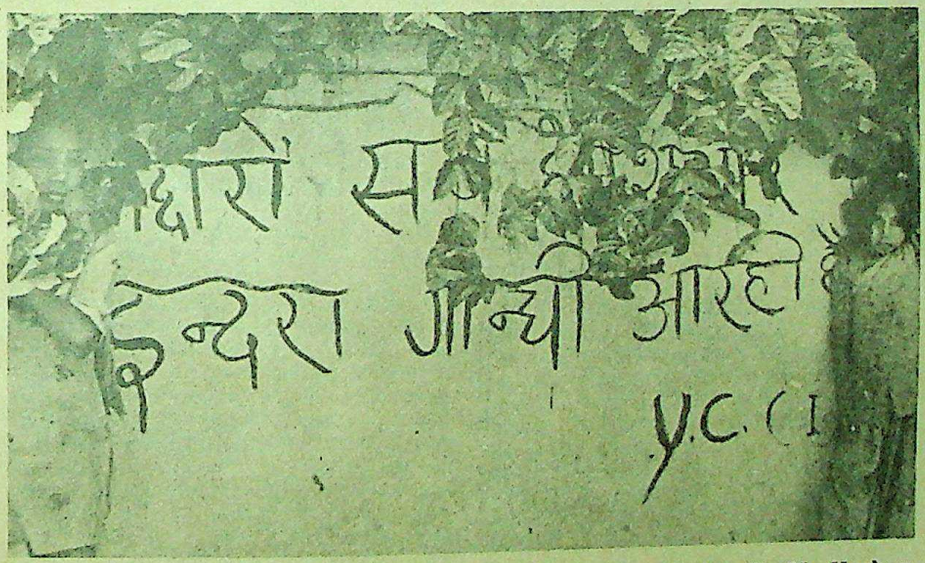
the last moment that the Deputy Commissioner, headquarters, B. K. Saha, arrived at the American consulate along with another Deputy Commissioner, H. A. Safwi, who was hurt in the stone-throwing by the demonstrators. When it became clear the next day that the violence would not spread, the people of Calcutta heaved a sigh of relief that one more risk of a communal flare-up had passed.

Altogether about 50 persons were arrested. Calcutta's Muslim dominated locality, Metiabruz observed a day's peaceful bandh on Saturday, November 24. The bandh had been jointly called by the Congress (I) and the Muslim League. Three processions were taken out on the day of the bandh in which, according to reliable estimates, a few thousand people took part. Police sources, however, maintain that only about 500 people took part in each procession.

SUDEB ROYCHOWDHURY, Calcutta

'Mrs Gandhi is coming back'

The Pandit brothers have been warned



"BEWARE traitors, Indira Gandhi is coming back" — this Youth Congress(I) slogan appeared sometime in mid-November on the boundary wall of No 12 Eastern Avenue in Maharani Bagh, residence of Mr K. P. Mushran, one of the partners of Pandit Brothers and brother-in-law of Mr P. N. Haskar, principal secretary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The slogan on Mr Mushran's wall is the only slogan in the whole of Maharani Bagh — one of the posh colonies of the capital — and it is quite obvious that Mr Mushran had been singled out by Mrs Gandhi's Youth Congress to drive home the message.

The message was first made clear to Mr Mushran, it may be remembered, during the Emergency on July 15, 1975 when he, Mr R. N. Haksar, another partner of Pandit Brothers and uncle of Mr P. N. Haksar, as well as Mr Mathur manager of the firm, were arrested ostensibly for violating the price-tagging laws of the Emergency. Months of harassment, persecution and humiliation followed and although there were a number of people who faced the same music during the Emergency with little reason, the victimisation of the brother-in-law and uncle of the once all-powerful P. N. Haksar will remain a unique chapter in the history of the Emergency.

It is worthwhile to recount the graphic description by Mrs P. N. Haksar in her book on the case of the Pandit Brothers published shortly after Mrs Gandhi was shunted out of power. To quote a passage from the book where she describes the condition of Mr Mushran after he came back to his residence from the police station: "The food was on the table. We sat down to lunch but Mr Mushran remained standing in the same posture as before. His hands upraised, his head slightly bent, muttering and mumbling to himself. As if half demented. Saraswati Didda (Mrs Mushran) asked him to wash his hands, which were black with ink. At the mention of his hands he started screaming, 'No no no! I will not wash my hands. I want to smear this ink on her bloody face. Am I a criminal? Why should they take my finger prints, hand prints, palm prints...'. He started swearing again. It went on for a long time, and we did not know how to pacify him. Ultimately Asha fished out an old newspaper with a blown-up photograph of Mrs Gandhi. Kamtabhai (Mr Mushran) smeared the photograph. Then with his hands which were still black he smeared his wife's cheeks and also that of Asha's and mine. Somehow this comforted him and he agreed to wash his hands and sat down to lunch. Mr Mushran had gone in the morning without any breakfast and was hungry. He started eating, but the moment he looked at his hands, he would stop eating and start swearing again."

Since those days, much water has flowed down the Ganges. But the enmity towards Haksar has evidently not died down. In an interview last year with an American professor, Mary C. Carras, who wrote her biography, Mrs Gandhi made a snide comment about Mr Haksar buying land for Rs 6,000 and then selling it for Rs 26,000. Haksar in a letter to the *Illustrated Weekly of India* which published excerpts of the interview, denied the allegation saying that Mrs Gandhi had got the facts mixed up.

AJOY BOSE, New Delhi

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Close encounters of the Uttam-Supriya kind

Matinee idols have their differences

The tiff leads to fierce argument. The hero loses his temper and hits the heroine. She staggers, falls down, hurts her knee. Doctors, ambulance, nursing home. Back home again. She calls the police for protection. Goes to court with the same plea. The police guard the entrance to her flat. She goes to court again, this time to withdraw her complaint against the hero. She is no longer frightened of him. And, then....

LOOKS like a script out of the Salim-Javed mill. But this is for real. The hero of the script is Uttam Kumar Chatterjee, 54, the glamour-boy of the Bengali film world for over a quarter century. Hindi film buffs, perhaps, remember him for his role in *Amanush* but he has to his credit quite a few other Hindi films (*Chotisi Mulakat, Bandi, Kitab,* and *Duriyan.*) His current assignments in Bombay include a crime thriller *Plot No 5,* in which he has been cast opposite Sarika, the multi-starrer *Deshpremi* (co-stars : Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra) and *Dabedar* (co-stars: Dharmendra, Shriram Lagu, Maushumi) The heroine: his protege and close friend Supriya Devi, 42, who is still remembered for her brilliant performances in two of Ritwick Ghatak's early films—*Komol Gandhar* and *Meghe Dhaka Tara*—and of course for her courage in accepting the lead role in *Amrapali* that required her to appear on screen scantily clad. She is also not a stranger to Hindi films. (Remember *Dur Gagan ke Chaon Me* with Kishore Kumar in the lead ?)

Uttam and Supriya have been very close friends for over 15 years now. But even before that they knew each other well as they lived in the same neighbourhood in south Calcutta. Uttam was a friend to Supriya's elder brother as well. She had been a great fan of his even in her salad days. But then, everyone of her generation was. From a mere fan, Supriya grew up to become a co-star of her hero in *Basu Paribar* where she played the role of Uttam's young sister. That was in the early fifties. But it was in the early sixties at an outdoor shooting of the film *Lal Pathar* that their acquaintance developed into an intimate friendship. While shooting for the film Supriya fell ill. Uttam spent many sleepless nights nursing her. "It was then that I started to feel a deep attachment for him", Supriya tells her friends.

Soon after that, Supriya with her daughter Soma, moved to an apartment in Calcutta's Moira Street, having been separated from her husband Biswaranjan Choudhuri, an executive in a Calcutta newspaper. The friendship with Uttam flourished. Finally, in 1964, Uttam also shifted from his Bhawanipur residence to Supriya's apartment. Uttam's wife Gouri Devi and son Gautam, however, preferred to stay back in his ancestral house. Thus began a torrid and turbulent period in the lives of two stars of the Bengali screen.

With passing years, however, strains began to show. Supriya could never approve of the female fans chasing Uttam. These fans seemed to be everywhere. This has been a major cause of irritations for her and strained their relationship. Her daughter Soma has been another. Uttam is very fond of Soma and has always delighted in pampering her. Soma too loved it. But Supriya felt that such pampering would go to the child's head and spoil her. Frequently, Uttam and Supriya argued over this, the arguments often leading to tantrums. When Soma got married to Prasun Goswami, a very affluent person and a linguist by profession, some three years ago and went to Switzerland to live with her husband both Uttam and Supriya felt relieved.

Europe, however, failed to hold Soma. Even the seaside chalet in Spain that her husband bought for her could not keep her away from Calcutta. She came back with her baby daughter. With her return, the old quarrels revived even more bitterly as Soma stubbornly refused to go back to Europe and initiated some very serious efforts to enter films. Supriya suspected Uttam might be encouraging Soma in her efforts. Eventually Some got the break in *Kalankini Kankabati* in which Uttam and Supriya had been cast in the lead roles and of which Uttam is the director ! This did not make things easier.

So when Supriya announced her retirement from both the screen and the stage on October 17 from her nursing home cabin and said that she would not be available even for the films already assigned to her, everyone smelt trouble. For, her announcement affected Uttam the most. It meant that the film *Kalankini Kankabati* which had progressed considerably would have to be shelved. Replacing Supriya in the lead role and starting the film all over again would be an expensive proposition. Supriya did not have many more assignments at hand other than this film. Her only other major assignment was the lead role in a north Calcutta stage production. But the theatre quickly secured her replacement and was not affected at all by the announcement.

And, finally Supriya herself confirmed the suspicions. She returned to her apartment on November 1 after about a month's stay in the nursing home. Two days later, she rang up the commissioner of Calcutta Police, asking for police protection against possible attempts by Uttam Kumar to enter her residence. Uttam was out on shooting in north Bengal and was expected back in the city on that day, she informed the police commissioner. She also confided in him that she even feared violence. The Park Street police station arranged for periodic checks on Supriya's apartment by its regular patrols for that area. A general surveillance was prescribed. But nothing happened on that day, nor on the following day, although Uttam had returned to the city and lodged himself in a hotel. This presumably dispelled some of Supriya's fears but she still wanted the vigil to continue. However, she was advised on November 6 that the police could not possibly continue with their watch for an indefinite period unless they were so instructed by a court.

Since Supriya was sick and unable to attend court, her brother Anil Banerjee approached the court seeking the necessary orders for the police. A petition was moved by him before a metropolitan magistrate of Calcutta asking for an order restraining Uttam Kumar's entry into Supriya's apartment. That was on November 9. Supriya's contention was that Uttam Kumar had been staying as a paying guest in her apartment which she had rented in 1962. Their relationship became strained because Supriya protested against Uttam's objectionable manners. On September 29, Uttam picked up a quarrel with her on a filmsy ground, abused her in the most filthy language and assaulted her mercilessly causing dislocation of her left knee and other wounds. Following this she had to undergo a surgical operation. The matter was reported to the police and at the intervention of the local public Uttam deserted her apartment threatening reprisal.

The magisrate drew up proceedings against Uttam Kumar and directed him to explain by December 12 why he should not be restrained from entering Supriya's flat. In the mean time, the order said, Uttam was restrained from committing any cognizable offence at Supriya's flat. The court directed the police to ensure peace in Supriya's flat and conduct an investigation into the matter and report back by December 10. The police posted guards at the entrance to Royal Court, the apartment complex where Supriya lived.

WHEN I visited Supriya Devi on November 15 she appeared very upset and was having second thoughts over the matter. Papers, scrolls and certificates admiring and acknowledging Uttam's services to the screen were still there on the landing walls before Supriya's flat. Beautifully framed, they were so numerous that

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Supriya Devi

the wall could scarcely be seen. Dominating the drawing room was a life-size photograph of Uttam and Supriya both garlanded and beaming at each other — seemingly straight out of a wedding scene. Certainly there was no visible evidence in the flat suggesting that the friendship between Uttam and Supriya was over. On the contrary, Uttam seemed to be everywhere. Supriya sat on a divan, her legs fully stretched out, and fed her granddaughter. She was angry with the newspapers for carrying the reports of the proceedings in the court on her complaint. "Why do you publish such things, they only add to bitterness", she said. It was instantly clear that she was already sorry for her acts. She spoke fondly about Uttam, his fragile heart condition and how her actions were going to hurt him. "Look, he even paid my medical bill at the nursing home", she said. Then she talked about her long friendship with him. "We have been so close for so long that it is difficult to forget about it just like that". She was certainly under severe emotional stress. She even admitted that her fears about reprisal were exaggerated. "Certainly, I should not have approached the court", she admitted. At the same time she hinted that it was the police who had egged her on to take this drastic step. She would now like to forget it all as an accident. Yes, they had fights. She was injured. "But tell me", she asked, "in which family are there no quarrels and tiffs". She made it clear that her affection and admiration for Uttam had not faded at all. "I have no grudge, no complaints against him and I will certainly cherish his memory for providing me with the best time of my life". Her eyes sparkled as she spoke and I, for one, was convinced that the worst was over.

Supriya had already asked the police guard and patrol to be withdrawn the previous day. Finally on November 20, her brother Anil formally approached the magistrate praying for the withdrawal of the case filed by him earlier. "In the interest of the parties concerned, Supriya Devi does not want to proceed with the present proceedings any further, and hereby withdraws the petition with the allegations therein. There is no apprehension of breach of the peace and no useful purpose will be served by proceeding with the case any further", the petition said.

Uttam too had been greatly upset at the developments. At the shooting for the film *Darpachurna*, one of his current assignments, he was called NG several times. This is film-terminology for doing a bad take. For an actor of the calibre of Uttam Kumar, this has never happened in many years. Apparently he had been lacking in his usual concentration. When newsmen approached him for his version of the story he dismissed them with a terse "no comment". Even his friends found him sullen and sulky, hardly in a mood to talk. But he did tell some of his friends that he had rung up Supriya and his

Soma

agonies would be over soon. It is hard to guess whether all his agonies are over but certainly he is a more relaxed person now after the proceedings against him had been withdrawn.

But what really happened on September 29? The version doing the rounds at the Tollygunge studios says that it all started over an argument on purchases made by them in the USA. The two had just returned from a trip to America. It was the *navami* day of the Durga Puja There were a few guests at their flat. There was some talk about who bought what presents for whom. At this Uttam is said to have remarked that he could not buy very many presents because Supriya spent most of the money for her purchases. Supriya

Uttam Kumar Chatterjee

flared up and said that her purchases included presents for Uttam's wife Gauri Devi, his son Gautam, the daughter-in-law, and even the child his daughter-in-law was expecting then. "And, yet you tell me I am selfish...you have been giving me a bad name always...", Supriya is said to have retorted. The argument soon turned fierce.

Even then the matter would not have come to a head had it not been for the presence of Ratna Chatterjee, a film-producer and Mrs Montu Ganguly (Montu *boudi* to her admirers), a Calcutta socialite. Suddenly they became the focus of the verbal duel between the two stars. Supriya appeared greatly irritated at their presence. "Time and again I have told you not to bring them in to my house", she is said to have shouted. Uttam retorted by saying they were his guests and deserved more respect from her. Supriya shot back: "This is my flat and you must respect my wishes". And, so the arguments went on and on. Finally, Uttam lost his temper and smacked Supriya on the face. She fell down and hurt her knee. For the next two days she received medical treatment at her apartment. But when the physician attending to her saw that her knee was not responding to treatment and had swollen up, she was advised to get herself admitted to a nursing home which she did on October 1.

What next? When I put this question to Supriya, her reply was: "Nothing. I want to be left alone, I want to live in peace". Whatever she might have meant by that, it is now certain that Uttam is moving back to her apartment. Just the kind of thing that Salim-Javed would have prescribed for the closing shot. The hero and heroine clutching each others hands, their backs to the screen, receding further and further away. And, The End. Or, is it?

TOOSHAR PANDIT, Calcutta

Photographs by Nimai Ghosh

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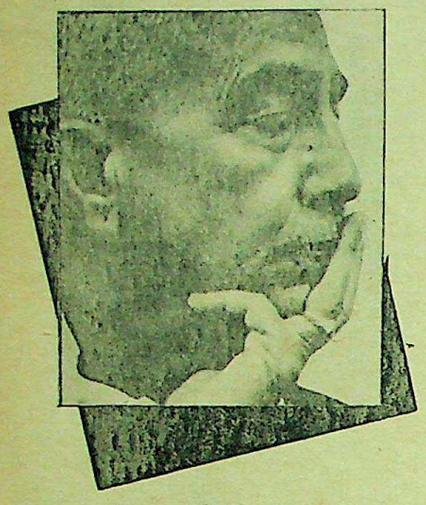

Sunil Dutt

WHAT I STAND FOR

The Prime Minister explains what his policies mean

By CHARAN SINGH

THERE are some generally held beliefs about me and my socio-economic ideas. These beliefs do not probably reflect the correct position. I owe it to the people to explain some of these ideas as best as I can.

I wish, however, to make it clear that I cannot and do not insist on the complete acceptance of all my ideas. For instance, I believe in smaller States. A State like UP, Bihar or Madhya Pradesh is too big, in my view, to be administrated in a manner that will be in tune with the urges and aspirations of the people. This is true of some other States also. It is also my belief that the remarkable progress made by some of the smaller States may provide a clue to how the States may be re-organised. Besides, a number of States having comparable populations may be able each to send an equal number of representatives to the Rajya Sabha. But then these are personal views which I cannot foist on others. I have to recognise that in the plurality of Indian politics, some flexibility is called for. How can I, an ordinary practising politician, present for national acceptance all my views on social or economic matters, let alone insist on it?

The views I would express need not necessarily reflect those of any Party, including mine. But, I think, it would be useful to present them for an objective debate.

Let me begin by quoting from the Mahatma. In a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru on October 5, 1945, Gandhi said, "I am convinced that if India is to attain *true freedom* and through India the world also, then sooner or later, the fact must be recognised that people will have to live in the villages, not in towns. Crores of people will never be able to live at peace with each other in towns and palaces".

Gandhiji recognised, however, that this is an ideal difficult to reach with the kind of development that has already taken place in the world. Hence he went on to say in the same letter to Nehru: "You must not imagine that I am envisaging our village life as it is today. After all, every man lives in the world of his dreams. My ideal village will contain intelligent human beings. They will not live in dirt and darkness as animals. Men and women will be free and able to hold their own against anyone in the world... No one will be idle, no one will wallow in luxury. Everyone will have to contribute his quota of manual labour. I do not want to draw a large-scale picture in detail. *It is possible to envisage railways, post and telegraph offices etc.* For me it is material to obtain the real article and the rest will fit in to the picture afterwards. If I let go the real thing, all else goes".

Mahatmaji's letter started a brief correspondence with Panditji. They also met during this period to discuss their ideas. Summing up these discussions, Gandhiji wrote to Nehruji on November 13, 1945: "The impression that I have gathered from our yesterday's talk is that there is not much difference in our outlook. To test this I put down below the gist of what I have understood. Please correct me if there is any discrepancy. (1) The real question, according to you, is how to bring about man's highest intellectual, economic, political and moral development. I agree entirely. (2) In this there should be an equal right and opportunity for all. (3) In other words, there should be equality between the town-dwellers and the villagers in the standard of food and drink, clothing and other living conditions. In order to achieve this equality today, people should be able to produce for themselves the necessaries of life, that is, clothing, foodstuffs, dwellings and lighting and water. (4) Man is not born to live in isolation but is essentially a social animal, independent and interdependent. No one can or should ride on another's back. If we try to work out the necessary conditions for such a life, we are forced to the conclusion that the unit of society should be a village, or call it a small and manageable group of people who would, *in the ideal*, be self-sufficient (in the matter of their vital requirements) as a unit and bound together in bonds of mutual cooperation and interdependence".

Panditji, as far as I know, accepted Gandhiji's summing up of their mutual correspondence and personal discussions.

Herein, perhaps, lies the clue to my social and economic ideas. Gandhiji, while setting forth an ideal, was prepared to accept approximations. There is a mass of material in Gandhiji's writings to dispel the general belief that he was against industrialisation. He said, "I am not against industry but against industrialism". Here is another quotation: "As a moderately intelligent man, I know that man cannot live without industry. Therefore, I cannot be opposed to industrialisation. But I have great concern about introducing machine industry. The machine produces much too fast, and brings with it a sort of economic system which I cannot grasp. I do not want to accept something when I see its evil effects which outweigh whatever good it brings in. I want the dumb millions of our land to be healthy and happy, and I want them to grow spiritually. As yet for this purpose, we do not need the machine. There are many, too many idle hands. *But as we grow in understanding, if we feel the need of machines, we certainly will have them.* We want industry, but let us become industrious. Let us become more self-dependent, then we will not follow other people's lead so much. W

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shall introduce machinery if and when we need them. Once we have shaped our life on ahimsa we shall know how to control the machine".

He added, "What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on saving labour till thousands are without work and are thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind but for all. I want the concentration of wealth not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery helps a few to ride on the back of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour but greed. *It is against this construction of things that I am fighting with all my might*".

The clue to Gandhiji's economic philosophy can be had from the following quotations also : "As a distinguished son of India put it — he is no other than Sir M. Visveswarayya — whereas an Englishman owns 30 slaves — or is it 36 ? — I speak subject to correction — an American owns 33 slaves. Personally, I think there is no room in true economics, which is convertible with religion, for the owning of slaves whether they are human beings, cattle or machinery. There is no room for slavery in economics".

Panditji (Nehru) had differences with Gandhiji but there is evidence to suggest that in his last days he was coming closer to Gandhiji's views.

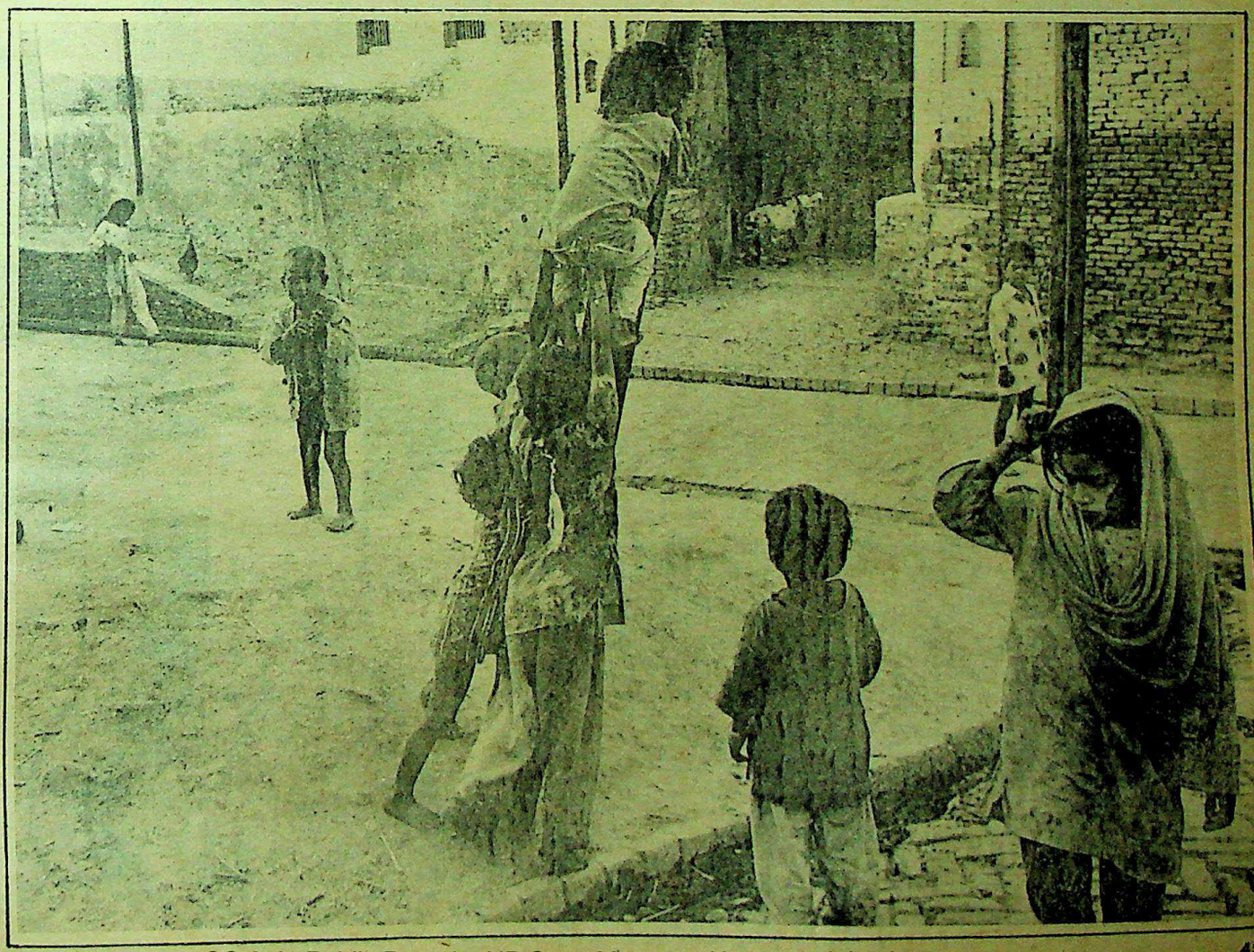
Gandhiji felt that if we can so manage the economy that production and distribution are near simultaneous, there is less scope for exploitation, for concentration of power. Gandhiji understood both the value and compulsion of industrialisation and did not object to it. What he wanted was a course of development whereby man will not become a victim of a process leading to exploitation, depotism and slavery.

I have done little more than preach what Gandhiji had presented as a practical and valid economic policy. Panditji had differences with Gandhiji but there is evidence to suggest that in his last days he was coming closer to Gandhiji's views.

No one in this world can wish away industry, even big industry. I have heard some people say that if "small is beautiful", "big is bountiful". This may be so. But bigness should not lead to concentration of economic power, large-scale unemployment and poverty. There is also a limit to mass production if there is no purchasing power and, consequently, if there is no market for the goods produced.

That is why I plead for cottage industries in the main, as also small-scale industries where they can serve the national purpose better, and even heavy or large-scale industries where they are inevitable. It should be clear that in the kind of world in which we live, we have not only to continue but rapidly expand industry, even heavy industry, for self-reliance, for defensive strength, for helping agriculture and a myriad other purposes. The infrastructure wisely laid by Panditji has stood us in good stead in difficult times. In fact, if we can think of small industries today, it is in some measure due to the infrastructure built by Panditji.

IT would be impertinent for ordinary men like me to speak of differences with titans like Panditji. Before we became free, Panditji was the tribune of the people. All of us were his humble lieutenants. Till his death he was India's undisputed leader, as even Dr Ram Manohar Lohia once called him.



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He is the architect of our Republican Constitution. He planned and executed brilliantly a foreign policy which raised India in the world's esteem. He ushered in the era of planning. And he launched this country on a massive course of technological and industrial development. His guiding role in the formative years of our independence will be remembered with gratitude by the people of India for ever.

History, however, is a relentless persecutor. No great man of any land has ever escaped the closest scrutiny of history and fiercest criticism. How can Nehru, by virtue of his greatness, escape this historical analysis ?

Can anyone deny that his essays in planning were not always rewarding, his industrial policy led to monopoly, his elections gave rise to the ascendancy of money power, his Constitution permitted the cavalier dismissal of State Governments and dissolution of State Assemblies, and his economic policy led to dependence and foreign domination of our internal policies as well as to unemployment and widening income disparities ?

Such an analysis does not take away from the greatness of the man, the majesty of his vision and the mightiness of his effort. An adulator is not the only kind of a follower a leader needs. And Nehru needs no adulators.

Even in his lifetime I freely expressed my opposition to some of his policies like cooperative farming and state trading in foodgrains, on which questions I had to resign my membership of the State Government in UP. I held then and hold now that while he planned for India's rapid economic growth, he failed to take into account the country's factor endowment as also the fact that, as Gandhiji used to say, the real India lives in the villages. So he did not fully appreciate the consequences of the kind of development which he planned and executed.

After several five-year plans and investment of tens of thousands of crores, there is mass unemployment and mass poverty. It is obvious, therefore, that there were some distortions in the past economic policies which need to be corrected.

THERE is, as I have often said, poverty in towns as in the villages. But the stark fact is that the bulk of the poor live in the villages. How do we remove this poverty ?

Fortunately, the new agricultural technology provides us great scope for a massive increase in farm output. Imaginative irrigation schemes should help us overcome the vagaries of weather to a great extent. Other inputs have to be provided at easily procurable prices. Without incentives to farmers, food output may stagnate as it did till some years ago in the absence of a proper input and pricing policy. We can no longer afford to go back to the era of continuous and large-scale import of foodgrains. Agriculture remains the mainstay of our economy.

New technologies make it possible even for small farms to be economic. Thus, faster agricultural growth can provide gainful employment to a large number of people and insure the country against the shortage of foodgrains, pulses, sugar, milk, edible oils, etc. At the centre of agriculture is the farmer and he will have to be treated with respect and gratitude. He must be assured of remunerative returns for his labours.

The problem today is that far too many people depend on land and it is impossible to provide them even a subsistence living. The era of large farms has to be ended. Such farms breed a feudal and slave relationship. Many a landless labourer lives the life of a bonded slave. They have to be liberated. Even after big farms are broken up, there would be considerable pressure on land.

Therefore, other methods of gainful employment have to be found, and they have to be found in the villages themselves, lest there is migration to towns and the resultant explosive situation of urban growth with all the attendant problems of congestion, slums and pollution. This gainful employment has to come from rural industries, social infrastructures etc. This will also bridge the economic and cultural gap between the towns and the villages, besides ending social oligarchies.

I plead for cottage industries in the main, as also small-scale industries where they can serve the national purpose better, and even heavy or large-scale industries where they are inevitable...

Finally, the unemployed, the landless and the other rural poor will have to be organised. Such organisation is difficult. Some extreme forms of action have been self-defeating. Today, landless people or agricultural labourers alone constitute one-fourth of our people, marginal farmers owning less than one hectare contributing an equal number. The only way of organising the rural poor is to get them employed in local social and economic enterprises and develop their collective bargaining power not only with the village rich but also with the urban lobbies.

Many people call me a kulak leader. What they mean is that I represent the rich peasantry. My whole life, writings and work as a Minister in UP are a testimony to the falseness of the charge. UP is the only State which, because of my crusade, did not permit the resumption of land by landlords. I stand for radical land reform, for small, semi-medium and medium holdings, the principle being that land should be so distributed that it can be managed economically by a family without employing labour or employing minimal labour during sowing and harvesting periods.

I am against cooperative farming and cooperative industries as distinguished from farming (and industrial) cooperatives for various reasons. The kisans in India have a strong attachment to land and only through a violent liquidation of kisans can they be deprived of this direct association with land. Besides, this will lead to bureaucratisation of farm development. Further, India's manpower endowment does not permit of such cooperative farming.

ALL my life I have held that caste indignity is adding to the misery of economic deprivation of the poor, particularly in the villages. The harijans were called the sons of God by Mahatma Gandhi; the condition of an even larger number of so-called backward castes was no better. Mere sentimental approaches, however, will not solve the problems posed by caste tyranny. A permanent solution will be found only in abolition of the caste system lock, stock and barrel and of the overlordism in land and in industry as also emergence or development of a labour-intensive economy on a national scale. A social revolutionary like Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy may be needed in every part of the country.

Atrocities on harijans have been continuing for centuries. Political parties exploit this tragic situation for petty ends. These cannot be ended by mere dramatic visits to affected places.

I HAVE held and continue to hold the view that it is iniquitous to confer increasing benefits on the organised sector of the working class when vast masses are half-naked, semi-starved and shelterless. Growing social alienation with growing development is a paradox of our times. Perhaps one of the remedies lies in stern action against ostentation and extravagance in private and public expenditures. Austerity in high places has to be enforced with relentless speed. Only then can we appeal to the working class to join in the effort to remove poverty and unemployment. Much of the urban administrative infrastructure may also have to be dismantled so that scarce resources can be used for productive employment, not mere desk jobs. An even more enduring solution lies in the dispersal of productive activity, which will necessitate statutory demarcation of techniques. This will require revolutionary changes in the educational and administrative systems.

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ONE of the manifestations of lopsided development is the migration of people from the villages to towns in search of jobs. Many of them do not get jobs and have been forced to live a miserable life in slums. Apart from imaginative housing schemes, projects for mass employment alone can end this pathetic situation. Meanwhile a census of the urban poor and massive rehabilitation schemes will have to be undertaken.

Urban problems like housing, transportation, traffic hazards, law and order, cry for immediate solutions. The police system has to be revamped. Dispersal of offices and housing schemes near places of employment will have to be thought of. Further construction of head offices and industrial projects in towns having, say, a population of half million in the last census, will have to be prohibited. The public school system will have to be replaced by fast expansion of schooling facilities with free education for the economically weaker sections. Perhaps a new urban police force may have to be raised to help children, old people, women and others cross the roads, get into or get down from buses. A human approach to urban problems is necessary.

OUR secularism does not mean any neglect of the rights of the majority community or pampering of any single community. But it must be recognised that minorities in any country will always have a sense of insecurity and it is the duty of the State and the majority community to remove this sense of insecurity. As an Arya Samajist, I stand for radical reform of Hindu society and abolition of dowry, caste hegemony and indignity of women. But the personal laws of minorities, say, in regard to marriage, divorce and inheritance have to be protected because the changes have to be the result of a reform movement within these communities and not an imposition by the State. There will, however, have to be a criminal code equally applicable to all the inhabitants of the country.

All places of worship of all religions will have to be protected by the State and fullest freedom of faith and its practice has to be preserved. Any aggressiveness by the minority communities can only be born of a fear complex. The solution lies in removing the fear complex. Officers whose duty it is to protect the people's civil rights have a special responsibility.

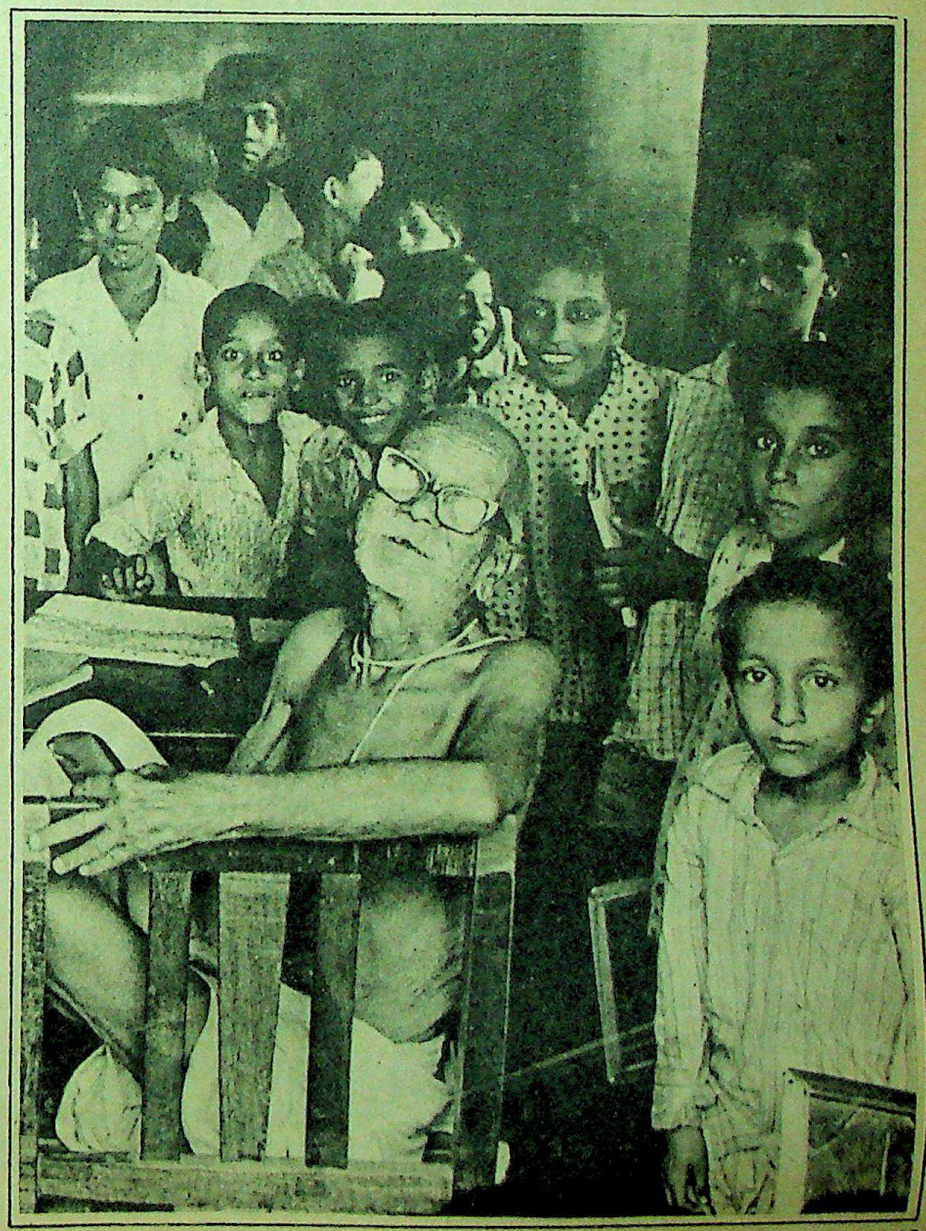
THE semi-federal character of the Indian state was largely a reflection of the upsurge of nationalism against political subjugation by the foreigner. Gandhiji, who brought about this upsurge, recognised, however, that aspirations of different cultural and linguistic groups cannot be stifled.

The farmer will have to be treated with respect and gratitude. He must be assured of remunerative returns for his labours.

Indian unity and strength would be preserved only if the people were made to feel and act together as members of a large fraternity, only if they had a sense of participation in governance. This was possible only if there was a devolution of power down the line. Perhaps the time has now arrived to think of a new federal order. The Centre, of course, has to be strong for defence, for protection of people's democratic rights, for economic stability and for the maintenance of standards of professional excellence.

PEOPLE have not sufficiently realised the significance of the assurance in my first broadcast as Prime Minister. It was not merely a negative approach that no language will be imposed. It was a positive approach that an acceptable *lingua franca* has to be evolved. We will have to convene a conference of all political Parties and Chief Ministers to consider this sensitive matter. Meanwhile, we have to provide that no language, indigenous or foreign, is imposed on any section of our people.

I STAND for open society, open administration, open government. I oppose excessive secrecy except where compelling national interest so demands. Equally, I stand for open, even if controversial, functioning of political Parties. India's problems can be solved only through



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the struggles of her people. The poor in the towns and the villages have been awakened and can no longer be put down. Civil liberties—even the right to satyagraha when these liberties are threatened—should be the solid foundation of our political progress. Any concept of absolute power, any idea of a short-cut through authoritarian ways to the people's emancipation is alien to my temperament.

The plurality of political Parties is inevitable in a country of our diversity. We cannot stop the organic growth of diverse political philosophies.

The police system has to be revamped. The dignity of the policeman has to be preserved. The policeman should be seen to be the friend of the people. Criminal investigation systems will have to be strengthened.

IT is now generally recognised that population is mainly the result of poverty. By a direct attack on poverty, illiteracy and superstitions, we can stabilise population. While the services have to be rapidly expanded, the scarce resources of the country have to be spent on the ending of poverty and the raising of the social, economic and cultural status of the people which will have an abiding impact on population control.

I FIRMLY believe that the intellectuals, so-called, speaking from a pulpit cannot educate the people. The masses have enough wisdom to educate themselves. As a famous man said, if you tell the people what the situation is, they are intelligent enough to solve their problems. Roberto Rosselini said, "We have in an excess of talk, made possible by mass communication, created a sub-culture based on false intellectuality and non-knowledge".

Knowledge is not always the equivalent of wisdom. In my view, communication, more particularly official media, should be people-oriented and not government-oriented. The culture of sermonising to the people must be replaced by the culture of learning from the people.

Publicity and propaganda are generally a debasing culture. We have seen the extent of debasement during the Emergency. The information infrastructure must be greatly simplified. We must have an institution of village communicator who can be no more than a purveyor of objective information and who can help the people summarise their own experiences for themselves. We may have to think of a large number of village theatres, village reading rooms and village libraries.

We must think in terms of a very large number of transmitters, each catering to no more than a few lakh people. The emphasis should be on giving the greatest scope for the cultural expression of the local people. Control of such transmitters may vest in people's institutions to the extent possible. We have to think in unconventional ways. Similarly, we must think of a large number of rural newspapers to be run by the people themselves. Control of people's minds either by governmental media or by the privately owned big-business metropolitan media should be eliminated.

Having said this, I wish to assert that, with all its faults, the Press has to be free from governmental control. Its dependence on governmental largese must be eliminated. Even if the Press is against me and my policies, as it generally is, I do not believe in curbing its freedom. The press has to recapture the revolutionary role which it played during the Gandhi era.

THE people of India have been cheated again and again. They are naturally sceptical about anything new resulting from a mere change of government or personnel. How do we remove this cynicism and despair? How do we strengthen their faith in the democratic process? How do we frustrate the ambitions of adventurists propagating a false theory that political absolutism or extra-political authoritarianism alone can keep the country together and solve its problems?

Austerity in high places has to be enforced with relentless speed. Only then can we appeal to the working class to remove poverty and unemployment.

Till August 15, 1947, the initiative remained with the people. Therefore, even in bondage, there was a spirit of challenge, participation, expectation. On August 15, 1947, the initiative passed on to the Government. The people became incidental to governance, except for a brief moment when their vote was needed. Thereafter, a handful of operators—politicians, bureaucrats, the urban lobbies, the business-industrial complex—took over. People have no control over their destiny. State power has become so powerful and the influence of the lobbies over the state has become so pervasive that people's struggles are ruthlessly put down by a combination of state power and economic as well as social oligarchy.

Thus, our development, though impressive, largely benefited a small class, promoted modernisation of consumption, as Dr. Lohia called it, and deepened the drudgery, poverty and misery of vast numbers of a long suffering people.

The new alliance which we have forged is an effort to bring the people into the scope of governance. It is never too late to try again to impart to the people a new hope. Youth is a state of mind. Gandhiji was past 60 when he undertook the Dandi March. He was 73 when he launched the "Quit India" movement. He was 78 when he went to Noakhali. Youth represents a passion for justice, a spirit of revolt against tyranny of every kind.

Why are people disenchanted? I think this is because most of us live in the past and in the present. We do not look to the future. There was the erosion of an ethos, first in the closing years of the Nehru era and again after the epochal events of 1977 whose significance was not reflected in the culture of governance that followed.

The administrative process has overtaken the political process. Bureaucracy is not the executive in our democracy. It is only an instrument of people's political will. Expertise can help only if it is an aid to this political will, not a substitute for it. Therefore, the political process must be fortified.

My first appeal is to the professional intelligentsia, not to stop with sermonising as politicians do. They must find an answer to the paradox of economic growth and simultaneous social alienation. They seem to have been overtaken by consumerism and precedent orientation which have robbed them of the excitement and adventure of intellectual challenge and response. They must regain their partisanship with the common people and evolve creative ideas of quickly solving the problems of poverty and social alienation.

The collective strength of the working class shall be asset to the political process. I would only appeal to them, as I appeal to businessmen and industrialists clamouring for profits, to consider, while making their demands, how they can share the fruits of development with crores of people who have no shelter, no food, no clothes, no work.

Those who are in power should prove their sympathy with the downtrodden by manifest evidence of simple, even austere, styles of personal life and administrative behaviour. All of us should accept sacrifices. All of us should sit together and consider how quickly we can provide drinking water, approach roads, basic sanitation and health care to the rural people, how quickly we can eliminate the grinding poverty in the towns and the villages. Harijans and the landless poor have to contend with caste indignity besides economic deprivation. The breaking of this age-old iniquity should be the common purpose of democratic Parties.

I invite all those who believe in a new value system to come together to safeguard the political process against inroads of fascism and authoritarianism and against the emergence of extra-political forces. After this consolidation, India will be ready for the next stage of ideological clarity and differentiation. ■

The photographs are of Charan Singh's village, taken by Raghu Rai.

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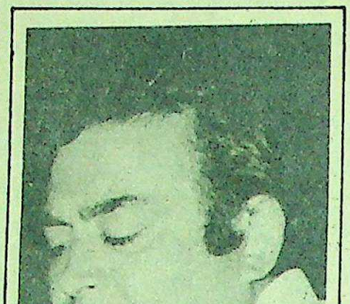
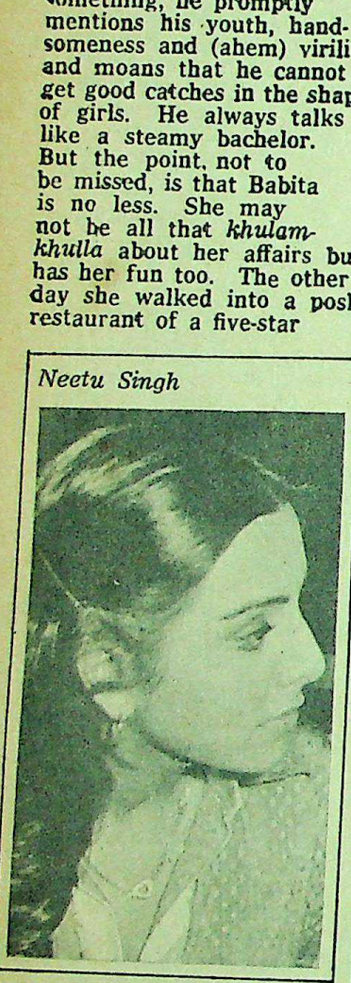
BETWEEN the husband and wife, poor *Dabboo* is more *badnaam* than his wife *Babita* because he hides nothing from anyone. His roving eye is known more through his own mouth than by the accounts from others. In case someone misses out something, he promptly mentions his youth, handsomeness and (ahem) virility and moans that he cannot get good catches in the shape of girls. He always talks like a steamy bachelor. But the point, not to be missed, is that Babita is no less. She may not be all that *khulam-khulla* about her affairs but has her fun too. The other day she walked into a posh restaurant of a five-star hotel, hanging onto the arm a fair, handsome man around her age. The two picked out the quietest table in the room and absorbed themselves with each other and a small lunch, oblivious of the eyes that watched them eat



Sanjeev Kumar

Neetu Singh



Sital Das

Shabana Azmi: for me to know...

Phal S. Girotra

SANJEEV KUMAR'S mother passed away last week. This tragedy left him sorrowing on more than one account. She was the only person whom he loved and now that she is gone, his close friends say that he will neither give nor receive true affection any more. The second reason is that he could not get married before she died: she always wanted him to marry and bring a *bahu* home. And he never seemed to make up his mind who he should select from among the various girls revolving in his orbit. Now he might suddenly take the plunge, or, possibly never marry.

NOW look at the change in *Raakesh Roshan*. Who would have thought that this meek, mild, young star would get involved in a controversy with a director? This controversy about *Ikraar* — which has now been blown out of proportions by the two parties concerned, reveal the sudden brash attitude adopted by Raakesh. He tried all he could to assume superiority over the new director, *Kailash Advant* just because the man was trying to get a foothold in the industry. Raakesh conveniently put on the airs of a celebrated, established star. Now the sugar-tongue hero with the chocolate-pudding face and innocent eyes, defends himself in a typically filmi way so much so, you are left convinced as to who the villain is: Kailash of course!

SARGAM still remains the most widely liked and biggest crowd-puller among current films. Producer N. N. Sippy is slowly coming to be known as the Midas of the film industry, with a string of golden jubilees behind him. He continues however to be the usual, good-humoured, self-effecting being that he is.

THERE was something about *Neetu* just before she got engaged to *Chintu*, which preserved her youth and glamour. Now that she is chucking away her career, she has begun to look careworn and stale: and the pair of them, Chintu-Neetu, already look long-married. The way they walked into a party recently, with Chintu looking very high and she looking a bit embarrassed and on her mental toes, in case he committed a faux pas. As Chintu talked and swayed his arms around, you could see the mounting tension on Neetu's face. At one stage, when it appeared that things will get out of hand, Neetu tried to steady him physically and with a quiet word. He rushed her away and snapped at her rudely. This appears to be the "in" thing for the young couples of the film world.

ONE of *Shabana's* girlfriends insists that one may know Shabby very intimately, but the one thing you might never guess is her weakness for members of the opposite sex: she never lets it out and even cleverly shrugs off rumours when you try to pin her down. But her fondness for male company is a sure thing — when you see how many kills she has made and is still making, with *Shekhar Kapoor* the only ostensible one by her side. ■

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KHAAS BAAT

WHAT was *Seema* doing with *MGR* recently? She didn't meet him to ask him to preside over her birthday celebrations or switch on the camera in one of her new films. Exasperated by malicious gossip published in some Tamil magazines (whose editors owe allegiance to MGR's AIADMK), she decided to meet MGR himself. And she says, to her utter surprise he promised to take action against the magazines concerned, and atleast one of them, the most vicious one she says, is not being published anymore. Mild gossip used to give her, great thrills, she says, but she cannot stand bored, poisonous minds churning filth calculated to harm her career.

IN her very first film *Oh Manju*, in Tamil, teenage heroine *Kavita* was made to take off her red blouse and stop an advancing train. The "hot" scene was calculated to keep the box-office busy but there wasn't much life in it, and there wasn't much of a bosom (at that time) which Kavita could display, and the way the film got bombed, nobody thought Kavita would survive. She has not only survived, but has steadily acquired a decent status in Telugu films. After Jaya Pradha, Jayasudha and Subhashini, she's considered a reliable box-office factor but in Tamil films her career is yet to warm up even though she has appeared in successful films like *General Chakravarthy*.

REKHA's appearance in *Meendum Kokila*, a Tamil film sponsored by *Kamalahasan*, isn't a brief, special appearance, says the actor. She plays a film-actress and it is a full-length role. Sridevi plays the parallel lead. This is the first time Rekha is appearing in a Tamil film but this isn't the first time she's speaking Tamil on screen. In the ill-fated *Imaan Dharam* she played a Tamilian labourer, and the delightful scenes in which she kept swearing in Tamil saved the film from being a total disaster (at the box-office)—at least in Tamil Nadu.

Rekha's acceptance of the lead role in *Meendum Kokila* is a special gesture of goodwill towards her friend Kamalahasan. And there are speculations if she'll feature with him in his first ever Hindi film, a remake of the super Telugu hit *Maro Charitra*. The Hindi version is being produced by L. V. Prasad, who till *Jaya Vijay* flopped, was known as Madras' Midas. Prasad's hits include *Sasural*, *Milan* and *Bidaai*. He also had ten consecutive hits in Hindi.

The highlight of *Maro Charitra* was a long dance sequence featuring Kamalahasan: besides the film had any number of comic scenes which kept the audiences amused. It became a hit in Andhra, It scored a golden jubilee run in Bangalore, and surely, large non-Telugu audiences saw it there. Its producer thought of dubbing the film in Tamil but the Telugu version now being shown at Madras is drawing packed houses and it's bound to go beyond a silver jubilee (in morning shows). Saritha was the debutante heroine who later made it big in Tamil too. The Hindi version may not have her: surely the producers cannot risk having two south Indians in one package, however attractive it may turn out to be.

Suphal

Kavita: better performance now

THERE's some gloom in K. R. Vijaya's camp: two films sponsored by her proved terrible flops. One was *Velli Ratham*, one of those films about a woman who'll do any damn thing to save her husband. And then there was *Neela Malargal*, which after running full-house for three days suddenly dropped dead. And this was despite Kamalahasan and Sridevi's presence.

IN the good old days there used to be box-office rivalry between the two most popular stars: *MGR* and *Sivaji*. Now, it's between Kamalahasan and Rajnikant. At the moment Rajnikant is doing better: his last two films have clicked very well whereas Kamalahasan's last two releases turned out to be nightmares but Kamalahasan is taking it cool: flops aren't new to him he says. In fact his career started with not-so-successful films.

NOW that *Rekha* has "condescended" to act in a Tamil film, will *Hema* follow suit? Hema's market in Bombay is so slippery, she may accept a film, say, if Sivaji Ganesan acts opposite her. Her mother is currently making three Tamil films, and she was going around saying that Hema is far too expensive for a Madras-type film. Well, is she still very expensive after *Meera*, *Dillagi and Dil Ka Heera*?

THE happiest people in Malayalam films, specially in those juvenile sex films, are the young boys approaching teenage. They get so many chances to hug and smooch their heroines (till the hero turns up). And they're hardly blamed if these films flop.

SEEMA has replaced *Jayabharathy* in *Harry Pothen's* camp: she is acting in two films being produced under his well known banner: Supriya. And now that Supriya is in much better financial shape, than when Jayabharathy walked out on Harry Pothen, Seema should have reasons to be happy.

PIOUSJI

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Ah! TAJ

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Beginning December 2.

This week the Sun and Neptune are in Scorpio, Venus is in Sagittarius and Kethu alone is Aquarius. Jupiter, Rahu and Mars are in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo and Mercury and Uranus are in Libra. The Moon will be moving through Taurus and Gemini from Aries.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) You are strongly advised to keep away from disputes and controversies. Arguments with people in authority are sure to go against your interests. Deal patiently and tactfully with those around you. Be cordial and courteous to ladies. The financial front will show some improvement. You may undertake an important journey in the near future. **Good dates :** 4, 5 and 7. **Lucky numbers :** 4 and 6. **Favourable direction :** West.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) You can make a lot of changes on the business and financial front. This is the right time for entering into business deals regarding property and investments. Legal suits may be decided in your favour. Translate plans into actions, make necessary changes and do not be afraid to seek favours from those in authority. **Good dates :** 2, 3, 6 and 8. **Lucky numbers :** 3 and 6. **Favourable direction :** South.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Use your foresight in professional matters. If you use your intuitions in good measure you will reap abundant rewards. You will prosper on the financial front to no end. It would be wise to make the right investments. Do not be afraid to adopt new and original business methods. Keep your temper under control. **Good dates :** 2, 3, 5 and 7. **Lucky numbers :** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction :** South.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Your problems have not come to an end. You are likely to remain perplexed and apprehensive as to your welfare. But the future is not as bleak as you think. Do not lose heart. There is some likelihood of disappointment on the domestic front. Avoid legal suits and unwise speculation. Extravagant tendencies should be curbed at all costs. Any wrong move may prove very expensive. **Good dates :** 4, 6 and 8. **Lucky numbers :** 3 and 9. **Favourable direction :** West.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) Success on the financial front is assured. A bout of illness may however dampen your spirits. Secret sources will contribute to your prosperity. Important people will favour you. Refrain from making erratic changes. Intellectual and artistic pursuits are not likely to progress. A female relative may oppose your plans. **Good dates :** 4, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 2 and 9. **Favourable direction :** North-west.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) You will enjoy a fair -measure of success and happiness. Do not enter into contracts or business deals which may backfire in the long run. Refrain from lending and borrowing money. Domestic affairs will require a lot of your attention. Some people at home may suddenly fall sick. This period is unfavourable for marriage and courtship. **Good dates :** 2, 3, 6 and 7. **Lucky numbers :** 9 and 10. **Favourable direction :** South-west.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) You must utilise the favourable stellar influences operating in your favour at this juncture. Secret sources will extend appreciable help. You will do a fair bit of travelling in the near future. Make suitable changes to suit your plans. Womenfolk will prove particularly helpful. Avoid doubtful love adventures. Check extravagant tendencies. Do not lose your temper. **Good dates:** 4, 5 and 6. **Lucy numbers:** 6 and 9. **Favourable directions:** South and West.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) You will enjoy yourself in the company of children and pet animals. Social activities will keep you busy throughout this week. You may fall in love once again! Elders and those in authority will prove cooperative. Exercise caution in your financial dealings and any misunderstanding with business associates should be settled in an amicable fashion. **Good dates:** 3, 4, 6 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 — December 22) You will face humiliation this week. Do not depend on others since no sort of help will be forthcoming. Take time and make up your mind. Plans should be formulated carefully. The latter part of this year is favourable, so postpone things of importance to a later date. Regarding finance, there will be paucity of funds. **Good dates:** 3, 5, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** East.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Your friends will not be very affable towards you this week. Avoid bad company. Do not go into any sort of controversy or useless small talk. Don't take any hasty decision. Your problems will aggravate at the end of this week. Women will find happiness and acquire costly presents. The time is not opportune for love affairs, matrimony or speculation. Deal tactfully with elders. **Good dates:** 4, 6, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 8. **Favourable directions :** South and East.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) The stellar portents are somewhat conflicting. However, some good fortune including inheritance and new friends are forecast. This is an opportune moment for asking favours of employers and relatives. Courtship and marriage are in the offing. Financial benefits through elders are forecast. Your health will not pose problems. **Good dates:** 2, 5, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 6. **Favourable direction:** West.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Use tact and circumspection in all your dealings. Patience and courage are required to combat the problems on the domestic and professional fronts. Do not embark on new ventures. Enterprise and good sense should show the way. Do not take unnecessary risks. Children will contribute to your happiness. **Good dates:** 5, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

M. B. RAMAN

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Vital facts about Colds and Flu and how to fight these ailments

"Anacin is a big help for quick relief from the miseries of colds and flu"
says Nurse Natalia D'Souza

What causes colds and flu?

Air-borne viruses from infected persons spread colds and flu. Normally, the body resists these viruses. But over-exertion or under-nourishment weakens the body and lowers resistance to infection.

What are the symptoms?

Bodyache, heaviness in the head, sneezing and a runny nose. Flu is often accompanied by shivering, discomfort and sweating. Cough, sore throat, loss of appetite and fatigue may follow.

Can it lead to complications?

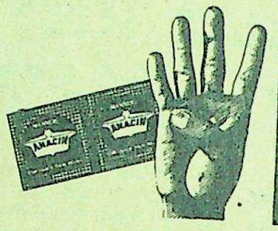
Neglected cases may lead to pneumonia and infection of the upper respiratory tract.

How does Anacin help?

Anacin relieves the misery of colds and flu. Anacin is strong—it contains more of the pain-reliever doctors most recommend all over the world. Anacin is trusted by millions. It is a combination of medicines like a doctor's trusted prescription. So at the first signs of cold or flu take Anacin four times a day.

What else should you do?

- Drink plenty of fluids, boiled water, orange or sweet lime juice
- Eat nourishing foods
- Rest adequately
- Gargle with antiseptic or salt water
- Keep rooms properly ventilated



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From the Anacin Division of Geoffrey Manners

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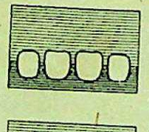
Stop bad breath... fight tooth decay with Colgate Dental Cream

Brush your teeth with Colgate after every meal. It protects you just the way dentists recommend all over the world.

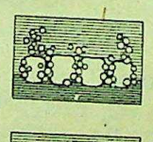
Bacteria grow in food particles left between your teeth. These can cause bad odour, and later—painful decay.

So always brush the Colgate way right after eating. It's proven most effective to freshen your breath, whiten your teeth and fight decay.

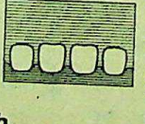
How Colgate's trusted formula works



Odour and decay causing bacteria grow in food particles trapped between your teeth.



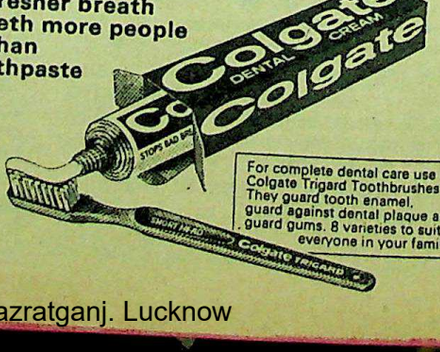
Colgate's unique active foam reaches deep to remove dangerous food particles and bacteria.



The result : attractive white teeth, fresh breath confidence, protection against decay.

For cleaner, fresher breath and whiter teeth more people buy Colgate than any other toothpaste in the world!

Only a dentist can give you better dental care.



For complete dental care use Colgate Trigard Toothbrushes. They guard tooth enamel, guard against dental plaque and guard gums. 8 varieties to suit everyone in your family.

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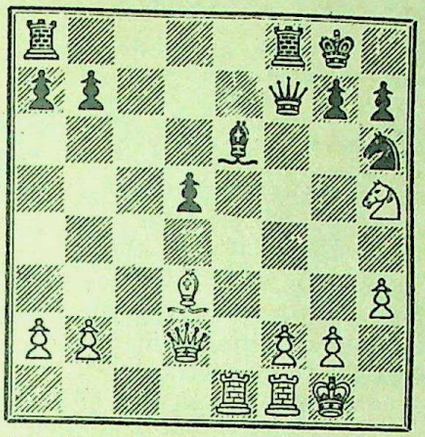
chess

Harris (Black)



Finn (White) to move
Position after Black's 21st move

The Varsity Match

THE ANNUAL duel between Oxford and Cambridge is one of the longest running fixtures in chess today, with a history dating back to 1873. But for the occasional tiresome World War, the sequence of matches has been uninterrupted since that date. This year's event was sponsored by Lloyd's Bank and played in London at the RAC Club—an excellent venue for the match.

A couple of curious facts about the Varsity Match. Firstly it is the only chess match in England to be reported regularly in the Soviet media—British counter-espionage take note. Secondly, almost every member of the English team has played in a Varsity Match. Clearly this event provides a useful pointer towards the future constitution of our national team.

Evidently dissatisfied with only having won the last nine successive meetings, Cambridge (rather unsportingly) extended the sequence to ten, though not without difficulty. In fact the final result was in doubt until the very last moment.

CAMBRIDGE			OXFORD
(Oxford had White on the odd numbered boards)			
1. S. Taulbut	½	½	D. Macpherson
2. C. Crouch	½	½	P. Sowray
3. S. Knott	1	0	N. Benjamin
4. M. Pagden	½	½	J. Branford
5. K. Harris	0	1	S. Finn
6. A. Berry	1	0	P. Carey
7. J. Friedland	0	1	C. Hill
8. Jane Anson	1	0	Annette Rogers
	4½	3½	

The inclusion of a ladies' board is a very welcome and recent introduction. However, male supremacy must have the last word, so the rules are that the ladies' result only counts if the men's match ends in a tie—which is precisely what happened. So in the final analysis it was Jane Anson of Trinity Hall who eventually carried the day for Cambridge.

Still, Oxford need not be too downhearted about the result. It was the most closely contested for many years and Oxford did have the consolation of producing the best game of the match on board 5.

White: S. Finn (Pembroke College, Oxford). Black: K. Harris (Queens College, Cambridge). French Defence.

1. P—K4, P—K3; 2. P—Q4, P—Q4; 3. N—Q2, N—KB3; 4. P—K5, KN—Q2; 5. B—Q3, P—QB4; 6. P—QB3, N—QB3; 7. N—K2, P x P; 8. P x P, P—B3; 9. P x P, N x BP; 10. N—KB3, B—Q3; 11. B—KB4. A sound idea, exchanging Black's best minor piece.

11. . . ., B x B; 12. N x B, Q—Q3; 13. Q—Q2, O—O; 14. N—K2, White must play with care. 14. O—O? N—K5! would cost him a piece.

14. . . ., P—K4; 15. P x P, N x P; 16. N x N, Q x N; 17. O—O, N—N5? A rash decentralisation for which he is soon punished. Correct is 17. . . ., B—B4 when White's advantage is minimal.

18. N—N3, B—K3; 19. QR—K1, Q—B3; 19. . . ., Q—Q3 was necessary. Now he loses material.

20. P—KR3! N—R3; Not 20. . . ., N—K4? 21. N—R5 and the knight is lost.

21. N—R5, Q—B2; (DIAGRAM) 22. N x P! For if 22. . . ., K x N, then 23. Q—N5+, K—R1; 24. Q x N.

22. . . ., Q x N; 23. R x B, N—B4; 24. B x N, R x B; 25. KR—K1. With an extra pawn and an iron grip on the K file, the rest is academic.

25. . . ., R—N4; 26. P—KN3, R—KB1; 27. R—K7, Q—R3; 28. Q—K3, P—Q5; 29. Q x P, Q x P; 30. Q—B4+, K—R1; 31. Q—B3+ Squashing Black's last hope, a sacrifice on KN6.

31. . . ., K—N1; 32. R—K8, R x R; 33. R x R+, K—B2; 34. Q—K3, Q—Q2; 35. Q x R, K x R; 36. Q—N8+. Resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

I DO NOT normally revive hands that have been used in this column during the recent past, but this one will bear a second look on its merits and because Robert Sheehan has added a most interesting gloss.

Dealer, South. E-W vulnerable.

	♠ K 5 ♥ A K 7 5 2 ♦ J 10 9 5 ♣ K 5	
♠ 8 3 ♥ Q 4 ♦ K Q 7 4 ♣ J 8 7 4 2	N W E S	♠ Q 7 ♥ J 9 6 ♦ A 8 6 3 2 ♣ A Q 9
	♠ A J 10 9 6 4 2 ♥ 10 8 3 ♦ — ♣ 10 6 3	

In the South American championships South opened Three Spades, North raised to Four Spades, and West led ♥ Q, won by dummy's King. The declarer ruffed a diamond and ran the 10 of spades, to avoid West gaining an entry to lead through dummy's King of clubs.

It looks natural for East to return a diamond, but this gives the declarer no problem: he ruffs, draws trumps, and runs ♥ 10, losing at most a spade, a heart and a club.

Henry Tarrab, sitting East, kept the game alive by returning a far from obvious card, the 9 of clubs, which ran to dummy's King. Declarer can make the contract now if he plays Ace and another heart, because if the defenders do not continue clubs the King of spades will draw the outstanding trumps. Not knowing that the trumps were 2-2, South led several rounds of spades, arriving at this position:

	♠ — ♥ A 7 5 ♦ J ♣ —	
♠ — ♥ 4 ♦ K ♣ J 7	N W E S	♠ — ♥ J 9 ♦ A ♣ A
	♠ 2 ♥ 10 8 ♦ — ♣ 10	

When ♠ 2 was led, West threw ♣ 7 and East completed a fine defence by discarding the Ace of clubs, the only saving card.

But East could have done even better! Study the effect of returning the Jack of hearts when in with ♠ Q. This defeats any line of play by the declarer.

The Second Daily Telegraph Bridge Quiz, by G. C. H. Fox (Robert Hale, £3·95) is derived from Fox's popular Christmas competitions. The section on declarer's play relies rather heavily on elimination technique, but there are excellent hands in the section on defence.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

WHEN this stamp, showing a wood-burning locomotive complete with cow-catcher, was issued in the Central American republic of Honduras in 1898, the Honduras National Railway was a narrow-gauge line running about 40 miles south from Puerto Cortes, on the Atlantic coast. It had been intended as an international short cut across the isthmus to the Pacific but a $20 million loan raised in London and Paris to finance it was diverted by the Honduran commissioners to less altruistic purposes. Even the stretch of line actually built was in poor shape and far from straight, for the contractors were paid by the mile, so that they profited at every turn. Although the locomotive stamps have never been expensive, a complete set of 8 still costing only about £2, forgeries were made, mainly to include in cheap packets for young collectors.

A POPULAR attraction for holidaymakers in Cornwall, the Old Post Office at Tintagel was probably built during the 14th century as a manor-house. Its name is a misnomer, for it was used as a post office only between 1844 and 1892. The owner then decided to sell it for redevelopment, but it fortunately escaped the fate of other old buildings in Tintagel because a group of local artists, led by Miss Catherine Johns, bought it and resold it in 1900 to the National Trust for £100. To raise funds for its upkeep, the Trust sells four stamp-like labels. The 5p label has a view of the Old Post Office itself. Other designs feature the oak-leaf emblem of the National Trust and a portrait of Octavia Hill, the Victorian social reformer who helped to found the National Trust in 1895. Although they have no postal validity, the labels may be stuck on postcards to be cancelled at the Old Post Office with a distinctive postmark.

C.W. HILL

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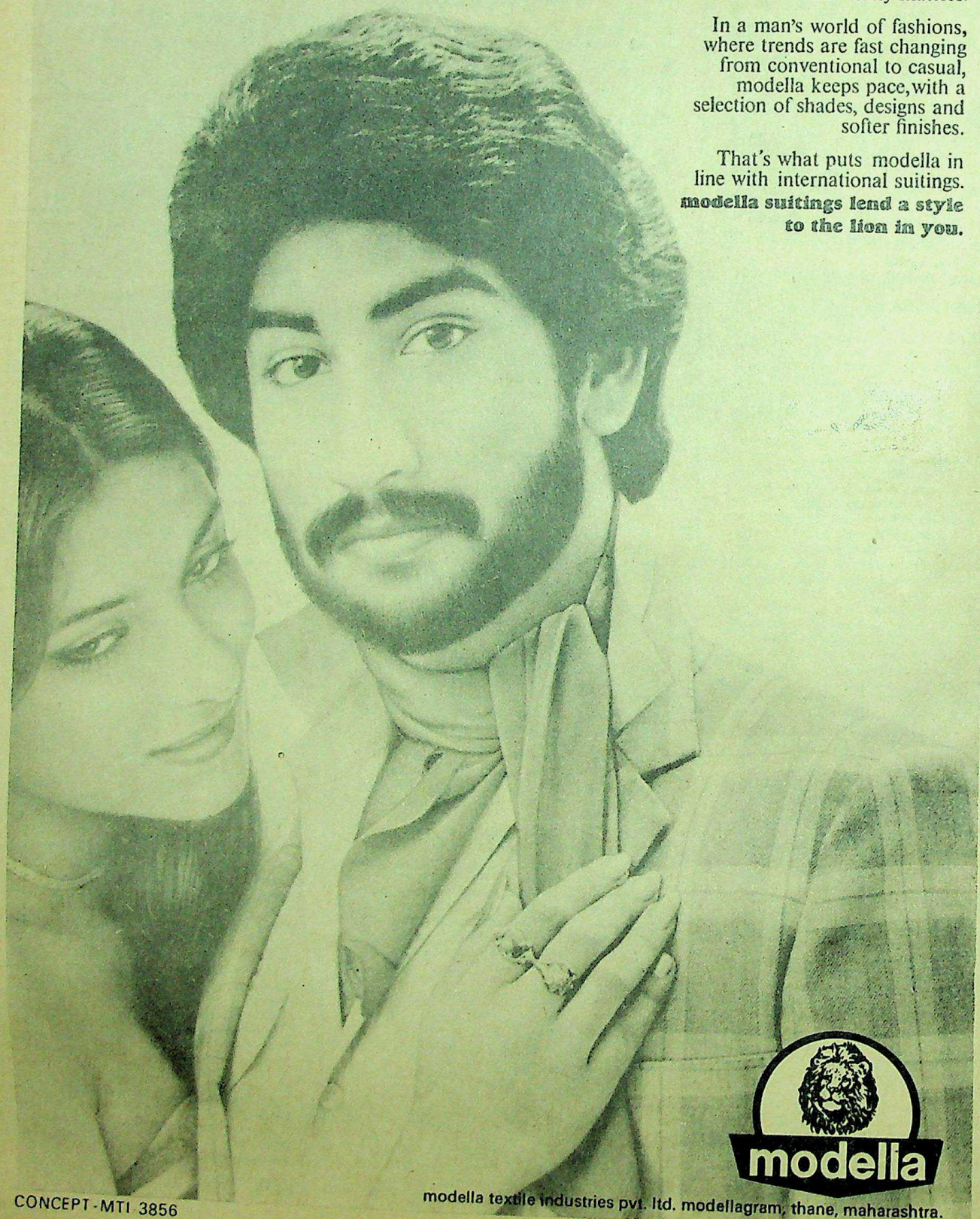

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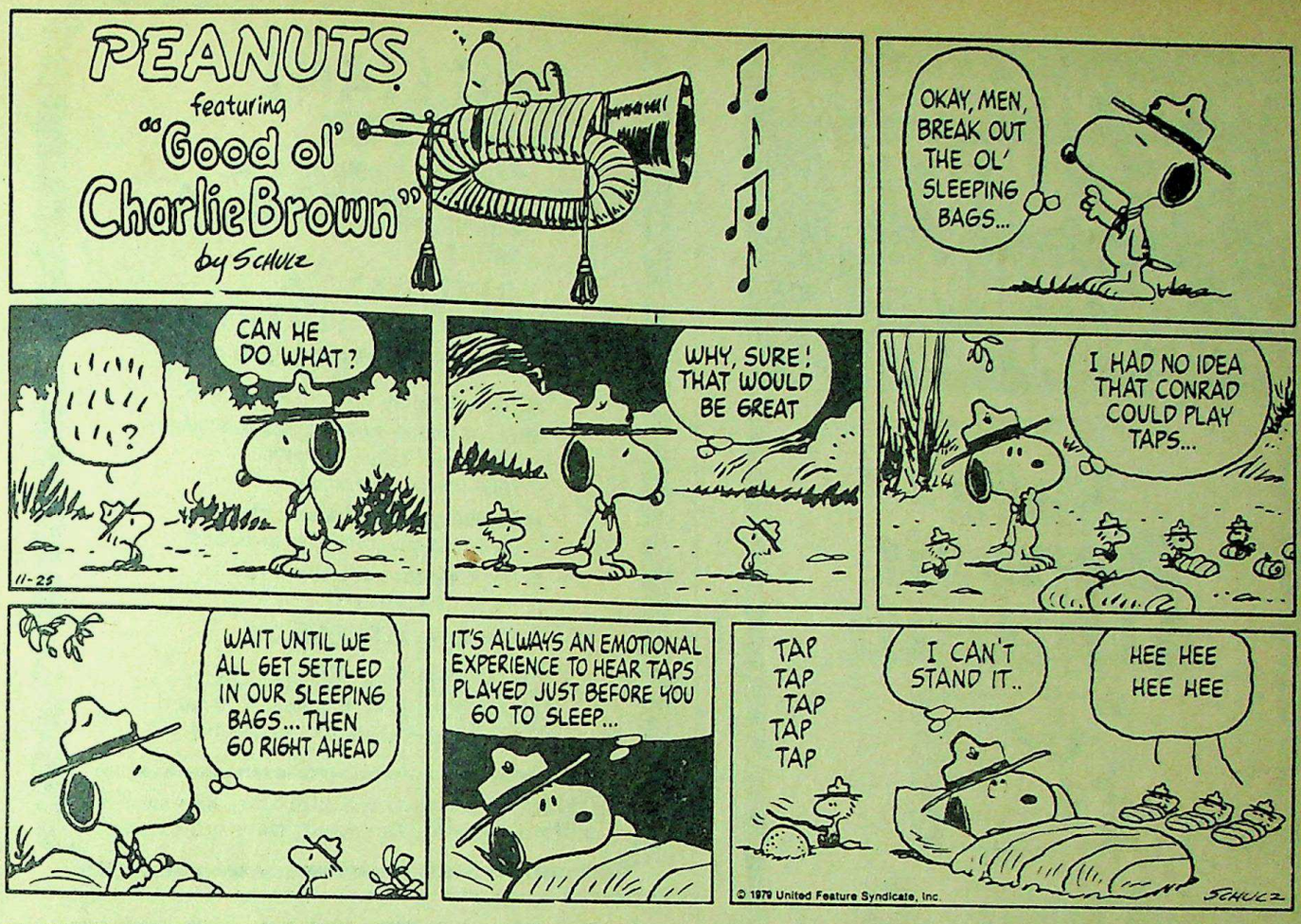

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You've lived too long in the midst of life's hustle bustle. You've worked and worried. Your shoulders are bent with the responsibilities you have carried. Now shadows lengthen and the body yearns for rest. And when grand children clamour for stories and treats, aren't you glad you planned and saved towards this day? Aren't you happy you have all the time in the world for spoiling your grand children and money enough to get them little toys? Money is the last thing on your mind. Your **Nirantara Deposit** with Canara Bank pays you an adequate sum every month. And your capital is intact with Canara Bank for the day you want it. It must have been an auspicious day..... the day you stepped into Canara Bank.

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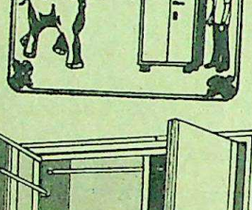

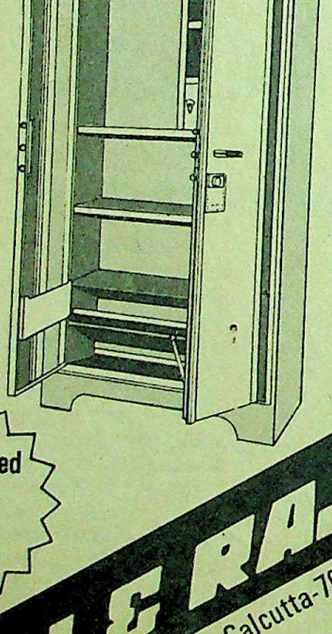

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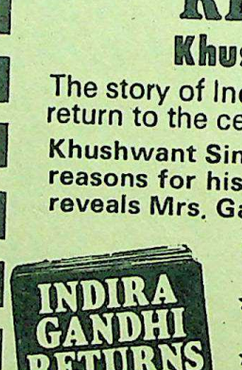

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BOMBAY: "Canards" exploiting human susceptibility to superstition are being spread by "vested interests" to ruin the plastic bangle industry, according to the President of the Plastic Bangle Manufacturers' Association, Mr Bogilal Gandhi. The "insidious campaign" by non-plastic bangle groups would have people believe that the husbands of women wearing plastic bangles and the brothers of spinsters would die, Mr Gandhi told a press conference. The campaign had "spread panic" and hit plastic bangle sales. Mr Gandhi said the association had written to the Prime Minister, Mr Charan Singh, requesting an investigation into the campaign —*The Hindu* (S. Varadarajan, Bhilai)

BANGALORE: At a village in Sirsi taluk of North Kanara district the people do not want to take medicines from a doctor couple posted at the Government dispensary there just because they are Harijans. This was stated by Mr K. H. Ranganath, Agricultural Minister, while inaugurating the Karnataka State convention against authoritarianism and communalism. The Minister decried the attitude of the villagers and said they must give it up. The doctor-couple had been asked to continue to serve the village and had been assured of protection. Husband and wife have to be posted to the same place, according to Government policy—*The Hindu* (S. L. Prasanna Kumar, Bangalore)

RAIPUR: One million of Surguja district's population of 1.3 million in the Chhattisgarh region of MP are yet to see a railway engine, although it was introduced in India 125 years ago. Revealing this to newsmen, Mr Samar Vijay Singh, president of the Surguja Lok Dal, demanded the construction of the 210-km Bushampur (Surguja)-Barudadih (Bihar) railway line, which had been sanctioned by the Janata Government — *Times of India* (K. P. Sharma, Dhanbad)

BROACH: Three kilograms of hair, teeth and bones were removed from the stomach of an Adivasi woman by a surgeon at the Rajpipla hospital near here. The 20-year-old Adivasi woman was admitted to the hospital after she complained of a severe stomach pain. She is reportedly progressing well—*Times of India* (Wasi Bilgrami, Sahibganj)

SHIKARIPUR: A case of a woman living by tea has been reported from a village near here. The only source of sustenance for Shivamma (50) of Begur, near here, for the last 15 years has been tea, it is claimed. Shivamma, who is said to be physically active and works in fields, consumes only a few cups of tea a day, it is said. The case came to light when the woman was admitted to the hospital here for a medical check-up—*Deccan Herald* (H. Munti, Bangalore)

MADRAS: A ruling Party member, Mr Pannal Sethuraman, complained to the Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Assembly that he found a three inch nail in his seat. He displayed the nail and a pencil which he said was also in his seat. The member said that he had found the nail in his seat and that he had ignored it. The Speaker, Mr Munu Adhi, said he would look into the matter, if the member gave a written complaint. The Leader of the House, Mr K. Manoharan, said that the Speaker should acquire the nail and the pencil from the member as they had become the House property—*The Hindu* (V. M. S. Ramakrishnan, Coimbatore)

SONEPUR: A railway engine ran on the track without any driver and derailed after hitting the diesel-tank pipeline which burst and over 6,000 litres of diesel were destroyed. The damage to the locomotive and loss of diesel accounted for a loss of Rs 5 lakhs to the N. E. Railway. An inquiry has been ordered into the accident — *The Indian Nation* (Pradeep Kumar Mathur, Patna)

ROURKELA: An actor playing the role of a constable found himself in the police station here as accused. Seemingly overwhelmed by the applause he received from the audience for depicting exploitation during authoritarian rule, he came out of the stage at the end of the drama without changing his uniform. Finding the superintendent of police without uniform in the crowd, he frivolously tried to arrest him. The SP ordered the police inspector present there to take him to the police staion, where he was charged wih impersonation. When the SP asked for two cups of tea the policemen on duty served only the SP and refused to extend the courtesy to the visiting 'constable'. The 'guest constable' then revealed his identity — Balakrishna Das, an Oriya film actor. The drama was staged by the Ganjam Kala Parishad, Barhampur — *The Statesman* (Rai Mohan Das, Orissa)

Illustration /Ahi Bhusan Malik

without comment

HE (Sikandar Bakht) is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim. He is just a self-centred person — The Imam of Jama Masjid

I AM a fakir, a servant of my God, my country and my community — The Imam of Jama Masjid

I AM not a career politician. I don't want a promotion — Devaraj Urs

INDIA is a very substandard country and Indians have very substandard minds and there can be many approaches to an election. I want to fight the elections in the American style — I. S. Johar

WHEN a minority community asks for its rights it is called communal but when one community denies the minority its rights, it is not accused of being communal — Mohammed Koya, Kerala's Muslim Legaue Chief Minister

FOR the ordinary people of the country, Sanjay is a non-issue — Mrs Gandhi

MR RAJ NARAIN has progressed from bufoonery to insanity — Ram Krishna Hegde

I DON'T feel aged at all. I still have the mind of a child—Bombay film actor, Dharmendra

MOTHER Teresa is proof that a small star's twinkling becomes more noticeable as the night grows darker — *Newsweek*

AS shortterm Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, he (Charan Singh) earned a longterm reputation for despising women — Surendra Mohan

I AM the Raj Narain of the National Party. They can't keep me quiet — I. S. Johar

I ENJOY hitting out and love being hit back — Utpal Dutt, Calcutta theatre personality and film acor

WE have been in the Opposition for years but we did not tear court records ar abuse magistrates— Atal Behari Vajpayee

IF Janata became strong, CPI(M) would have no future — Morarji Desai

I SLEPT a lot. I read a lot of books. I have been eating a lot — too much I think. That takes care of everything — A US Marine on his detention in the US embassy at Teheran, quoted in *The Daily Telegraph*

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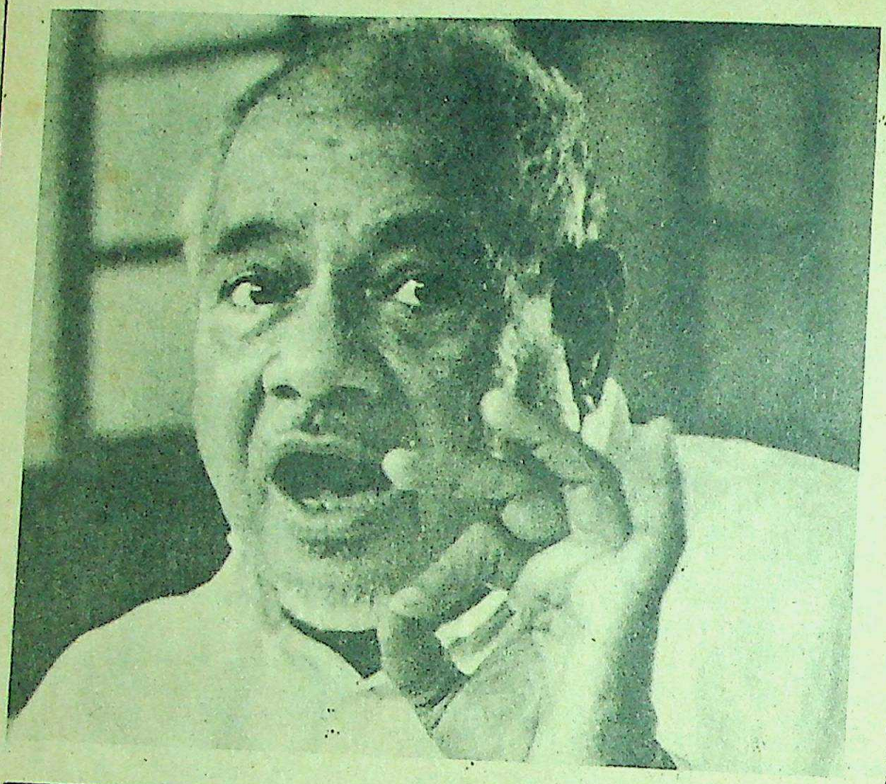

COLD WAR HOTS UP

AS FAR as infighting is concerned, the Lok Dal is hardly any exception to the rule. And its contradictions often become very amusing. The cold war between Chaudhury Charan Singh and Raj Narain is now well known, and these differences were bound to aggravate after the Chaudhury appointed Satpal Malik, his youthful supporter from the BLD days, one of the national secretaries of the Lok Dal. But the man most perturbed by this appointment is not Raj Narain, but G. D. Solanki, the Chaudhury's eldest son-in-law. Solanki and his father-in-law have had a curious love-hate relationship. So far Solanki had been saying that as long as Raj Narain did not leave the Chaudhury, the latter would not get anywhere. But after Malik's appointment, he has turned his attack on Malik, calling him an "agent" in Chaudhury's camp. Solanki is so angry at this appointment that he's gone berserk.

JANATA NOT FAR BEHIND

KRISHAN KANT, the Janata nominee from the Chandigarh seat, friend of Chandra Shekhar from the "young turk" days, and one of the first people in the Janata Party to raise his voice against the RSS, is becoming a symbol of the frustrations of the non-RSS people in the Janata Party. Although his friend and Party leader Chandra Shekhar has given him the Chandigarh seat, the RSS and the Jana Sanghis have not forgiven Krishan Kant for attacking them. And they are determined to see that he is defeated. They have even decided to put up a rebel candidate against him, R. S. Sharma. Sharma, an old RSS hand, was in jail during the Emergency, like the Congress "young turks". But unlike Chandra Shekhar and his friends, Sharma wrote abject letters of apology to the Indira Gandhi Government to come out of jail, in a familiar display of cowardice. But today he is the RSS nominee. When Krishan Kant contacted Vajpayee, Advani and Chandra Shekhar to try and settle this problem he got the same response: 'We did not know...this sort of thing should never happen'. But nobody as yet has done anything except provide lip sympathy for Mr Krishan Kant. Can people like him survive in the Janata Party?

STAR WARS

AND the chase for star support continues. The National Party newly created by the Bombay film industry, which drew respectable crowds in Bombay, seems to have aligned itself with the Janata Party: and the leadership of Babu Jagjivan Ram is the main reason for that. One cannot think of a single star supporting the Lok Dal-Congress alliance. But Mrs Gandhi has her supporters in the celluloid world too, the most prominent being Nargis and Sunil Dutt. And of course, Amitabh Bachchan is a personal friend of the Gandhi family. To gather more stars on her side, Mrs Gandhi sent Arvind Kumar, former editor of *Madhuri*. He conveyed this message: forget the Emergency, let us be friends again. One does not know yet how well Mr Arvind Kumar succeeded.

BATTLE OF THE BOTTLE

BELIEVE it or not, the contest in the South Delhi constituency is not really between the Congress(I) and the Janata, but between Coca Cola and 77. The reason: the Congress(I) candidate is Charanjit Singh, whose firm used to bottle and market Coca Cola before the Janata Government axed the drink out of the country. Charanjit Singh's workers condemn this decision and promise the voters of their constituency that they will bring back Coca Cola if they are sent to power; the Janata workers defend the birth of Double Seven. Let's see which drink suits the electorate's palate better.

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

MOHAMMAD Yunus's book *Persons, passions and politics*, which hits out sharply at a number of Delhi journalists, has created quite a stir in the capital. But what has intrigued many is the fact that nowhere in his book has Yunus criticised Mrs Uma Vasudev who wrote an adulatory biography of Mrs Indira Gandhi but as soon as Mrs Gandhi was shunted out of power, did a volte face and wrote a sharply critical book called *Two faces of Indira Gandhi*. According to an insider, the reason for Yunus's silence on Mrs Vasudev is that she was the ghost writer of his book. While Khan Saheb's proficiency in Urdu is well known, written English has never been his forte. Khan Saheb was once called by P. N. Haskar "a brainless wonder created by Indira Gandhi."

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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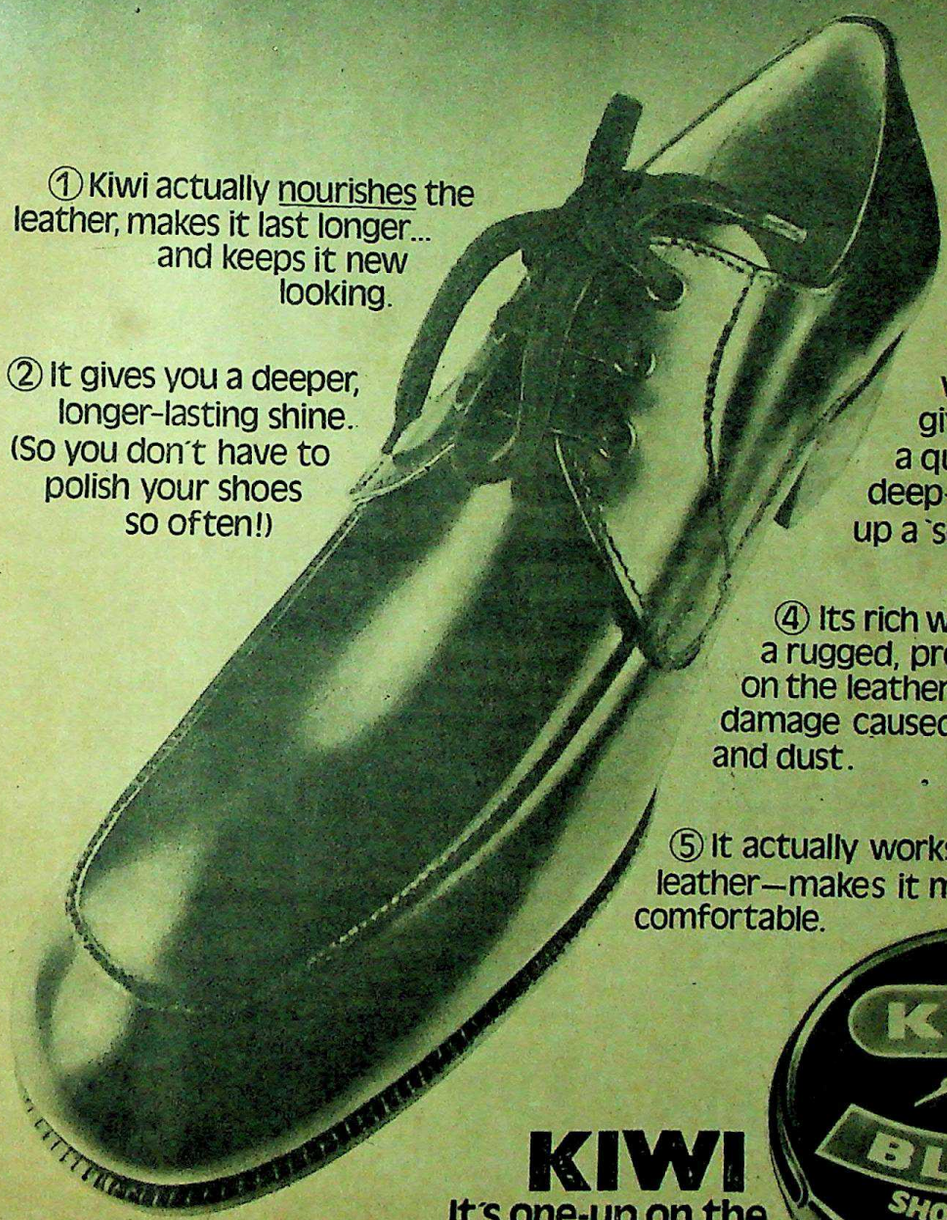

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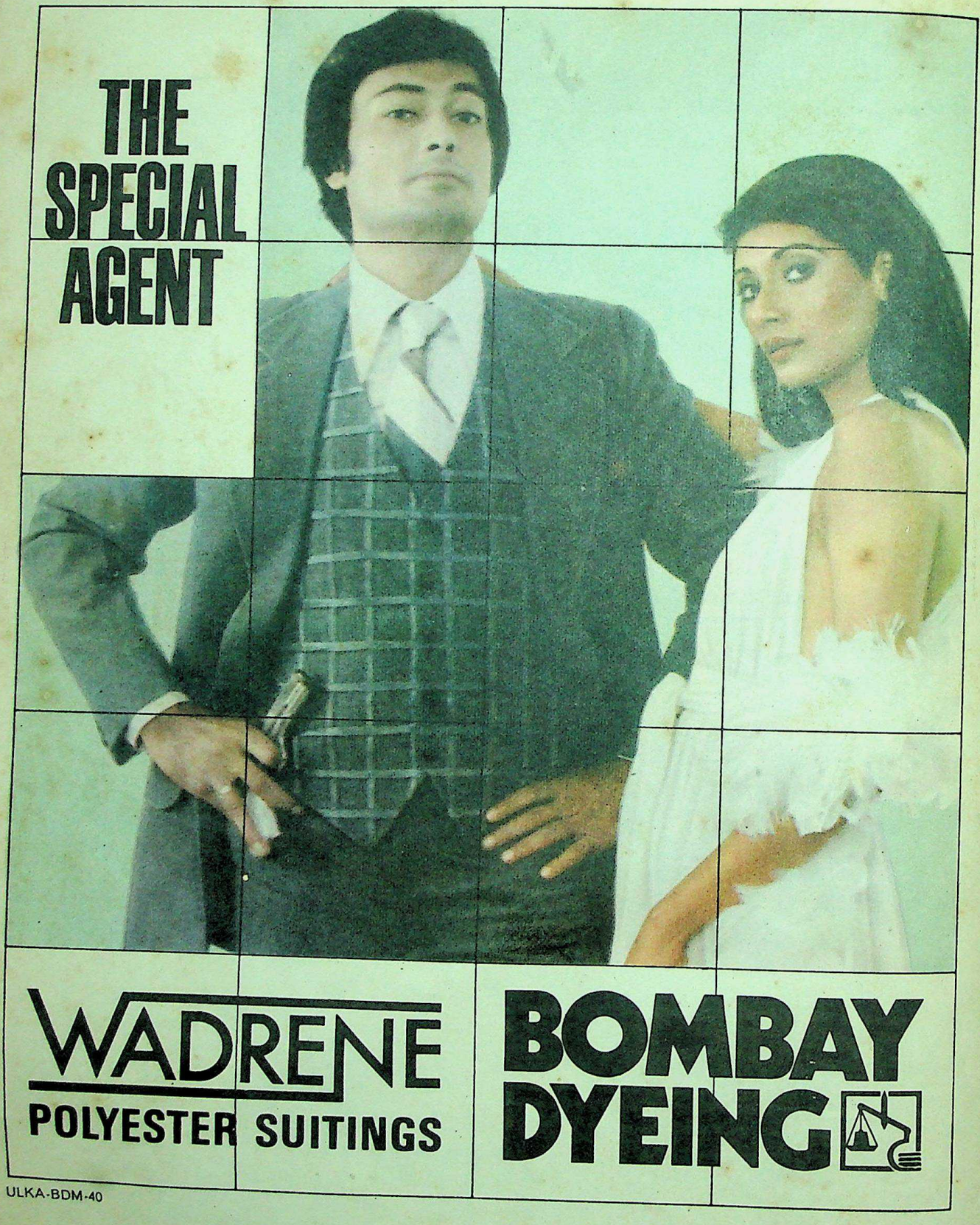

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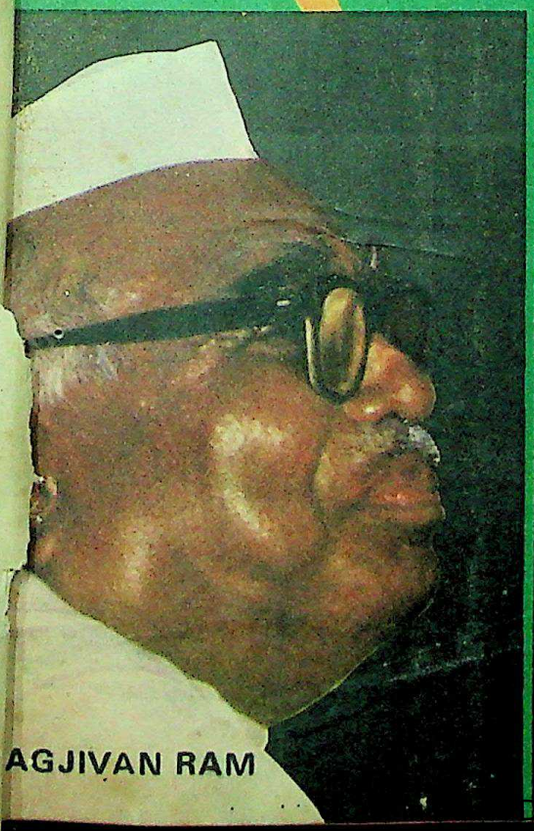

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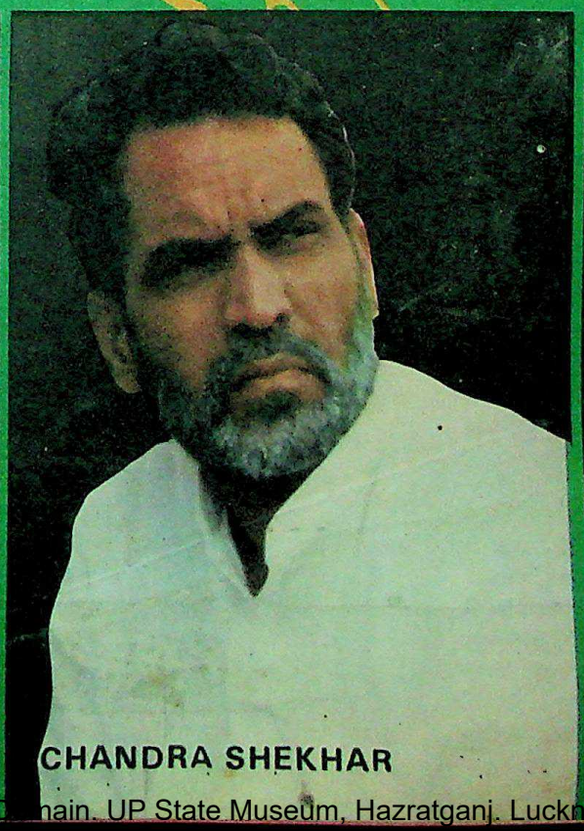
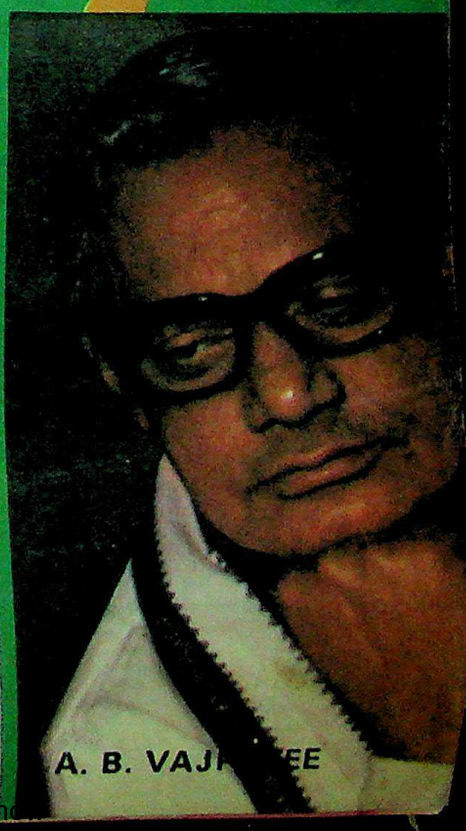


CHANDRA SHEKHAR



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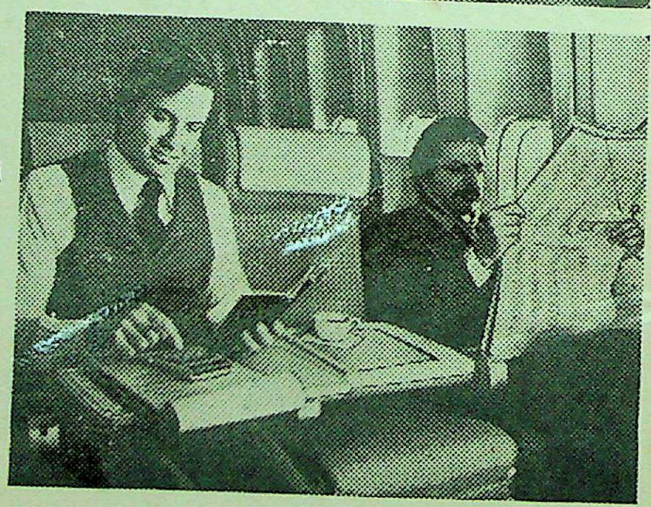

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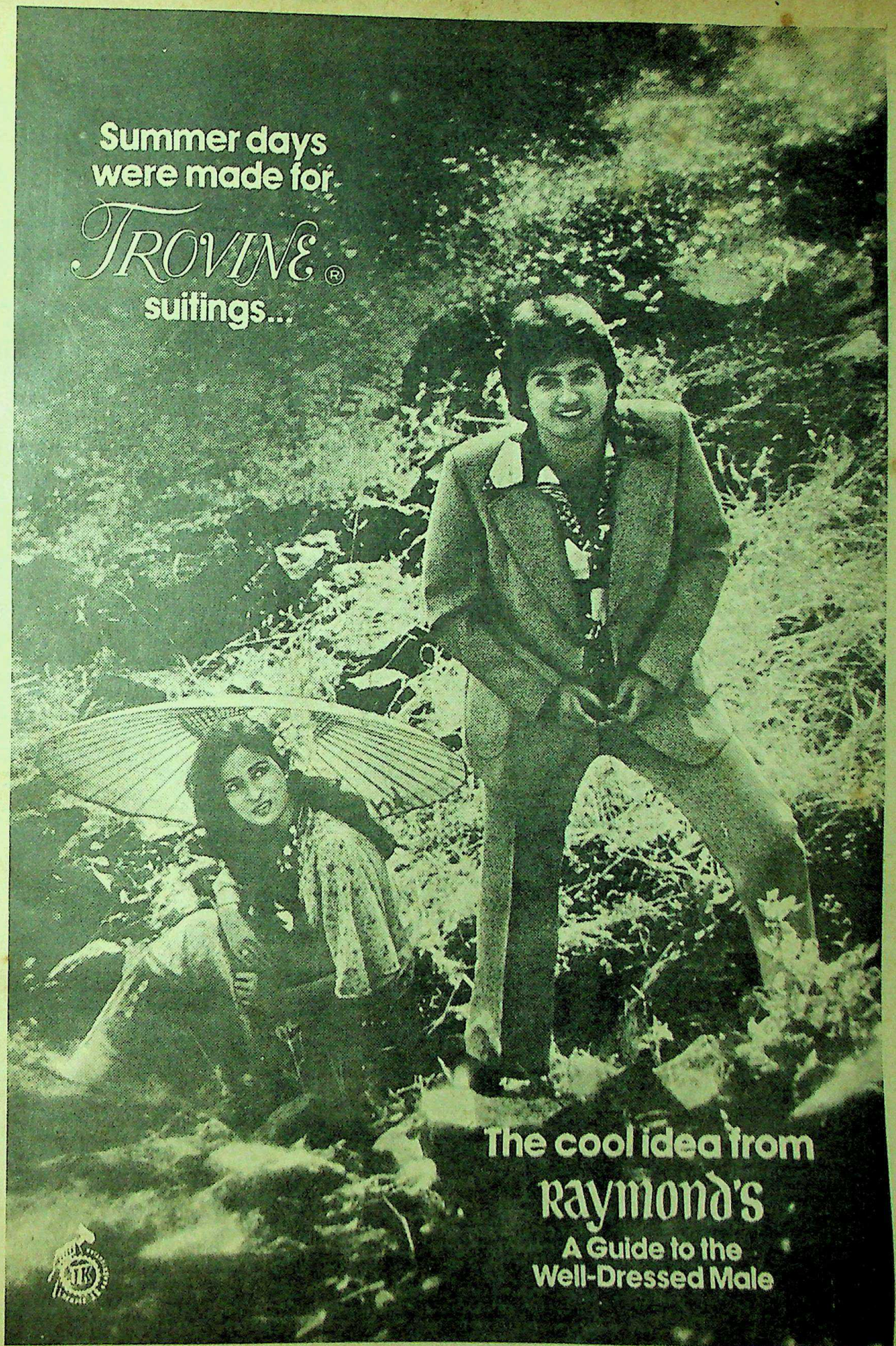

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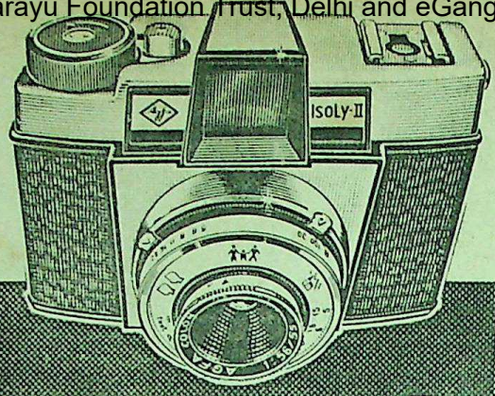
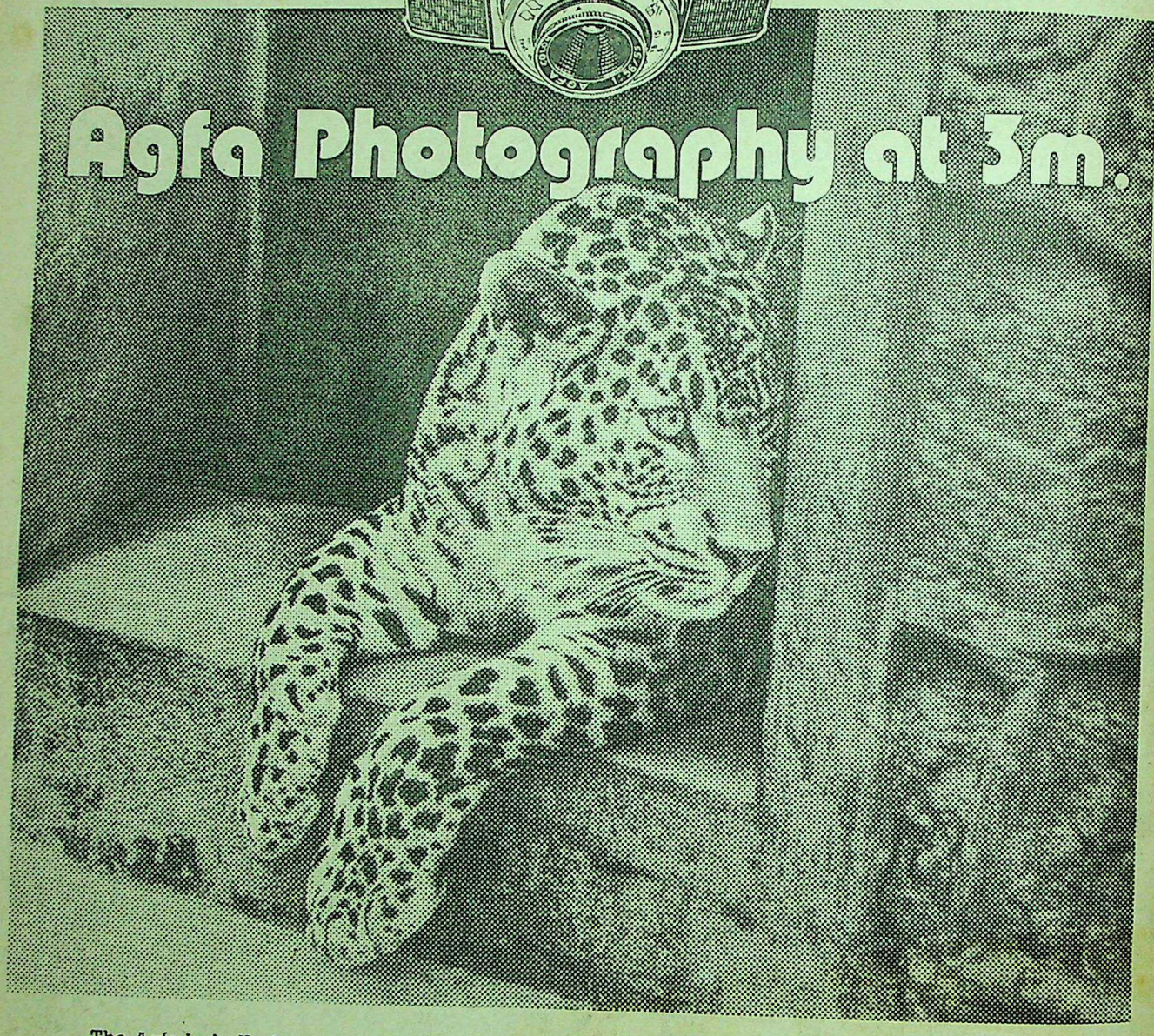


Agfa Photography at 3m.



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An ever increasing range of colours, designs,
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BINNY
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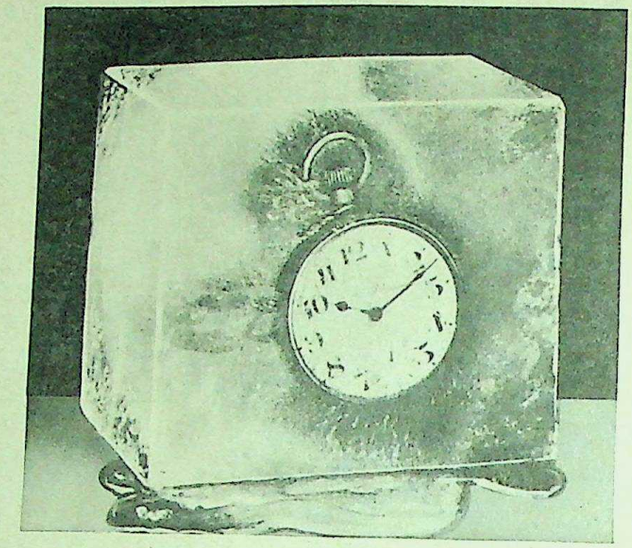
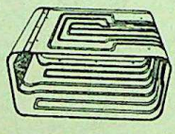
The Quicker Cooler!

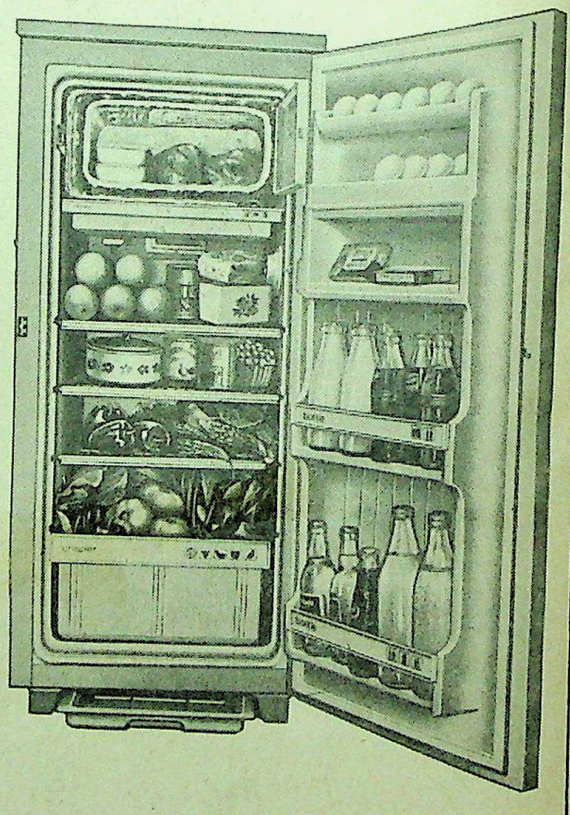


Allwyn Prince 165

Only Allwyn has the Roll-Bond Freezer. For faster, more efficient cooling. Time it and see!



Our Roll Bond Freezer is absolutely unique. Here the cooling tubes are not placed outside the freezer as in other fridges. They're integrated into the freezer walls. Naturally, cooling takes place much faster. Ice cubes form much quicker. And the overall operating efficiency of the compressor is significantly improved. Today, only Allwyn offers you this feature. That's why it's called the Quicker Cooler.



Other advanced Allwyn features are:

- Auto-defrost with a self-draining tray
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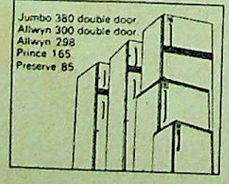
- Free laminated table top

And remember this: Allwyn is the only Indian fridge with over 30 years of experience behind it.



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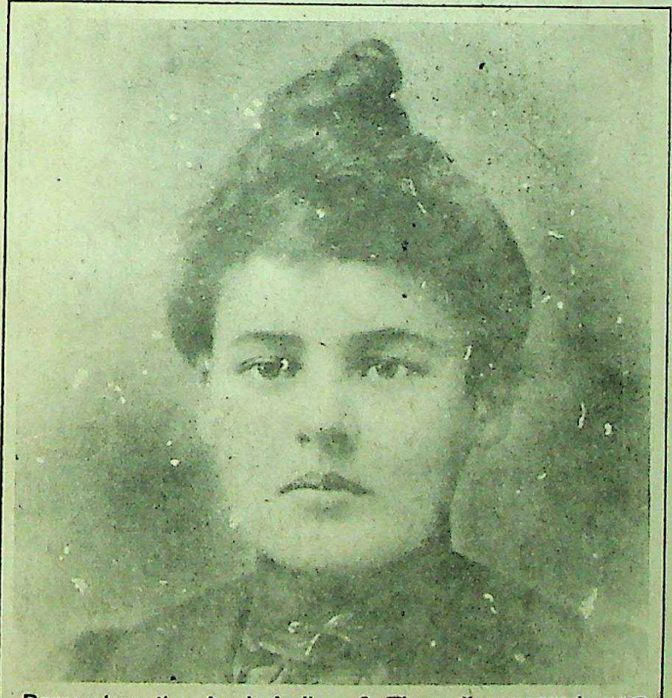
SUNDAY VOLUME 7
ISSUE 37
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

March 16, 1980

The Janata seems to be totally devoid of any survival instincts. And as it splits again with the departure of Babuji, the opposition seems hell-bent to self-destruct.
Where does Chandra Shekhar stand ?
What are the underlying socio-economic causes ?
What are Babuji's plans ?



Remember the Anglo-Indians ? They disappeared even as they dug roots. The railways, customs, police and major ports were formerly their happy hunting grounds. Today they survive only in schools and hospitals. But they have done themselves proud in the armed forces. Why did they ever leave ?

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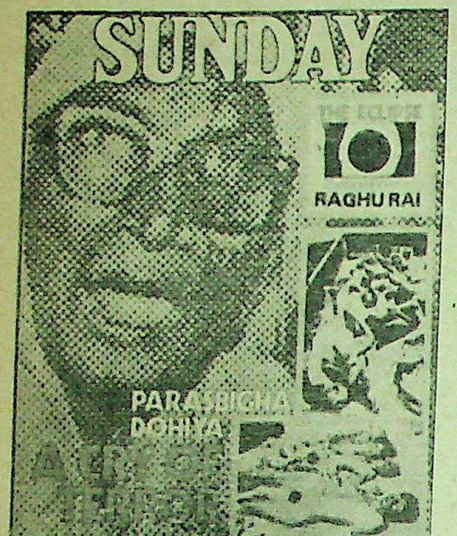

Caste kills

THIS refers to your cover story on Parasbigha and Dohiya by Saumitra Banerjee and Arun Ranjan ("A cry of terror", February 17) I feel the Government and other political organisations should try to identify the root cause of such sad incidents: how do meek and simple villagers turn suddenly violent? One thing is clear—that Bihar is irretrievably divided on caste lines, and this is helping the feudal lords. A similar incident occurred later at Punpun, in Pipra village on February 25. All those attacked were harijans again.
Anil Kumar Ojha, Motihari.

RECENT happenings at Parasbigha and Doniya have seriously threatened the very foundations of democracy and the federal structure: if the state governments fail to discharge their own duties of preserving law and order, the people will be bound to lose confidence in them and naturally turn to the Centre for redress.
Gautam Kumar Sinha, Calcutta.

THE report mentions that the Supreme Court's verdict was dishonoured by Ram Niranjan Sharma, who was murdered. What action did the Bihar Government take to protect the Court's verdict? If such action had been taken, I am sure the gruesome murder would not have occured. After all, it is the duty of the Government. Central or State, to implement court orders. It is useless spending taxpayers' money on law courts if their verdicts are dishonoured by the governments themselves.
Randendra Mukherjee, Siliguri.

WHAT really surprises me is that in a country which gave birth to humanists like Kabir, Guru Nanak, Sankardev and Vivekananda human life itself seems worthless. We Indians claim to be a pious people, in spite of genocides committed repeatedly in the name of caste, religion and language. In reality, it is vested interests that are to blame for all these. Opportunists who call themselves leaders are gambling with the lives of innocent citizens.
Prateep Sen Gupta, Digboi.

THOUGH caste hatred has a major role in the butchery, the fact is that as long as India remains a Party-based democracy, nothing can rid her of this cancerous social trait. The possibility of communists exploiting the situation is also imminent.
K. S. Raman, New Delhi.

THE memory of Parasbigha had hardly faded when Pipra was in flames. Again harijans were the victims of this carnage. It is said Pipra is an area infested with Naxalites and criminals. The harijans were persecuted by them since long.
Khan Basera, Patna.

See our Pipra report—Editor

JUST as I was reading your cover story on Parasbigha and Dohiya. I came to know about the incident at Pipra. Quite irrationally, I started counting on my fingers the number of carnages Bihar had seen in a brief one year.
Chandrashekhar Dubey, Bhagalpur.

Reason eclipsed

I HAVE gone through the reports on the eclipse by Raghu Rai, Nirmal Mitra and Ajoy Bose. The display of ignorance and stupidity on the occasion of the total solar eclipse by even men in responsible positions has made us the laughing stock of the civilised world. Pseudo-scientific reports on the hazards of watching the eclipse in the Press and the radio created a situation of near-panic. During the eclipse, streets were deserted as people everywhere shut themselves indoors. And we talk of nuclear energy and space research!
Gautam Kumar Sinha, Calcutta.

RAGHU RAI's photographs of the eclipse were excellent. The text by Mr Mitra describes beautifully the setting and impressions of the eventful day at Konarak.
Shirsanka, Calcutta.

MR MITRA has successfully brought out the anti-social and irrational nature of the practice of "pollution" among caste-conscious Hindus. It is also clear that All India Radio was more keen on propagating religious fallacies rather than presenting scientific explanations. It would be pertinent to quote Bertrand Russell: "Fear is the main source of superstition and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom, in the pursuit of truth as in the endeavour after a worthy manner of life."
V. A. Poonkodi Selvan, Thiruvaiyaru.

THE eclipse provided welcome relief for those of us fed up with politics. This 'celestial loadshedding' eclipsed all the contemporary brouhaha, from Ayatollah Khomeini to Assam aliens. In one of his brilliant essays, "On comets", Bertrand Russell wrote about man's curiosity in the past over the "appearance" and "disappearance" of comets. The fact is comets never appear or disappear. They are made to by superstitious men.
Roma and Arindam Ghosh, Nagpur.

Blurred images

MY attention has been drawn to "The TV Spots Muddle" (February 3). I am surprised to note that a publication of the Ananda Bazar Group, which has a matchless reputation for observing the highest ethical standards in the profession of journalism has allowed the publication of baseless and malicious insinuations under the garb of comment. It is most surprising that the editor did not screen the article before actual publication.

I am not concerned with what Ashish Rajadhyaksha has written about others but as far as the National Council of Advertising Agencies (NCAA) of which I happen to be the President, is concerned, it is a most respectable and fully recognised organisation. All the 46 agencies which are members of NCAA are accredited to the IENS as well as the Government of India. No single non-recognised agency is a full-fledged or associate member of NCAA. NCAA is also the only professional body that organised the National Advertising Congress in India most successfully. It is singularly dedicated to the cause of raising the standards of advertising in India. Therefore, the insinuations of the author with regard to NCAA are wholly unjustified and uncalled for.
Vishwanath, President, The National Council of Advertising Agencies, New Delhi.

Ashish Rajadhyaksha replies: 1) Almost all the agencies known to have struck it rich after the new accreditation rules do in fact belong to the National Council of Advertising Agencies. 2) The NCAA has refused to support the Advertising Agencies Association of India in fighting a policy that is demonstrably detrimental to the interests of all above-board agencies, small or big. 3) The imposing sounding number of 46

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members that the NCAA talks of contains practically none of the more reputed agencies, and the combined billing of all 46 cannot be over 10 per cent of the total business placed with the media annually, some 130 crores.

One is not trying to say that the 46 agencies do not have a right to start their own organisation. One is not—and this is important—trying to side with the AAAI in anything more than the limited pointed of the particular issue. In fact, lack of space forbade me from writing some more about the erstwhile racketeering of the very people who are so righteously renouncing corruption in the new system.

Instead of so righteously accusing me of 'baseless and malicious insinuations' and similar high rhetoric Mr Vishwanath might well have spent his time more fruitfully by explaining just why his group has refused to side with the AAAI. At least that might have put to rest the suspicion that the only reason could be the benefits the new system appears to offer some of its 46 members.

THE article has focused very effectively the racket going on at Bombay and Delhi Doordarshan in regard to the time allotted for the commercial advertisements and the priority in bookings. As alleged in the article, it is very shocking that the I and B Ministry is giving a boost to such backdoor methods of booking advertisements. We, on behalf of the viewers, small manufacturers and small agencies demand an enquiry. Members of the opposition Parties in Parliament should also ask for a thorough enquiry and help stop this menace, otherwise the genuine and small agencies which do not want to be a part of such tactics may suffer. Ultimately the middle and small manufacturers will find it very difficult to advertise their products with a limited budget.

Nikhil Buch, Convener, Bombay Doordarshan Darshak Sangh, Bombay.

THE article is obviously 'sponsored' and is a crude attempt by the few big advertising agencies to pressurise the authorities to end the 'time rationing' scheme so that the monopolistic strangehold of the agencies over TV commercials is perpetuated. That the author has indulged in lies and half-truths is evident from the following: Neither the author nor anybody else visited our firm, ADWEL, nor have we ever offered to "manage" bookings with *Chitrahaar* out of turn to any advertisers; the author alleges that agencies like ours sprang up only during 1979 when the booking position of TV commercials became very acute. In fact, ADWEL got accreditation in 1975 and prior to 1979 ADWEL booking of TV commercials was about Rs five lakhs a year. It is now only about Rs two lakhs; the article says that ADWEL specialises in outdoor advertising like hoardings. Is it a crime or is there any ban that outdoor agencies cannot do TV advertising. It will 'shock' the author to know that some of our Radio and TV Spots have won appreciation from even advertisers whose accounts are being handled by big agencies; and we do not know anything about ADWEL being a member of NCAA which, according to the author, has been formed by the 'inner circle of agencies'.

The booking already sent by five big agencies for April 1980 totals up to more time than the total time available over TV commercials. This fact alone demonstrates that the monopoly racket of big agencies must be busted by schemes like 'time rationing'. Small agencies and advertisers warn the I and B Ministry to be aware of such blackmailing attempts because already the Ministry has succumbed, wittingly or unwittingly to the lobbying by the big agencies by deciding to double the telecasting charges for Still Spots—a policy which may squeeze out both the small agencies and advertisers from doing TV commercials because most of the Still Spots are booked by them.

D. Sabharwal, ADWEL, Delhi.

What next?

THE book review "Domes of fortune" in the February 17 issue was marvellous. Is your next pick the "Pillars of glory"?

Chandra Shekhar, Allahabad.

I HAD occasion to go through Alan Brien's book, "Domes of fortune" some pictures from which were brought out in SUNDAY under the heading "Keeping abreast of the times". The book is a narrative of the varieties of female breasts as seen from different angles. In Sanskrit classics, especially Kalidas's *Kumarasambhawan* and Vatsyayan's *Kamasutra*, the description of female breasts in far more captivating. At one point it is said that when Brahma (the creator) conceived of the idea of creating woman, he prepared a compound after decades of research, and lovingly named it *Saunaaryam* (beauty). After shaping all other parts of the female form, he was still left with some matter that he thought of using in the best possible way. He pondered for a while, smiled, moulded the matter into two bowls, and stuck them on two sides of the woman's chest. He gazed at the creation and admired it. Nowhere has the prominence and charm of female breasts been better described as in Indian classics. No less immortal than the poets were the gifted yet unsung sculptors who carved their dream figures in stone. Breasts display all the varied charms of womanhood. Brien's book failed to bring this impression through.

Shivanath Prasad, Muzaffarpur.

Brute force

MY blood boiled as I read the report "Brutality at Narainpur" (February 10) about the murders, rape and other acts of barbarism by the police of Independent India. The incident will remain a black spot in the history of the Indian Police force, which is notorious for its brutality, corruption and partisanship, anyway. The atrocities by caste Hindus on the landless harijans were definitely committed with the active connivance of the police. The reason for such behaviour is perhaps a belief that no government will ever take action

K. Ramu, Bangalore.

THE Narainpur outrage was far worse than any communal or caste riot. Here the guardians of law and order were the criminals. Policemen, especially those belonging to the UP Provincial Armed Constabulary, are notorious for criminal activities. In her book *Reason Ruined*, Primila Lewis, who was once a prisoner of the Delhi Police, gives an authentic first-hand account of police barbarities, including the rape of petty women criminals. Cruelty is a general rule with the police all over the country,

Kuntala Datta, Calcutta.

Maiden show

PIOUSJI writes in Khaas Baat (December 30, 1979) about Hema Malini that: "...she had bared her pretty shoulders for her very first film *Sapnon ka Saudagar*". Incidentally, this was not Hema's first film. Her first film was in Tamil: *Ethu Sakhyam*, made in 1962 when she was a girl of 14 (born October 16, 1948).

Samir Kumar Sutradhar, Khutapura.

Fun? None

THE total of the digits of 1980 is nine. Add nine to the total of the digits of any number and you will get the same result. There will be no difference. The "interesting feature" ("Fun with numbers", Opinion, February 70) Mr Ghosh has noticed is not true for 1980 alone but any year whose digital total is nine. Judging by the standard of the brainteaser, I shouldn't be surprised to see you publish ones like: "Think up a number add eight to it, subtract eight, and you get the same number."

T. S. Venkataramani, Madras.

"FUN with numbers" was not fun for me. One should know that all pure numbers are between zero and nine. The rest are combinations of these numbers. Hence, adding any digit with nine will always add up to the same number: thus 9 plus one equals 10, and one plus zero is one.

Jagdish Rawat, Kanpur.

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Withering away of the Janata

BY KEWAL VARMA

THE Janata is a strange creature. It quarrels when in power, it splits when out of power. It has disproved two common theories : power is a great cementing force and adversity makes strange bed-fellows. This fact alone should be enough to prove that there must be some important socio-economic reasons for even the residual Janata to split.

The tragedy of well-wishers of the Janata is that it is sought to be kept together on the basis of only democracy. In 1980, democracy alone cannot be the basis of a political Party. It could have been, had complete social, economic and political tranquillity been prevailing in the country. But it is not. In many areas, the conflict of interests between different social groups has assumed such proportions that it is not possible to harmonise the interests. Such conflicts can be resolved in favour of those sections which succeed in capturing political power. Parties are instruments to capture power and democracy is the framework in which this power is used. It is also a painful reality that with 48 to 50 per cent of the people living below the poverty line and with an aggressive social order under which Harijans are burnt alive and culprits go scot free, democracy has little meaning for a majority of our people.

While democracy alone cannot become the basis of a political Party, it can certainly become the basis of a movement. It is said that the return of Mrs Gandhi has once again made democracy a central issue in India. This is, perhaps, an over reaction. With Mrs Gandhi winning the elections, there are many who would like to give her the benefit of the doubt. But if democracy is visibly threatened again, what prevents different political Parties, otherwise pursuing antagonistic social and economic goals but committed to the democratic framework, from coming together to defend democracy? In the period between 1975-77 the CPI(M) joined hands with staunch anti-Communists like P. C. Sen but they parted company soon after Mrs Gandhi was out of power. A political Party is more than a movement. It is possible to build up a movement on a one-point programme, but a political Party has to have homogeneous social and political objectives on a number of important issues to stay together. Babuji, whom the "democratic" Press all of a sudden wants to reduce to a political "untouchable", was sharing his inner thoughts when he said : "After the general elections (1977), I had misgivings about the viability of the Janata Party. I reasoned that people belonging to such disparate groups as had come together to form the Janata Party with only one common objective of overthrowing the Emergency regime would not stay together for very long."

In retrospect, it would not be proper to blame Charan Singh's personal ambitions alone for the split in the Janata. His personal ambitions could predominate those of the Janata Party only when this coverged with three other factors : a big fall in the prices of agricultural produce, articulation of backward castes-upper castes conflicts and a spate of communal riots. For two years, 1977 and 1978, the peasants

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had been the loser in sharing the national cake as the prices of their produce were falling and the prices of manufactured goods they had to buy, were increasing. In fact, the Janata Party split on the day the farmers had to sell their potato at 10 paise a kilo and burn their standing sugarcane crops. In this situation, if Charan Singh had not split the Janata, he would have been politically finished. Similarly, with the sharpening of caste conflicts and total alienation of Muslims from the Janata, it was only prudent to react to the issues, rather than remain passive.

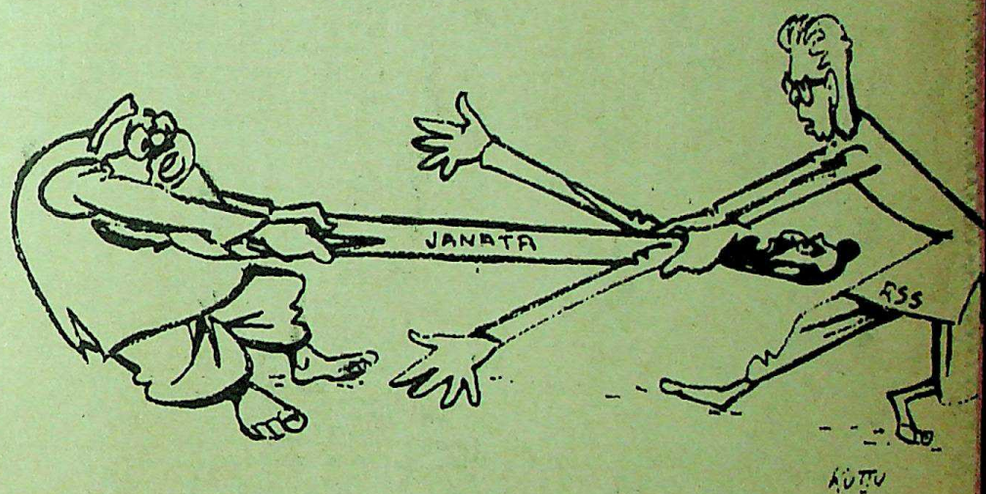
EVEN the formation of the Janata Party was a strange quirk of history. The disparate groups which formed the Janata Party had been, for decades, pursuing antagonistic social and economic objectives. These were the Jana Sangh which had Hindu rashtra as its ideological cornerstone, the Congress (O) which was formed to give a rightist slant to economic policies, the Swatantra which had been unashamedly pro-capitalist and pro-price rise, the BLD whose sole preoccupation was to promote the interests of peasant proprietors, the Lohia Socialist group which consisted of militant social democrats and the PSP which was an insipid social democratic Party. There were some individuals like Jagjivan Ram, Chandra Shekhar and H. N. Bahuguna, who were broadly left-of-centre politicians ploughing their lonely furrows. They came together primarily because they were prepared to compromise to an extent to capture power. This, however, did not necessarily mean that the social forces they were representing had also got tired and were ready to sacrifice their interests.

When these Parties faced difficulties under the Emergency, JP influenced them and superimposed on them a confused, vague and hypocritical slogan of 'total revolution'. The 1974 and 1975 upsurge against Mrs Gandhi in Bihar and Gujarat in essence was a backlash against feudal and semi-feudal forces resulting from the signals given to tamper with the system. Then, once the dust settled down, it was not difficult for Mrs Gandhi to reclaim Gujarat. If she has not been so successful in Bihar, it is because in the meantime the backward castes have become more articulate. JP, irrespective of the social forces which those agitations strengthened, jumped into the fray to utilise the movement to serve his Utopian objective of 'total revolution.' In 1974, in the course of a discussion, JP admitted that landless Harijans, poor peasants and the working class had not joined his Bihar movement. He also admitted that students who are mostly from the upper castes and landed classes were in the forefront of the movement. In the villages, invariably the largest landholder was the supporter of the JP movement. When questioned on how he could achieve total revolution with such forces behind him, he got annoyed and said : "Let me first capture political power then I will outmanoeuvre them." No wonder, JP died a frustrated man. This is the tragedy and fate of all those who consider themselves to be above social forces.

Look at Babuji. He admitted that all along he had strong reservations against the RSS. But he said : "I had reasoned that if I possessed the necessary leverage to implement the socio-economic programme of the Janata Party, in case it came to power after the elections, I would be in a position to check and contain the unhealthy trend of the people who lacked in commitment towards their programme". No tears need be shed for Babuji for his self-deception, not to speak of the wide benefit of the doubt granted him in assuming that he ever seriously bothered about such things.

Of all the groups which formed the Janata Party, only two, the Lok Dal and the Jana Sangh are sure of their independent strength. Hence they have been continuously working to see that their distinct social support base is not obliterated in the elusive search to form a national party embracing all classes. The Lok Dal resolved its dilemma by walking out of the Janata Party. The Jana Sangh has been postponing the decision, partly in the hope of capturing the whole of the Janata Party and partly because its top leadership, particularly, Atal Behari Vajpayee and L. K. Advani have been paralysed by the conflict between their heart and head. In cooler moments they realise that the RSS ideology has reached a dead end, but because of sentiments or lack of conviction, they cannot break away from the RSS. So we see an interesting situation. Vajpayee writes an article, then goes to Nagpur and apologises. Advani asserts, "I am proud of my RSS association", yet he cannot stop the RSS from working openly against his colleague in the national executive, Mr Krishna Kant, and then at first agreeing that the Jana Sangh leaders will not participate in RSS activities and later going back on it. No wonder in this situation even their best friend in the Janta Party, Chandra Shekhar, has turned against them.

THE position of Jana Sangh elements becomes more anomalous with the RSS continuing to poke its nose in purely political matters. Much has been said about Balasaheb Deoras' tilt towards Mrs Gandhi. Take another sensitive political issue—the agitation in Assam. RSS leaders have been going to Assam and trying to give a communal twist to the agitation. It issued an official statement that Bengali Muslims should be thrown out and not Bengali Hindus. In fact, the RSS stamp is so deeply imprinted on Jana Sangh leaders that in an unguarded moment even a liberal leader like Atal Behari Vajpayee reveals his RSS colours. He virtually said that the Janata failed because it fielded Babuji and the country is not prepared to accept a Harijan as Prime Minister. There are a hundred and one good reasons why the Janata failed. Perhaps the most important was that its secular credentials were not accepted because of the Jana Sangh. Similarly, the personal factor which went against Babuji was not that he was a Harijan but the impression he gave on the eve of the elections that he might defect to Mrs Gandhi's camp. But Vajpayee, with his brahminical bias instilled in him by the RSS ideology, finds fault with Babuji on the ground that he is a Harijan!



Many self-appointed "mujahids of democracy" feel pained at the articu-

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A last desperate act

EVER since the results of the mid-term polls spelt doom for the Janata Party, Babu Jagjivan Ram had been thinking of the possibility of forming a new Party. It is true that the ageing leader had never been comfortable in the Janata since the very day he joined the Party. But Babuji's innate inertia to make a move and his obsession to become Prime Minister had always held him back.

After Morarji Desai resigned from Prime Ministership in July, last year, Babuji had made a strong bid to replace him but Charan Singh beat him to the post. When Babuji with the help of Mrs Indira Gandhi managed to force the Chaudhury to resign in August 1979, fate in the guise of President Sanjeeva Reddy thwarted him again.

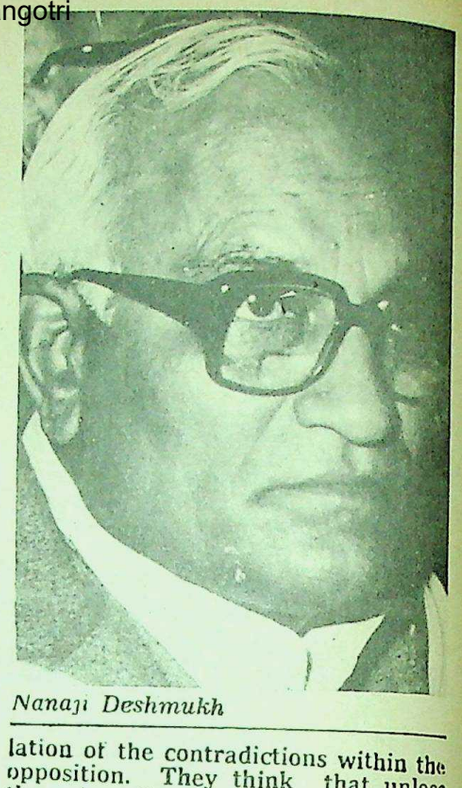
There was still some hope for the Janata Party to come to power in the mid-term polls. Although there was tremendous pressure from his son, Suresh Kumar, to come to an understanding with Mrs. Gandhi, Babuji after a lot of prevarication which gave jitters to the Janata, finally decided to stay on in the Party. It was only after the Janata rout in the polls, that Babuji's hopes were dashed. There was very little left for him to continue in the Janata. After being paraded as the only able national leader, who could lead the country, Babuji was reduced by the poll results to the favourite 'whipping boy' of various Janata politicians since he had failed to deliver the goods. Frustrated in his quest for power and humiliated every day by his Party colleagues, Babuji got increasingly desperate to leave the Janata. One alternative was to join the Congress (I) and Suresh Kumar met Sanjay Gandhi a number of times to work out some arrangement

After one of Babuji's chief lieutenants, Bhajan Lal, crossed over with his Government in Haryana, there was speculation about a similar move by Babuji. But Jagjivan Ram had no Government to cross over with. Consequently, his bargaining power with Mrs. Gandhi was not much. In fact, Mrs. Gandhi was shrewd enough to realise that Babuji would be of much more use to her as a Trojan Horse inside the Janata than as a member of her Party which already had innumerable contenders for power and position. The example of Bahuguna also weighed heavily on the mind of Babuji and must have vitally influenced his final decision. Even if Babuji himself could accept the post of a figurehead in the Congress, Suresh Kumar was not ready to kill his own political future so soon. The meeting of Babuji's supporters in late February also revealed that not many members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha would follow him to the Congress (I). Even bitter critics of the RSS like Ram Dhan and Krishna Kant came out against leaving the Janata Party hastily.

But there was no way Babuji could stay on in the Party any longer. His attempts to raise the dual membership issue had failed to draw support from the anti-RSS group itself inside the Party. Most members of the Janata had some reservation or the other about the RSS but nearly all were reluctant to be associated with Babuji as well. The announcement by Babuji disassociating himself from the Janata, therefore, was the move of a desperate man who neither had a support base nor enough moral credibility. For the moment, it is highly unlikely that more than ten MPs would join Babuji's Party. Of these ten, seven are members of the Rajya Sabha of whom four will retire in March, 1980.

Babuji's attempts to draw people from other political Parties have not been particularly successful so far. Although, there are some in the Congress (U) like Rajni Patel, Priyaranjan Das Munshi and Purabi Mukherjee who would like to unite with Babuji, important leaders like Y. B. Chavan and even Congress President Devaraj Urs are extremely reluctant to go along with Jagjivan Ram. There is, of course, no question of any association with the Lok Dal, since according to Babuji, Chaudhury Charan Singh is his worst enemy, even more than the RSS. The Left Front has been cautiously optimistic about the formation of a new Party by Babuji, but apart from the odd electoral adjustment for the Assembly elections, they are not expected to associate too much with it. For the moment, the emergence of Suresh Kumar on the political horizon will be a major aspect of Babuji's Party. According to sources close to Babuji, he will be given an important position in the Party and will look after the organisation.

AJOY BOSE



Nanaji Deshmukh

lation of the contradictions within the opposition. They think that unless there is a Congress-type all-India, all-class Party, Mrs Gandhi's challenge cannot be met. Mrs Gandhi is certainly a big beneficiary of the historical legacy of the nationalist movement. The Congress had retained substantially its multi-class support base for a number of years after Independence. The first signs of a big erosion in this base became visible in 1967. The lost ground was sought to be revived in 1969. However, the 1971, 1977 and 1980 election results have proved that the committed support base of the Congress has considerably shrunk. If it won the elections in 1971 and 1980 it was because of a wave and floating votes. These floating votes can desert the Congress (I) as easily as they came over to it. The Congress of today has been most shabbily put together by Mrs Gandhi and her son. Such an organisation will be swept off its feet in the event of a mild adverse current. Further, a party which is sought to be made a pale version of the Congress will not be durable. Janata's additional handicap is that it is looked upon as being more rightist than the Congress (I). It could not discard its image even by electing Chandra Shekhar as its president. Stability in Indian politics will come only when Parties are formed on the basis of relatively homogeneous social groups. Attempts to keep the support of the poorest and the richest in the country can succeed only temporarily. This is because class formations among the poorer sections have become more distinct and their degree of articulation is increasing. The national cake is too small to be shared equitably between the rich and the poor.

It is, therefore, not accidental that in the last decade only the left movement in pockets of West Bengal and Kerala has proved to be the most durable political force. Unlike other

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Parties, the left concentrated on relatively homogeneous social forces. The only other Party which has stood its ground, albeit in a limited manner, is the Lok Dal but the tragedy of the Lok Dal is that by reflecting peasant individualism and parochialism, its leaders have become inherently incapable of broadening its support base. This was amply illustrated during Charan Singh's six-month tenure as Prime Minister. The Lok Dal has, perhaps, reached its limits. On its own, it cannot go very far from what it achieved in the last parliamentary election. But the peasantry can be a very useful political "cannon fodder" in an alliance among relatively homogeneous social forces. Unfortunately, Charan Singh and his jat and ahir brigade articulate peasant proprietor-landless Harijan contradictions more than contradictions between the peasantry and the traders and the peasantry and industrial capitalism. This naturally limits the scope of an alliance in which Charan Singh is a major partner.

THE stability in the Party system could come only if a new chapter is opened. Objectively, there is scope for a rightist Party which could articulate the interests of the proprietary classes and of a social democratic Party. Potentialities for a rightist Party should not be ignored. In the last 30 years of economic development, the propertied classes have expanded both in the urban and rural areas. With the abolition of the zamindari system and the green revolution, the institution of peasant proprietorship up to the middle farmer level has consolidated. Even though the propertied classes are still in a minority, they wield considerable political influence because of their economic strength. It is a safe bet that Mrs Gandhi is the most trusted and enlightened representative of the propertied classes. On the other hand, the left of the West Bengal and Kerala variant is showing no sign of rising to the occasion and filling the vacuum at the national level. At the moment one can see an alternative only in terms of personalities. Those who have potentialities are Babuji, Chandra Shekhar and Devaraj Urs. H. N. Bahuguna, who is sulking in the Congress (I), could be a dark horse. Unfortunately, Y. B. Chavan has shown no promise in the last three years. Apart from public stature, what will matter is perception and perseverance. Socialists can play an important role in building a national alternative since socialists have nothing to lose except their second class citizenship status in the Janata and the Lok Dal.

One has to reconcile oneself to the fact that the entire process will take some time to be set into motion. In the short run perhaps more defeats and frustrations are in store. Attempts to secure instant relief by having either a hold-all unity or electoral adjustments will not succeed much. Many commentators prove their point by reeling off voting percentage figures of the last parliamentary elections. But in political arithmetic, two plus two is rarely four, it is either five or three. It is five when there is adjustment or unity of relatively homogeneous social forces, it is three when social forces are antagonistic in the context of articulation of current issues. At the moment there is no Emergency-type issue which will relegate normal social and economic antagonism in society to the background. When caste articulation has been taken to such a pitch, can a Rajput be made to vote for a backward caste Lok Dal candidate? Similarly, will a chammar who voted for the Janata in the last election in the hope of Babuji becoming Prime Minister, vote for the Lok Dal candidate in the coming Assembly elections? The experience of the recent parliamentary by-elections is not very encouraging. Roughly speaking, the position will be like this. If the Lok Dal candidate is of the backward caste then the Janata will be able to transfer only 40 per cent of its votes for him and the balance of 60 per cent may go to the Congress (I). If the Lok Dal candidate is a non-backward caste person then that 40 per cent may increase to 45 or 50 per cent. The Lok Dal, perhaps, may be in a better position than the Janata to transfer the bulk of its votes to a Janata candidate in the event of an electoral alliance. Since the Assembly elections are now round the corner, it may not be feasible to escape some ad hoc response to the compulsions of elections. This ad hocism will, however, lead nowhere. So, sooner rather than later, conscious attempts will have to be made to open a new political chapter in India without which a degree of durability cannot be imparted to the Party system.

Countdown to the split

By AJOY BOSE

A FEW weeks after the mid-term poll results were announced, at a Janata Party high command meeting discussing the election rout of the party, the ever ebullient and sometimes profound Piloo Mody made a sudden intervention. "Can anybody here tell me why the Janata Party won in 1977"? he asked. There was an embarrassed silence. "See! There is no answer," continued the Janata member, "we do not know why we won in 1977. And we don't know why we lost in 1980. What's the point in a post-mortem?"

For the Janata Party, history has been indeed repeating itself according to the classical Marxian dictum, the first time as tragedy and the second time as farce. When Chaudhury Charan Singh, Raj Narain, Madhu Limaye and George Fernandes left the Party last July, many Janata politicians including some senior leaders claimed that after the 'defectors' left, the Party would be far more cohesive. In fact,

Kamal Sahai

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most scribes had painted the Chaudhury as the villain of the piece and reduced the whole Party split to the political ambitions of Charan Singh and other 'defectors'. The bitter in-fighting among the various political groups in the Janata Party which continues till today, has completely demolished this myth.

The portents of an impending crisis in the Janata Party were clear even in January just a few weeks after Mrs. Gandhi was back in the chair, RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras made an impassioned plea to her expressing his and his organisation's full support to her "even if she did not want it." At the same time, there was growing criticism amidst the Janata ranks of the two erstwhile pillars of the Party—the RSS and the charisma of Babu Jagjivan Ram.

The Janata Party had gone into the mid-term polls with Babuji as the head and the RSS as the tail. Jagjivan Ram was expected to provide the charisma and the RSS its muscle and organisation. Unfortunately for the Janata Party, the head repelled instead of attracting while the tail, if it wagged at all, did so for Mrs. Gandhi.

The consequent rout of the Janata Party in the polls therefore also resulted in a major loss of face for both Babuji as well as the RSS. Balasaheb's public support to Mrs. Gandhi and increasing reports of Babuji acting as her Trojan Horse in the Party, further vitiated the atmosphere in the Janata. Ironically, the two groups in the Party most bitterly opposed to each other were Babuji and the Jana Sangh constituent. While leaders like Atal Behari Vajpayee, Nanaji Deshmukh and Sundar Singh Bhandari increasingly blamed the failure of the Janata Party on Babuji and privately abused him as "unreliable and Mrs. Gandhi's stooge", Jagjivan Ram and his friends did not spare the RSS in both private and public discussions.

Even the arbitrary dissolution of the nine State Assemblies by Mrs. Gandhi failed to contain the growing rift between the different constituents of the Janata Party. On the very day after the dissolution, Babuji indicated the extent of his alienation from the Janata Party. In a surprise statement in Kanpur, Babuji announced that he was calling a meeting of his supporters on February 23 to decide whether he should stay in the Party. He also announced that the Janata Party will not enter into electoral pacts with any of the Opposition Parties. Furious at this public statement by Babuji, other constituents of the Janata Party reacted strongly. Surendra Mohan refuted Babuji's statement on electoral adjustments with opposition parties the next day saying that this was not the official Party line.

On February 20 Chandra Shekhar went even further to hint that he would not mind Babuji leaving the Party. He said that he could not understand the propriety behind Babuji's calling a separate meeting of his supporters. Atal Behari Vajpayee was even more categorical. "Those who want to leave the Party need not invent excuses for it," he said, reacting to Babuji's letter to his supporters which accused the RSS of working for Mrs. Gandhi. On February 23 and 24 over 200 supporters of Babuji met and bitterly criticised the RSS and most speakers were unanimous that it was not possible for Babuji to continue in the Janata Party. The few who tried to advise a less hasty course were shouted down. Among them were Ram Dhan and Krishan Kant, both bitter critics of the RSS but who still maintained that Babuji should not leave the party. "Mrs. Gandhi is the biggest authoritarian," said Ram Dhan but this was greeted with boos and jeers from most of the audience among whom were interestingly some who had already joined the Congress(I). Meanwhile, six Janata leaders including Ashok Mehta, H. M. Patel, N. G. Goray, Ravindra Verma, S. M. Joshi and Gauri Shankar Rai—all belonging to the Congress (O) and Socialist constituent, urged Chandra Shekhar to take action against Babuji. An emergency Janata Parliamentary Party meeting was called on February 25 to take a decision on Babuji's activities.

Just as it seemed sure that Babuji would either be thrown out of the Party or leave it himself, he did a sudden volte face. In a surprise move which left Party politicians and newspaper scribes completely bewildered, Babuji attended the Parliamentary Board meeting on February 25, and expressed his regrets for criticising Janata leaders like Chandra Shekhar and Vajpayee. The unconditional apology took the wind out of the sails of Babuji's critics and the Board meeting ended on an amicable note. The same night, however, Babuji did yet another somersault. In a letter to Chandra Shekhar, he raised the question of dual membership again and asked the Party president to settle the issue immediately. Jagjivan Ram said that he and his supporters would not compromise on the 'RSS connection' of some of the Janata leaders, particularly since the RSS had worked for Mrs Gandhi in the polls and even after the rout of the Janata, extended public support to her.

The crisis in the Party started all over again. Next morning, L. K. Advani wrote a strong letter to Chandra Shekhar expressing his and the Jana Sangh constituent's anger and regret about charges of "dual loyalty" raised by Babuji. In protest the Jana Sangh members boycotted the National Executive and the Parliamentary Board meeting. Instead the Jana Sangh members held an emergency meeting at Advani's house where softliners like Advani and Vajpayee were hauled up by Jana Sangh workers and leaders for compromising on the RSS issue. At one point in the meeting, most of the members wanted Advani to declare immediately that they would quit the Janata and form a separate Party. Among those who favoured leaving the Janata were Sundar Singh Bhandari, Kushabhao Thakre and S. P. Mathur. Nanaji Deshmukh, although otherwise a RSS hardliner was trying to follow a middle path. For perhaps the first time in its history, the Jana Sangh rank and file publicly expressed its anger with some major leaders. Men like Vajpayee, Advani, and Bhairon Singh Shekhawat were abused openly as "impotent political stooges" who have been selling the Party and the RSS for paltry Ministerial privileges. The workers reminded these leaders that whatever political status they enjoyed it was because of their connection with the RSS. The leaders were told categorically that unless they were able to stop the "canard against the RSS" by Janata leaders, they would either have to quit the Janata or the RSS as well as most of the Jana Sangh workers would disown them.

Meanwhile at the Parliamentary Board meeting, the militant mood of the Jana Sangh constituent had scared most of the other constituents of the Janata Party temporarily. A sudden departure by the Jana Sangh group could well mean the disintegration of the Party. While many of them were secretly of exactly the same opinion as Babuji, they were eager to bring about a compromise formula to save the Party. Most of them were furious with Babuji for antagonising the Jana Sangh constituent, and Chandra Shekhar himself was of the opinion that Babuji had become a first rate liability to the Party. The Parliamentary Board refused to pass Babuji's demand for the Jana Sangh to completely dissociate with the RSS. Instead they took a softer line and wanted a solution to be worked out on the basis of the July 1979 formula which called for office-bearers of the Janata Party and Members of Parliament and State Legislatures, not to take part in the day-to-day activities of the RSS. Hoping that it would placate the Jana Sangh constituent, Chandra Shekhar sent a strongly worded letter to Babuji the same night, criticising him for shifting his earlier stand and for his "unbecoming behaviour as a responsible member of the party". The next day Babuji resigned from the leadership of the Janata Parliamentary Party in protest and from all indications, it seemed that it was only a matter

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of time that he would either be thrown out of the Party or leave it himself.

Babuji's departure has already signalled the start of the disintegration of the Party. Seven members of the Rajya Sabha including Dinesh Singh, Ganpat Bhagat, Subedar Prabhu Singh, Shivendra Singh, Nathu Singh and N. P. Naidu are expected to leave with him. Two members of the Lok Sabha, Satadev Singh and Nihal Singh are also likely to follow Babuji. There is also a strong feeling that the Bihar strongman and Lok Sabha Member Satyendra Narain Singh along with his two family member MP's might leave the Janata. Satyen Babu is particularly upset about the way RSS workers behaved in his constituency during the mid-term polls. He has already written a letter to Chandra Shekhar complaining about how the RSS worked against him and has even submitted a list of workers who tried to defeat him. If Satyendra Narain Singh leaves the Janata, the Party would hardly be left with any base to fight the coming Assembly elections in Bihar.

The rest of the Party is also singularly unhappy. The Socialists are a divided lot. On one hand is Surendra Mohan who is not all happy at the prospect of remaining in a Party dominated by the Jana Sangh constituent. He is very keen on Chandra Shekhar working out an arrangement to revive the old Janata but this time without the Jana Sangh. Madhu Dandavate is against such an arrangement, however, and is keen that the Janata Party remains in its own. Dandavate has hopes that his name might be proposed to either replace Babuji as the leader of the Parliamentary Party or as the president of the Janata. Dandavate feels that the Janata cannot do without the Jana Sangh constituent for the present and is willing to co-exist with it. The Socialists are further confused by the efforts of Raj Narain and Madhu Limaye to reconvene Socialists of all Parties together and work out the parameters of a new Party or united democratic front. Surendra Mohan is reportedly very keen on this idea. The Congress (O) constituent is not quite sure what to make of Morarji's new bid for leadership in the Party and a political comeback. Mr Desai has completely forgotten his pledge last year to retire from active politics and has been making frantic visits to almost every Janata leader's house to further his position of becoming the leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party. While Morarji is himself not a member of Parliament, he is quick to point out the example of Mrs Gandhi who was leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party without being an MP. Morarji reportedly met the Rajmata of Gwalior also and asked her to plead his case to the Jana Sangh constituent for its support. And presiding over this huge mess that is the Janata Party today, is a sad, confused and embittered Chandra Shekhar. For the moment he is playing for time. He admits that the 'dual membership' issue cannot be put into cold storage. He also knows that most of the present-day Janata politicians have become completely redundant. What he hopes is for a national Party with a popular base and progressive ideology. What he has, however, is a disintegrating Party which could be wiped out completely after the Assembly elections.

'The RSS has a secret alliance with the Congress (I)'

JAGJIVAN RAM tells A. N. PRABHU in an exclusive interview

Q: *Would you tell us about the new Party you propose to form?*

A: The idea is to have a strong opposition Party, which will be secular, which will be free from casteist and communal influences and will be working for the establishment of a socialist society. The talk at present is authoritarianism. Any opposition Party which is democratic cannot tolerate any concentration of power in the hands of either an individual or a group of individuals. That is a negation of democracy. All my life, I have stood and worked for democracy. Any infringement of democratic norms with have to be resisted and I will always be ready to resist any such tendency. Any Party I am associated with will stand for democracy and will resist all efforts to concentrate power, either political or economic, in the hands of individuals, groups or classes. It will fight authoritarianism relentlessly.

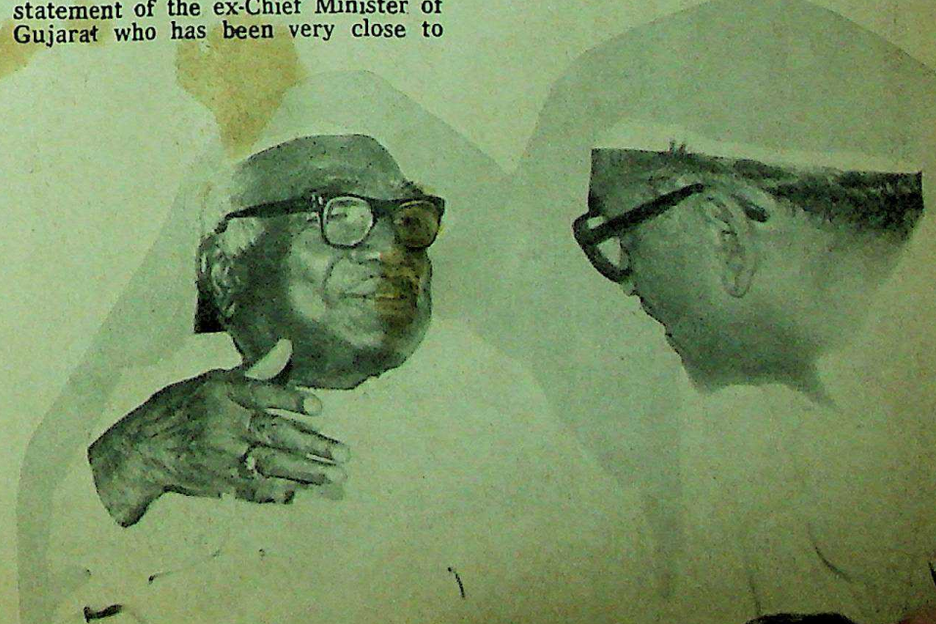
Q: In your statement of March 7 announcing your decision to split the Janata Party, you had said, and I quote: "It seems as if they (RSS) had a secret alliance with the Congress (I). Do you have any concrete instance to substantiate this?

A: Yes, it is not just inference. As a matter of fact, this was based on a statement that was made by the ex-Chief Minister of Gujarat who issued it (the statement) immediately after Mr Balasaheb Deores' statement. I have been drawing upon the statement of the ex-Chief Minister of Gujarat who has been very close to the Jana Sangh (and is so) even at present. In his subsequent statement he has declared that he would continue with his combination with the Jana Sangh in Gujarat. Besides there are many evidences to this effect right from the days since Mr Balraj Madhok came out from the Jana Sangh.

Q: But the Jana Sangh people say that Mr Deoras was not correctly reported...

A: But Mr Deoras himself has not contradicted it. The whole thing is, when such a thing appears in newspapers, it is taken as correct until it is contradicted. Until now that statement or interview has not been contradicted by Mr Balasaheb Deoras.

Q: But there had been persisent reports also about your alleged talks with Congress (I) leaders prior to the



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last Lok Sabha elections.

A: There are certain persons who are always interested, and some newspapers also in spreading canards. I don't know whether they have been chartered by some Parties or agencies to malign me. Just the day I had held a Press conference, the next day comes the *Hindustan Times* (with some allegations or speculations). I think some of the newspapers have been entrusted with the work of maligning me on this score. Such allegations had been made for the past few months but I continue where I was. In view of that experience... for people to go on repeating the falsehood...Everyday it was coming... Everytning was falsified. Still they persisted...

I think some newspapers have been entrusted with the task of maligning me.

Q: You also say in your March 7 statement that the "nation is today confronted with an array of grave dangers..." It is nearly two months since the new Government has come into power. Do you feel this Government will be able to meet these dangers you spoke about?

A: The problems are very grave and great and the problems are difficult for any Government. I will not judge the competence or success or failure of this Government on the basis of functioning of the last two months. I will give them more time. But the style of functioning on authoritarian lines is evident.

Q: You have also said in your statement that there is a "total lack of clear formulation of ideological or programmatic policies of the Government". Would you elaborate?

A: Up till now nothing has come. If it comes then I can elaborate. We are faced with a grave economic crisis. Up till now no formulation has come from the Government as to how they are going to surmount these difficulties and when it (the formulation) comes, it should cover both the ideological and the programmatic...But nothing has come.

Q: Your statement also talks of the nation's moral and economic strength having already been dangerously depleted through total unconcern and incompetence of the preceding Government. In this connection, could you elaborate what should be our attitude, approach and policy towards our neighbouring countries in general and in regard to the Afghan question in particular, with reference to the role of the super powers?

A: I have always held that success or failure of the foreign policy of any Government would depend upon what relations it has with its immediate neighbours. There is no use of having friendly relations with remote countries without striving hard to have good relations with our immediate neighbours. I have always held, and I stick to it, that we must strive hard to have good relations with our immediate neighbours. Fortunately, we are a much larger country both in size and in population and naturally the responsibility of a larger country is greater insofar as friendly relations are concerned. Because some concessions by a bigger Party are regarded as a generous gesture whereas any concession by a smaller country is regarded as surrender. We must have good relations with those countries. The Afghan question has brought big powers on the border of India and escalation would be of great consequence to our country. I therefore demand that the presence of all foreign powers—direct or indirect — in Afghanistan should be immediately withdrawn as a first step. I have said nothing new. We have repeated it at international forums.

Q: There has been talk of an alliance between various Parties for the coming nine Assembly elections. You have said you would have nothing to do with casteist Parties. What about others?

A: Newspapers bring all sorts of reports about adjustments of seats between various Parties. Nothing concrete, it appears, has been achieved up till now in this direction. It would be a good thing if multiplicity of candidates of political Parties is avoided. Of course, in this country you cannot rule out the possibility of a large number of Independents. It would be a good thing if political parties can evolve something to avoid this division of votes and several contestants and Parties.

Q: In view of your coming out from the Janata Party on the communal issue, do you visualise the possibility of all former Congressmen from other Parties coming together to form a solid block of ex-Congressmen?

A: Well, there is, I think... I would put it, not immediately, but in the course of time. Not immediately.

Q: Do you think it would have been better if you had come out of the Janata Party immediately after the mid-term election results were known without so much of mudslinging we witnessed during the last two and a half months?

A: Well, it would have been better. But I did not want at that time to take any step merely on gossips and rumours unless I was myself convinced that a part of the rumour was correct.

Q: You have said that you did not leave the Janata Party in the midst of the elections because that would have been unethical. The question being asked is whether it was ethical for you to have left the Congress in 1977 in the midst of the elections?

I do not think Suresh Kumar will have a big say in the new Party.

A: 1977 was not a comparable year on any account and in 1977 when I left, nobody was sure that the Janata Party was going to win ...It was a grave risk that I had taken but there are all sorts of people today who can be made to write all sorts of things. I have seen one of the columnists writing that in 1977 I made calculations before I left...

Q: What do you think of the credibility of Indian politicians in general?

A: Well, the last two years has been a period of uncertainty, equivocation and generally of non-performance in several fields and if people are angry, that is quite justifiable.

Q: Do you think Suresh Kumar will have a big say in the new Party you propose to form?

A: I don't think so. The thing that Suresh has been doing, in the case of others might have brought him praise. He was offered a ministership in Bihar in Mr Gafoor's Cabinet. And even without consulting me he declined to accept it at a point when the invitation was given to him for the swearing-in ceremony. When the parliamentary board decided in 1977 to give him a ticket for Rajya Sabha, he declined at that time. This year, many people wanted him to contest a seat for the Lok Sabha but he declined. All these things should have brought praise in the case of sons of others. But because he happens to be my friend—my son—and there are interested parties to malign me, he also is maligned without any justification. His credentials are these. In the 1977 elections, Suresh Kumar worked very hard for the success of the Janata Party, and without any reward. Then somebody complained that he was against my joining the Ministry. If he was against his father joining the Morarji Ministry, it should go to his credit, not to his discredit. All these things. How many sons are there to persuade their fathers not to join a Ministry?

Q: I have been seeing you Babuji for so many years right from my cub reporter days. Are you confident of leading a new Party?

A: Today this country stands in need of a political Party which, as I have said earlier, stands for democracy and will not permit any infringement of the democratic norms. The Party should be secular, secular not in the accepted sense that it should not be communal. In the complicated social structure of this country, casteism is a factor which should be reckoned with. Such a party should be free from caste as well as communal bias. Ours is a poor country. Socialism can only ensure to the vast masses, labouring classes, a status in society and adequate reward for their labour. We have to restore the dignity of labour which was there at one time in our own country. Labour was not only respected but even worshipped.

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"Dual membership can't be put in cold storage"

The Janata Party president CHANDRA SHEKHAR told AJOY BOSE

Q: How do you see the developments in the Janata Party in the past few weeks?

A: Quite disturbing. I did not expect that these developments would take place after such a crushing defeat. It is human nature that at a time of calamity or (in a) adverse position people try to cling together and face the challenges unitedly. But there are certain people within the Party who cannot resolve their differences. This can only be explained as an excuse for some people to get away from the Party—that is the only explanation I have. I don't understand the logic behind their attitudes. The only logic is that they want some pretext to leave the Party.

Q: There is a feeling that you are the only link holding a disintegrating Party together. How long do you think you can do so?

A: I don't think this would be a correct analysis. The fact is that it is not a disintegrating Party. This Party was never united or cohesive in the past. Many elements came together after the Emergency and luckily they got power—I think (that) was the uniting factor. Now that there is no power, in the face of defeat, all of them are feeling frustrated. Well not all of them, but many of them are feeling frustrated. They are fighting against each other. But I am not the only link, there are many workers who are determined to continue their fight against authoritarianism and they are the real source of strength of the Janata Party. Individuals are important, but they are not as important as you presume them to be.

Q: You mean that if certain individuals leave the Party, it will help the Party to be cohesive?

A: I can't tell you about the individuals, but people who don't (have) their hearts (in) running the Party, who do not have the patience and endurance to face the difficult days, leave the Party. That really does not add to the problems of the Party but in many ways solves the problems of the Party. If you are facing a difficult period, there is no point in frittering away your energy in fighting against each other.

Q: If Babuji leaves the Party, would it help in making a more cohesive Janata Party?

A : I can't say. Just by Babuji leaving the Party, you can't make the Janata Party more cohesive. For this you have to go through a period of struggle. You have to go a long way to make the Party cohesive. Only Jagjivan Ram going out will not solve the situation. There are other factions which (can) make problems in the Party. I don't think some individuals going out or some individuals coming in will make the Party more united.

Q: Has the dual membership issue been put in the cold storage for the moment?

A: It can't be put into cold storage. It has become a live issue. Both sides have taken rigid attitudes. There are people who have real apprehensions about the functioning of the RSS. This is nothing new. They have had these apprehensions in the past. In the begining, I tried to strike a compromise on that issue and if you remember in July, 1979 when the split was there, I met Balasaheb Deoras. I was coming from Madras and he was kind enough to come to Nagpur airport and we had a brief talk for 20 minutes. I tried to persuade him that this has created an apprehension in the minds of certain people and why doesn't he himself say that those who are Members of the Legislature or Parliament or office-bearers of the Janata Party will not take part in the activities of the RSS. He agreed to that formulation and he said at that time that if I made such an announcement he would not have any objection because the power was there and everybody was trying to find some solution to the problem.

Now the same solution was suggested at the recent national executive, and unfortunately, our Jana Sangh friends, I mean former Jana Sangh friends, took a very rigid posture. Later they made some gesture that they were ready to think over it but it was as if it was a great concession they were bestowing upon some friends in order to save the Party. But at this moment if they go on saying that their first loyalty is to the RSS and only their political loyalty is to the Janata Party, it becomes very difficult to know where is the line between political loyalty and their loyalty to the RSS. That is the apprehension in the minds of certain people. So unless and until there is some desire on both sides to strike a compromise, I think it will go on agitating the minds of the people and will go on creating trouble for the Party. I don't think that the dual membership can be put in the cold storage. A decision will have to be taken this way or that.

Tarun Chakrabarty

Q: I believe that there have been a number of complaints by Janata Party members that the RSS worked against the Party. Why did these people expect the RSS to work for them in the first place?

A: They should not have. That was wrong on their part. This is what I told them. If you want the RSS to be delinked from the Party, why should they also want the RSS to work for them? That was a ridiculous position. I don't understand the mind of these people. That is why I say even these people are not quite serious about their stand on the RSS. But I am ready to give concessions to these people for such frivolous attitudes to this issue. I think that this problem will remain because you know, the RSS is no ordinary organisation. It is very highly organised institution and they have a day-to-day function everywhere. Whether they have an impact on the society, right or wrong, whether the apprehensions are genuine or not, I shall not go into that. So it is bound to agitate the minds of people at every crucial moment. This thing should be cleared up — that is what I feel.

Q: Why do you think the fromer Jana Sangh leaders are not ready to snap their links with the RSS?

A: The whole thing is that there is a feeling among people that the RSS is an organisation of a band of workers. Everybody wants to utilise their services for political advantage. Whether they belong to the erstwhile Jana Sangh or they don't, everybody wants to cash in on the organised capacity of the RSS. But when the question comes of the apprehension in the minds of the minorities that has been created because of the long history of the RSS, they have not been able to swallow that. That is the whole problem. They want to take the advantage but they are not ready to take the odium of what the RSS has been known in the country for such a long time.

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Did JP clear the RSS ?

By BHOLA CHATTERJI

IF the Jana Sangh faithful is a "fascist, then I too am a fascist": who could have possibly said that way back in early 1975? Particularly, when the Jana Sangh was wont to make a fetish of its anti-secular-obscurantist-authoritarian political ideology? Who else but a morbidly communalist Hindu, you would probably say in retort. Well, you have guessed wrong. It was none other than Jayaprakash Narayan who made that statement. This, according to the March 6, 1975 issue of the *Motheriana*, the Jana Sangh mouthpiece, was what JP said while addressing the 20th annual conference of the Jana Sangh held in New Delhi.

To get the point one has only to refer to the not so distant past. In his presidential address to the Second National Convention Against Communalism on December 28-29, 1968 JP said: "India being a country of many religions, almost every religious community has its own brand of communalism. They are all pernicious, but Hindu communalism is more pernicious than the others...Hindu communalism can easily masquerade as Indian nationalism and denounce all opposition to it as being anti-national...Some like the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh might do it openly by identifying the Indian nation with Hindu Rashtra...When the Sangh (RSS) was under a shadow after Gandhiji's murder there were many protestations about its being entirely a cultural organisation. But apparently emboldened by the timidity of the secular forces it has thrown its veil away and has emerged as the real power behind, and controller of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. The secular protestations of the Jana Sangh will never be taken seriously unless it cuts the bonds which tie it so firmly to the RSS machine. Nor can the RSS be treated as a cultural organization so long as it remains the mentor and effective manipulator of a political party."

He did not let the matter rest here. Referring to the "RSS itself", JP observed that "if it has the good of India at heart it should convert itself from a narrowminded Hindu organization to a broadbased Indian organization and admit into its ranks the young from all communities and train them...to be disciplined, loyal and united citizens of India. They (RSS) would earn the gratitude of India if they did that, but if they persist in their present politics and happen to make headway they will most certainly kill the soul of Hindu Dharma and sap the foundations of the nation." Needless to say, JP was not oblivious to the mischief potential of other facets of the problem of communalism. In the course of the same speech he said: "I have time only for one more religious communalism, that of Muslim communalism. Certain facts of Indian history and misinterpretations of Islam, coupled with reaction to Hindu communalism, have produced a type of Muslim communalism that is becoming a danger both to the Muslims themselves and to the country. There is one body that I would like to identify particularly as a source of such danger—I mean the Jamaat-e-Islami." At the same time, JP wanted it to be clearly understood that minority communalism was not only a response to Hindu communalism but also would grow in volume "if Hindu Rashtra and not Bharatiya Rashtra becomes the goal of the predominant Hindu community".

Between then and 1975 the country had changed and, with it JP's diagnosis of the malady. As he put it in *Prison Diary*, "The country is heading for a downfall, not only moral but also the economic, social and cultural degradation of at least 40 per cent of the Indian people who live below the poverty line. One is reminded here of a statement of Benu who, while defining democracy, had said that it did not only mean a government established by the people's vote; it also meant that the people had the power to oust their rulers when found unworthy to rule. Democracy has almost ceased to exist in India today. The pyramid of the political structure still stands on its apex. The same is true of the educational and almost all other spheres of public activity. It is a tragic story that beggars description."

JP was almost persuaded that the alchemy of struggle would bring about a qualitative change in the ideas and attitudes of the political Parties. Anticipating the question whether the participation of opposition political Parties in his movement was "an unmixed evil." JP said: "My unhesitating answer is No. Its first result...is that it lends strength to the movement. But the more important thing is that the parties undergo a sea-change in the process. True, this would not happen in a State where there is no strong non-party leadership in the movement. But in Bihar it has happened. All the parties involved are committed to the aims of total revolution and to the dynamics of change: struggle." Even as he said this he had grave doubts about the wisdom of taking to the course that he did. He could well realise that this involved the complex issue of ends and means, that the ideal he had set himself was hardly compatible with the tool he was obliged to use. That in a way explains why he said that "the ideal never gets translated into practice without suffering deterioration". Taking one thing with another, one cannot avoid drawing the conclusion that the compulsion of events left JP with no alternative to putting a premium on expediency. Circumstances alter cases and JP, who had all along insisted on sticking to the straight path of principled politics and whose major preoccupation had been the question of ends and means, seemed to have veered round to the point that a lesser evil could be employed to get to grips with a greater evil: "the Congress monopoly of power at the Centre".

But it did not take long for him to realise that he was mistaken in his reckoning. Immediately after the March 1977 parliamentary election it became quite clear that the period of sweet reasonableness was over. The succession of events confirmed that the RSS had not changed a whit, that it was determined to throw a spanner into the works. Much sooner than most others had expected, JP woke up to the fact that his concept of total revolution would be reduced to a mockery if the Janata Party continued to associate itself with any variety of communalism.

Soon after his return from the US, where he had gone for medical treatment, JP stated in unadorned language that the RSS was a malignant growth in the body politic of the country. In an interview to *Samayika Varta*, a weekly, on September 13, 1977 JP said that the RSS had no justification to continue its separate existence "in the changed circumstances". Speaking in the same vein he observed: "In the course of my contact with RSS leaders as well as cadres, I have noticed a change in their outlook. They no longer have a feeling of animosity toward other communities. But in their heart of hearts they still believe in the concept of Hindu rashtra."

That said, he advised the RSS to "disband itself and merge with the youth and cultural organizations of the Janata Party". If that was not possible the RSS should at least "open its doors to members of all communities, including Muslims and Christians, and make it possible for members of all castes and communities, including Harijans, Muslims and Christians, to hold the highest office in the organization". He also suggested that the RSS front organisations should join the Janata Party's front organisations. "If this is not done," JP warned, "there will be great potential for discord and conflict in future". And he reminded the RSS people that he had hopes that "they will give up the concept of Hindu rashtra and adopt in its place that of Indian nationhood, which is a secular concept and embraces all communities living in India". His hopes, however, withered away much before he went the way of all flesh. ■

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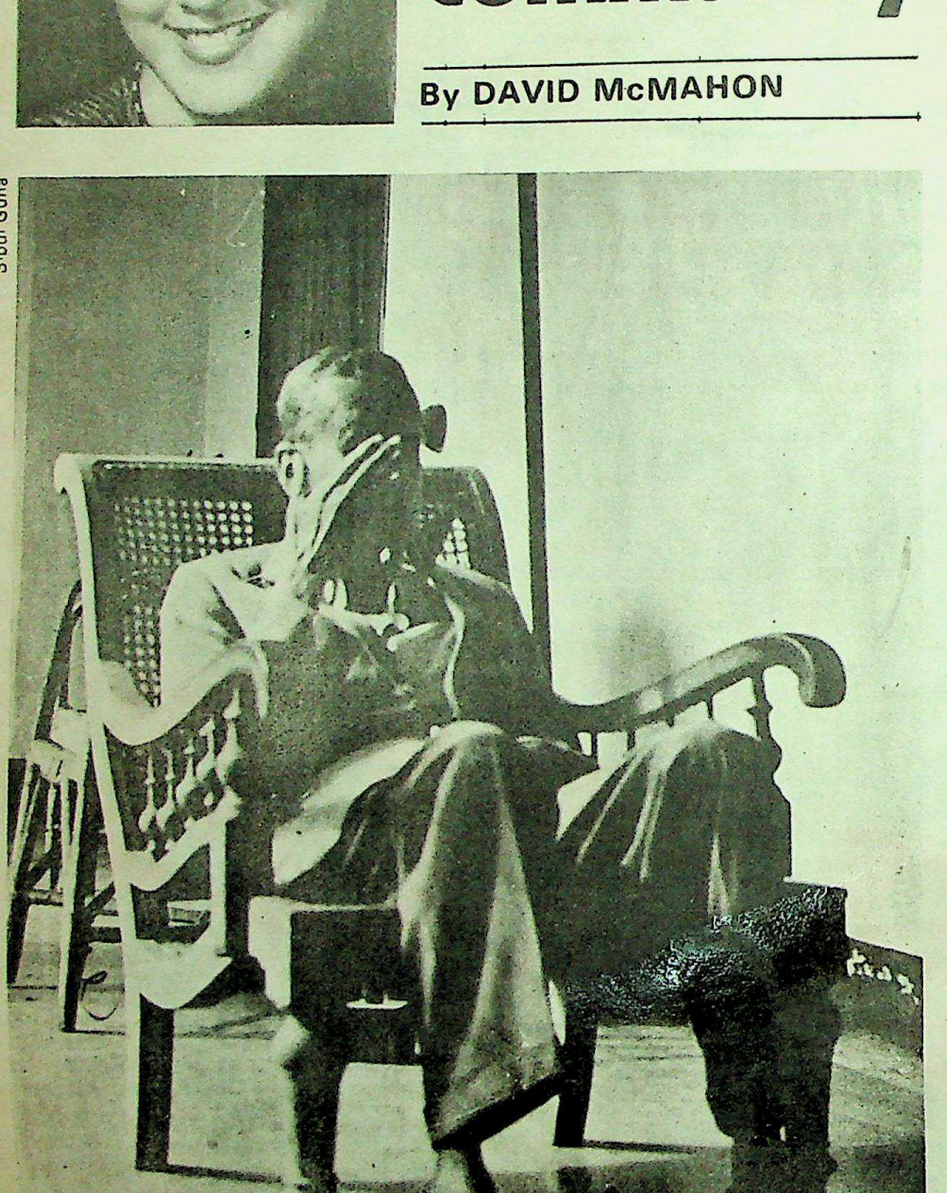
ANGLO-INDIANS

The forgotten community

By DAVID McMAHON



Sroul Guha

A COUPLE of centuries ago, according to legend, one of my ancestors who was then an Irish citizen, decided that the Emerald Isle was not good enough for him. So he sold his property lock, stock and barrel and used the profits to pay for his passage out to India which was for him a wonderful land of polo, sahibs, sundowners and Hindoos. Although there is a parallel line of thought which suggests that he was evicted from Ireland because he was a sheep thief, no one has ever been able to prove this intriguing theory. He liked India, stayed on and raised a family which later intermarried. Thus his descendants—my ancestors — became known as Anglo-Indians, or people of European descent in the male line whose parents were habitual residents of India.

It is not difficult to discover why Europeans, or, more specifically, Britishers, of that time were so prone to intermarriage. In the early days of the East India Company there were very few Englishwomen here in India and so even in a large settlement like Madras, tedium was the order of the day and the only thing to look forward to was the weekly Sunday dinner. A writer in the Calcutta Review of 1845 describes these men as "desperate adventurers... who sought the golden shores of the East to repair their broken fortunes. They cheated, they gambled, they drank, they revelled in all kinds of debauchery". Burke however, thought differently. "There is nothing worse in the boys we send to India, than in the boys we are whipping at school, or whom we see trailing over a pike, or bending over a desk at home," he affirmed.

However he may have been, he was denied the company of women of his own race since the regulations of the East India Company forbade Englishwomen sharing the risks and privations of their men. They therefore wasted no time in moaning about their fortunes and accordingly chose their partners from the women of the land. Such marriages were considered respectable and they continued. although with decreasing frequency, until the Renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833, when the existing regulations about residence in India except by servants of the Company were withdrawn. The opening of the overland route via the Suez Canal made the trip out to India infinitely less tedious, with the anticipated result that there was a great influx of Englishmen and women into this country. At around this time two novel terms came into being: One was the "fishing fleet" and the other was "return empties". The former referred to the droves of women who left England and came to India with the sole intention of hooking husbands, while the latter, predictably, referred to those unlucky maidens who failed in their endeavours and had to return to their homeland. One charge that has been frequently —and often maliciously—levelled

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against the Anglo-Indian community is that it retains the characteristics, manners and lifestyle of the British. The reason for this is fairly simple. The British husband found it easier, call it laziness if you like, to teach his Indian wife the English language than to pick up her vernacular. Thus the English language, customs and practices became the dominant strain in such families and they have retained this character even today. It is difficult to find a member of the community who can speak a national language with any degree of proficiency. There are some notable exceptions, of course, but they are few.

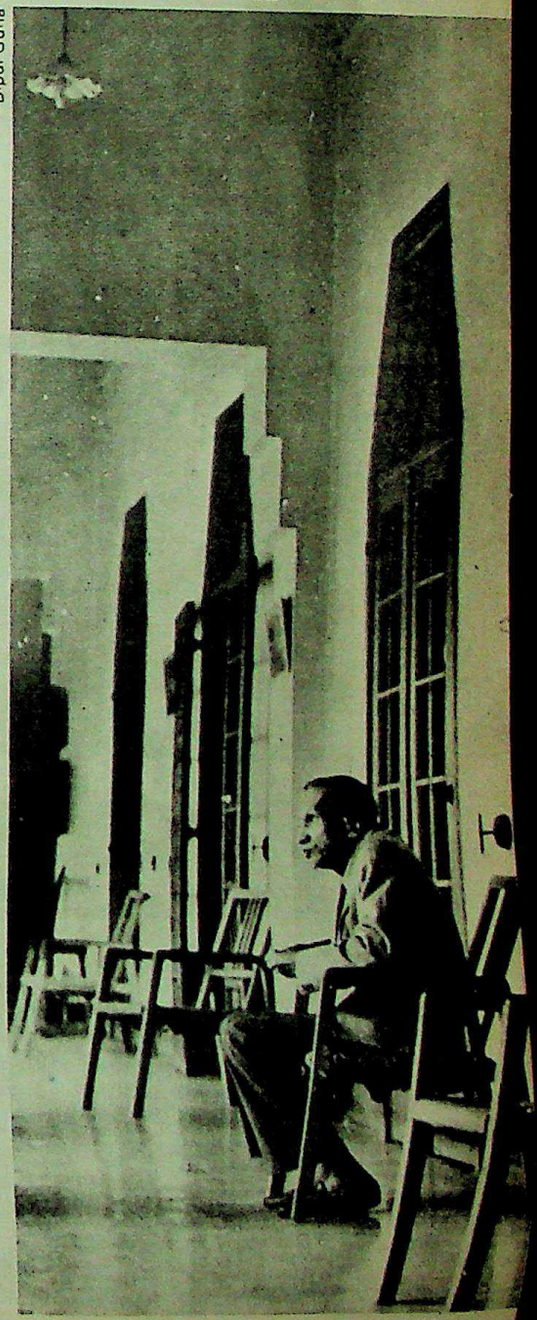
There are still others who speak of England as being "home", regardless of whether they have ever set foot on English soil or not. My closest friend in school had been born and bred in Calcutta but he never really thought of the city as being home. To him, it was a surrogate hometown and I always suspected that he secretly dreamt of London, although he had only been there once, as a child, and probably could remember nothing about the city. During the 1971 Indian tour of England and the historic victory of the tourists under Ajit Wadekar we used to follow the series very closely. During the day we used to scan the school notice boards for the latest scores and at night we used to slink into a friendly prefect's room to follow the Tests on his radio. The fall of an English wicket would send us into soundless jigs for joy (soundless because we risked having our pocket money docked if we were caught) but he would sit alone in agony. After India had clinched the series, a number of us pulled his leg about whether he wanted to revert to Indian citizenship.

Scratch most members of the Anglo-Indian community and you find a person whose first love is sport. The noted sports commentator, A. F. S. Talyarkhan, writing in the *Times of India* in 1968 said "India's hockey grew thanks to the greatest hockey-playing entity the world will ever know : the Anglo-Indian community of the country". This is more than true. In 1926 an Indian Army hockey team which was about to depart to New Zealand played a practice match against an impromptu Anglo-Indian team from the North-western Railway. The carefully selected Army team was well and truly trounced. Two years later, at the Olympics, the Indian hockey team swept aside all opposition, scoring 23 goals against their opponents without conceding even one. Of the 11 playing members, eight were Anglo-Indians, while the manager and two of the three reserves also belonged to the community. It would not be out of place to add that this Olympic team had been beaten by a scratch Anglo-Indian team from Bombay. Leslie Claudius, who represented India at four successive Olympic Games, was described as one of the greatest half-backs the world has ever seen. His son Robert, affectionately known as "Bobby" had just returned to Calcutta after participating in the World Cup hockey tournament at Buenos Aires when he was tragically killed in a scooter accident.

IT is interesting that today no one pokes more fun at the Anglo-Indian community than the Anglo-Indians themselves. And we have one man in particular to thank for this ability to laugh at our own faults. This man is no longer in Calcutta, but in the long years he spent here, Ken Stewart was a hallmark in the city. A marriage was never the same if Ken was not around; we tried to postpone our christenings if the proposed date did not suit him; no club function was ever a success if he was not the Master of Ceremonies.

It wasn't that Ken thought there was anything wrong with Anglo-Indians—he was a staunch one him self ("A thick one" he described himself, using a favourite phrase of the community). But it was he who taught us that there is no essential difference between the various strata within the community. Ken was no preacher but his message was always the same—"Smile, things are never quite as bad as they seem". His jokes are still told at parties by people who try and pass them off as their own but the one I like best was related to me by Mr. Neil O'Brien, the Anglo-Indian MLA from West Bengal and the butt of the joke in this case. He had given Ken a lift home one evening and the latter did not miss the opportunity to quip "How many people can claim to have an MLA for a driver ?" Ken was a wonderful mimic and always had his audiences in splits of laughter with his acts though, according to a general consensus, his imitation of a tailor (the inevitable "durzee" to every Anglo-Indian family) was the one that cornered the most laughs. It was the same act over and over again but it never failed to delight his fans. He would appear dressed for all the world like a harassed tailor, with a long shirt over a checked lungi, a measuring tape draped untidily around his neck and the usual bundle of clothes over his shoulder. Then he would launch off into a long tirade against those imaginary customers who gave him the most trouble. It is ample proof of the rapport between Ken and the rest of the community that his victims always laughed loudest at the jokes.

It was not long before Ken's brand of humour brushed off on the rest of the community. Soon everyone began cracking jokes about Nizam's and their famous "kathi" rolls which have somehow become synonymous with the Anglo-Indian community. The "kathi" shop became the focal point for a "gup" or the Anglo-Indian equivalent of a chat. The latest "khabbar" was who had "labjao-ed" (hacked, as in kite-flying) whose girlfriend, or who had been putting on a lot of "kunni" (another allusion to kite-flying, meaning putting on airs and graces). It was a sad day for the community when Ken announced that he was leaving the country for good and the resultant "Ken Stewart Farewell Show" was sold out well in advance. No hall could possibly have accommodated the number of people who wanted to say goodbye to Ken and so the organisers decided on an outdoor musical festival at La Martiniere School. It was a stifling hot summer evening but every chair was occupied an hour before the concert began and thousands who could not find their places stood for seven hours, from five in the evening till midnight, till the last notes of the music had died away. One of the most touching moments came when Ken was overcome by emotion during his farewell speech and could only blink the tears from his eyes while thousands of his friends chered him as they had never cheered before. Usha Uthup, the famous singer who has always held a special place in Calcutta's heart, hugged Ken and



Bipul Guha

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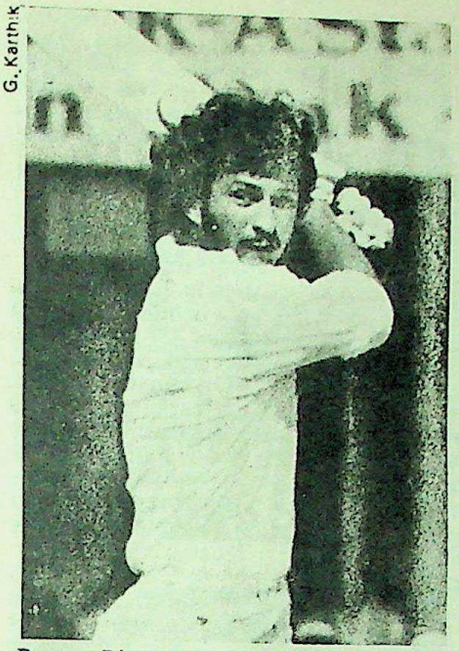
G. Karthik

Roger Binny, the Anglo-Indian Test all-rounder from Bangalore

burst into song, but after a few bars her voice broke and then it was only the band that played on in the growing darkness.

CHRISTMAS for the community is without a doubt the greatest time of the year. It is a time for new clothes, for family reunions, for listening to Christmas carols on cold nights. It is a time for joyous celebration, for gathering around Christmas trees in living rooms, decorated with tinsel and imitation snow. It is a time to go out carol singing in groups and to hear the haunting notes of carols like "Silent Night"; it is the season for milk punch and homemade wine, for grandmother's cakes and plum pudding, for kulkuls (one wonders at the origins of such a name) and rose cookies. For the ladies it is an opportunity to try and lift a good recipe from a neighbour. Each family has its own recipe, handed down from generation to generation, for the traditional Christmas cakes. Often these recipes are closely guarded secrets and so it is very rare to find two cakes in different households that taste the same

The Anglo-Indian is gregarious by his very nature; it is in his blood. He places great stress on the practice of visiting friends and relatives, while clubs too form an integral part of his lifestyle. The club to him represents a home away from home; there are three typically Anglo-Indian clubs in Calcutta alone and each one perhaps is a legend in its own right. The first is the Grail Club on Park Street, which still has a very high percentage of Anglo-Indian members. The second is the Rangers Club, founded in 1896, which gained fame through sport, its dances and its well run Sweep which enabled the club to donate lavishly to various charities.

The most famous of the three is the Dalhousie Institute, affectionately referred to as the DI and sometimes as "The Lousy Institute". It was founded on the site of what is today Telephone Bhavan but the club premises were later shifted to Jhowtalla Road. Although it is in no way a club exclusively for members of the Anglo Indian community, there is a spirit about it which is very difficult to describe and which the members refer to as the "family feeling". It is a place for everyone, young and old alike, with its tennis courts, swimming pool, billiard tables, table tennis tables and of course a well-stocked bar. Social functions at these clubs are ample evidence of this family feeling and no such function is ever complete without a dance. It is always more than likely that, even if a dance has not been scheduled, there will be one by the time the show is over. And if the music is not loud enough, it doesn't really matter, because everyone will chip in with a bit of singing. The popularity of the Dalhousie Institute is always most in evidence at the traditional New Year dance, when the tables are crammed to capacity and it is not just the cold that causes the couples on the floor to dance a little closer. And on the stroke of midnight, the musical chimes strike twelve and the problems of the past year never seem further away as hundreds of voices break into "Auld Lang Syne".

THE railway colonies were once a focal point of Anglo-Indian life and the premier of these was the one at Kharagpur, a two-hour drive from Calcutta. We heard our fathers speak in glowing terms of the sporting life in the township, of the fabulous dances that used to be held at the railway institute there, and of the hospitality that was so legendary. But the Kharagpur of today is very different from the one our fathers knew and loved. Apart from the distinction of having the longest railway platform in the country, there is little else of interest there. The township is laid out in

Paul Guha

Nikhil Bhattacharya

Leslie Claudius, the only man in the world to represent his country at four successive Olympic Games

neat squares, the boundaries of which are narrow tarred roads that are surprisingly smooth. Very little traffic traverses these roads, apart from the occasional bus or cycle rickshaw. There are the old bungalows by the side of the roads, each with its own plot of dry land that was once a garden.

Age has begun to show. The railway institute, the scene of so many wonderful functions, is now derelict and is scheduled to be pulled down. The bandstand where once, not so long ago, brass bands played regularly, has not seen a coat of paint for many years. "There have been more changes here", Mr Rupert Wainwright told me, "more perhaps than I can ever describe to you. This used to be a thriving colony, a happy colony once upon a time, with plenty of social life, but most of the Anglo-Indians have left now". There is no bitterness in his voice, only a trace of resignation and nostalgia. He knits his brows as he tries to explain what he means. "Our children are the ones that suffer here, so a lot of them go to Calcutta to work. They stay there in hostels and come and visit us whenever they can. Even those who opt for college must leave here and go to Calcutta so you can realise what a deep sense of loneliness there is here. I have a daughter who is working in Calcutta, a son who is studying there and one daughter is working as a nurse in Patna. My other daughter and two other sons are still with me as they are still of school-going age." Mr Wainwright, who was a member of the BNR (Bengal Nagpur Railway) hockey team that won the Beighton Cup many years ago, suddenly looked very tired when I asked him about sport in the colony. "We once had the finest talent in the country here in this colony, but all that has changed now." He smiled suddenly and said "You must be getting tired of that phrase

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A view of the Mary Cooper Home from within the courtyard

by now, but it is a fact. Our Anglo-Indian boys—the few that are left here now—will find it difficult to attain the standard and proficiency in sport that people of my generation did. This is not to say that they do not have the same interest or aptitude, but there are just not enough of them left".

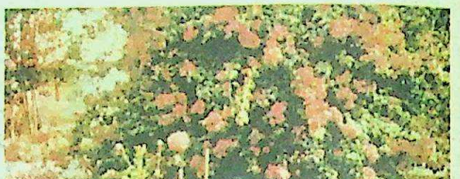
What he said is true, although a team of Kharagpur boys acquitted themselves well two years ago in the inter-railway tournament. I watched a few of them at a practice session at the colony's stadium. The game clearly meant more to them than the blazing afternoon heat but they did not quit their tireless running and dribbling till the shadows began to lengthen. While they tried to outwit each other, the sweat dripping off their brows, I noticed a middle-aged gentleman sitting about twenty yards away from me, watching the game intently. I mistook him for a resident of the town, so I walked up and began talking to him. Jerry Lonneaux, I discovered in the course of the conversation, was indeed Kharagpur-born although he now stays in Calcutta. He was more philosophical about the changes that had taken place. "Yes, it has changed unbelievably, but then that again is only to be expected, isn't it ? Still, it does come as a bit of a shock to see how this place has altered. I come here every year with my old mother. We spend about a month here and I always see more changes with each visit. The whole place is so different from the colony I remember."

"The day will come" he told me as he stubbed out his cigarette and slowly exhaled with what seemed to be a sigh of sorrow, "when there will not be a single Anglo-Indian left here. The older ones will die, their children will move on because there will be no future for them here." Teenager Vernon Wainwright echoed a similar sentiment that evening when I sounded him out in an attempt to grasp the problems of the youngsters in the colony. "I am not ashamed to be an Anglo-Indian," he told me, "but I'm willing to face facts. The education here is all right up to a certain level but I will do my college in Calcutta and stay on there to work. Personally, I feel that the era of the Anglo-Indian railway colonies has come to a close."

WITH the death of the railway colonies, the centre of Anglo-Indian life is Calcutta, in which city is represented every section of the community, from the poorest at Tiljala to those who occupy the posts of executives in various firms. They are spread out all over the city, although there are some areas which are practically mini-colonies for the community. But the community is diminishing in this city as well and there are considerably less Anglo-Indians now than there were, say, ten years ago. Many have migrated, either to England or Australia: the vast majority to the latter country. In some cases whole families have left; in others individuals packed up their bags and tried to make a new life for themselves in other countries. Some have made their fortunes, some have not but the community continues to thin out considerably.

The cement goblin and pigeon

My eldest brother Keith migrated to Australia ten years ago, and shortly after he was granted Australian citizenship, he came out on a visit to India. His new nationality led to quite an incongruous situation when he came to see me in Darjeeling, where I was in school. When my brother decided to extend his stay in the hill station, he had to take special permission, as a foreign national, in order to do so. My mother, one of my other brothers and I accompanied him to the authorities. One of them sanctioned his extension without any delay and then asked my mother if she would allow him to ask her just one question out of curiosity. My mother said yes, although she did look a little puzzled. "Madam" said the bemused official, "how is it that you have two Indian sons and one Australian son ?"



As a result of mass migration, there are cases where children leave the country one by one, until the parents are left alone, with nothing to look forward to after retirement except perhaps a meagre pension and a bleak little flat. To this end there is an essentially Anglo-Indian innovation: the home for the aged. In the absence of a joint family system, such institutions guarantee a roof over the heads of those who no longer have a means of supporting themselves. For a very nominal sum they are cared for, fed and nursed at these homes. In case they do not have the money to pay, there are certain trust funds that provide the money. The atmosphere at these places is a poor substitute for the family life that these elderly folks have been denied, or conversely, that they can no longer afford. But they have the satisfaction of knowing that all their needs will be taken care of and most of all that they do not

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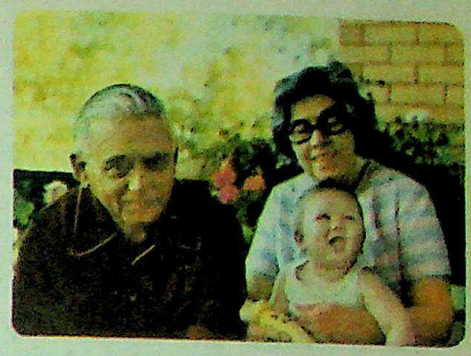
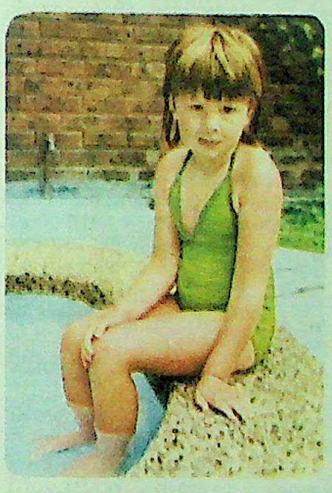
have to face the loneliness and alienation that is almost always linked with old age.

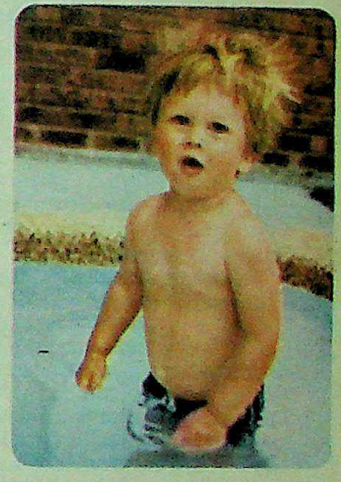
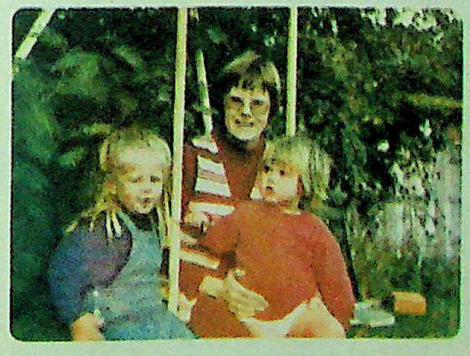
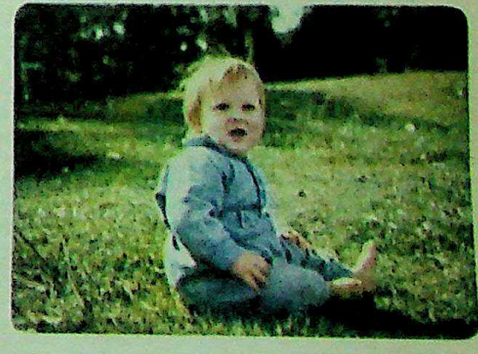
THE Mary Cooper Home for the Aged in Calcutta is well maintained and preserved. The lawns are neatly cropped, the two-storeyed building is kept immaculately clean and the brass fittings sparkle. As one enters there is a colour photograph of Queen Elizabeth, one that must have been taken many years ago. The corridors are sunny and clean. Outside, in the grassy courtyard there is a birdpond with a pigeon drinking out of it. Nearby there is a goblin in colourful clothes, complete with cap and butterfly net and it is only at this stage that one does a double-take and realises that both the goblin and the pigeon are fashioned from cement. Both are the creations of one of the inmates of the home, a Mr Nelson, who died many years ago and whose wife used to look on my three brothers and me as her sons until she died early last year.

She used to tell us stories about life at the home whenever she used to spend the day at our house. "They are very good to us," she would say, "but at the same time it can be difficult to get on with everyone. All of us are getting on in years and we all have our own idiosyncracies which do not always suit others. So there is sometimes friction but on the whole we are as happy as we can be in such a situation. Certainly we get all the attention we want." Sometimes, when she was worried or preoccupied, her outlook was different. One day, when she was particularly gloomy, she told us "You know, the worst thing about being in a home like this is that you know it is the final stage of your life. You shift into a room which you sometimes have to share. Maybe you linger on for a year, maybe five, maybe ten; but you know that your days are numbered. You know that you are going to die and it will only be a matter of time. When someone here dies, everyone wonders whose turn it is going to be next, but no one discusses it in the open."

WHEREVER there have been Anglo-Indians, there have been flowers, a truth that exists even today. Flowers were very much a part of my childhood, when our sprawling lawns were ablaze in winter with sweetpeas, cannas and beds of some of the most massive dahlias I have ever seen. One of my most vivid memories relates to the Winter of the Queen's Dahlia. My father was determined that his prize dahlia be entered in a flower show which Queen Elizabeth, on a visit to India, was to judge. So it was that a huge white beauty became known as the Queen's Dahlia. No one was allowed within a five yard radius and all games in the vicinity were naturally taboo. The Queen's Dahlia grew and prospered and everyone breathed easier as the great day drew nearer. But one of my brothers, a pugnacious





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southpaw named Brian, who must have been about twelve years old them, hit a sizzling four during a game of cricket which unfortunately snapped the stem of the Queen's Dahlia. No one spoke, which was understandable in view of the gravity of the situation. I was too young then to be included in the proceedings but I do remember that my brother Mike found a piece of thin, very strong wire and carried out instant surgery so that the Queen's Dahlia stood proud once again. That evening however I forgot my enforced vow of silence and chattily told my father what had happened. I don't recall what took place after that, but I do remember that it was a long time before I was allowed to play cricket with my brothers again.

But the flowers, which have always meant so much to Anglo-Indian families throughout India, have withered away. The once immaculately trimmed hedges are now dusty and ragged while the lawns are overgrown with weeds. The Anglo-Indians are a sadly depleted community today. Those that remain on in India live on memories of days gone by. A festival or a celebration is never the same without those members of families who have left the shores of the country for ever; without the friends who are now thousands of miles away. It is a sad community which has more or less resigned itself to the fact that it faces extinction in the not-too distant future. Anglo-Indian representation in Parliament is scheduled to come to an end in 1981, despite the best efforts of men like Frank Anthony, and a number of brows are furrowed with apprehension. Those who prefer to quit the country will grab the first chance they get; those who stay on will see their children intermarry.

It will not be very long before there is nothing left of the Anglo-Indian community except legends and old, dog-eared photographs.

Torn between two worlds

By COLIN McMAHON

I AM an Anglo-Indian and proud to be one. All that has to be said about this minority community has been, perhaps, touched upon in the books by Herbert Stark, Frank Anthony, Reginald Maher and others. I have no pretensions to add to their contributions on the history of the Anglo-Indians. Leaders like Sir Henry Gidney, Frank Anthony and A. E. T. Barrow, helped by others of lesser stature, gained recognition and constitutional guarantees for their community from the Government of India after the country gained Independence.

The Anglo-Indian is a product of a union between East and West. For over a century we were referred to as Eurasions, half-castes and country-born. Our women were looked down on as *chhee chhee*. These descriptions all have derogatory connotations. Sir Henry Gidney's efforts resulted in establishing a nomenclature more in keeping with the union between East and West and the Anglo-Indian has been clearly and unambiguously defined in the Government of India Act of 1935 Article 366 (2): "An Anglo-Indian means a person whose father or any of whose male progenitors in the male line is or was of European descent but who is domiciled within the territory of India and is or was born within such territory of parents habitually resident therein and not established there for temporary purposes only."

The Calcutta Police Force formerly provided gainful employment to very large numbers of the community but today the picture is very different. One can practically count them on one's fingers. The Railways, Customs, Post and Telegraphs, Licensed Measurers, Port Commissioners and large mercantile firms were all served by the Anglo-Indians to a very great extent, but now their almost total absence is all too noticeable.

Take a look at the playing fields in schools and on the Maidan. The Rangers Club was the only Anglo-Indian club in this city that could field two full and equally competent teams in football, hockey and cricket. All these sides could hold their own against the best available, not only in Calcutta but also from outside the city. Today's story makes very sad reading. The club's social activities were once the talk of the town—they still are, but not in the same terms.

THE services still have their nucleus of the Anglo-Indians who continue to make a name for themselves in the Rolls of Honour. Members of the community acquitted themselves honourably in both confrontations with Pakistan and perhaps even today some Anglo-Indian names remain household words. There were the Keelor brothers, then Squadron Leaders, who literally exploded the myth of the invincible Sabres used against us by the Pakistanis. Both brothers, Trevor and Denzil, shot down a Sabre each while flying Gnats, which were till then considered inferior to the F86 Sabres. No less than them were heroes like Wing Commander William MacDonald Goodman—whose Mystere pilots wreaked havoc against the opposing forces—and fliers like Tony Mousinho and Group Captain Lloyd. Lt. General Pat Dunne, who gained so much fame, was an Anglo-Indian too.

A question that appears pertinent to me is why the Anglo-Indians left this country in their thousands after Independence. Were they unmindful of the community's glorious past? Why has the community failed to respond to the Indian Government's generous attitude to them, and what has happened to their sense of loyalty? In spite of the oppression of the British for over a century, thousands have migrated to the British Isles and thousands more to the Dominions. Entire families who migrated did not always go to the same destination and very often part families remained on in India. Why did the Anglo-Indian Association at the Centre fail to tackle this problem properly and why did the West Bengal Branch actively help in accelerating this exodus?

Two very far-reaching consequences stem from this mass migration. The community has reached its lowest ebb and faces extinction in possibly a hundred years from now. Avenues for employment are being restricted not by unwillingness on the part of employees but by the fear that the Anglo-Indian is a time server and will leave as soon as it is convenient for him to do so. In spite of rigid immigration rules in Britain and the Commonwealth countries, coupled with stringent financial rules governing money that can be taken out of the country, the Anglo-Indian is still leaving. ■

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An Opposition divided

By BARUN SENGUPTA

CAN the Opposition put up a joint fight against the Congress (I) during the next Assembly elections? To me, it seems to be almost impossible. Though they are all aware that no single Opposition Party can defeat the Congress (I) in any of the States and though it is clear even to a child that only a united Opposition can put up some strong resistance to Mrs Gandhi, it would still be stupid to expect the Opposition to close their ranks. The Opposition is now more divided than it was during the Lok Sabha elections. And, I am afraid, they will be further divided in the coming months.

The truth is that apart from the CPI(M) no Opposition Party is too keen on putting up a joint fight against Mrs Gandhi. The CPI(M) has proposed one Opposition candidate in all the constituencies. Not a joint front as such—only an adjustment of seats. But the CPI(M) is no force in those nine States. The dominant forces in those States are the Janata Party and the Lok Dal. And the situation within these two Parties is so confusing at the moment and personal relations between the top leaders of these two Parties are so bitter that they cannot be expected to complete the difficult and complicated task of adjustment in about one thousand Assembly constituencies.

The Opposition can broadly be divided into five groups: the Jana Sanghees and the RSS men, the old Congress people and the opportunists, the non-Communist Left, the pro-Moscow "progressives" and the CPI(M). The Jana Sanghees and RSS men belong mostly to the Janata Party. The old Congress people and opportunists are in the Congress (U), Janata Party and the Lok Dal. The non-Communist Leftists are in the Janata, Lok Dal, Forward Bloc, RSP and PWP. The pro-Moscow progressives are in the CPI, Congress (U) and Lok Dal.

The Jana Sanghees and the RSS men are still the most organised Opposition political force in the country, though their mass base is not that strong. Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi still consider them to be their main adversaries. There are virtually three opinions within this Jana Sangh-RSS group. One group thinks that it should try to build up a broad anti-Mrs Gandhi front immediately and arrange an adjustment of seats with all the anti-Congress(I) forces. This group is headed by Atal Behari Vajpayee. The second group, headed by L. K. Advani, thinks "we should not hasten to forge an alliance again which may appear to be opportunistic and unworkable to the people". They would prefer to wait and allow all the anti-Mrs Gandhi forces to come closer during the process of a long struggle. The third group wants a dialogue with Mrs Gandhi and her son. They argue that with the presence of the Russians in Afghanistan and the threat of Pan-Islam, all patriotic Indians should come closer. They think Sanjay Gandhi is a patriotic Indian first and then everything else. This group is composed of some diehard RSS men.

The old Congressmen in the Opposition now can be divided into two groups—those who fought against Mrs Gandhi in 1969 and those who were with her till 1977. The first group is still bitter towards Mrs Gandhi, they want to stop her at all costs, but they think that no arrangement can work with a person like Charan Singh. So they do not want any adjustment with the Lok Dal. Some of the Congressmen who opposed Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi in the post-1977 period wanted a resolute and united fight against the mother and the son. They are not unwilling to join hands with the Jana Sanghees and the RSS men. Some others of this group are still bitterly opposed to the Jana Sangh and RSS and want a united front against the Congress (I) minus the Jana Sangh & RSS.

One can write page after page about the political opportunists in the Opposition today. One of the biggest opportunists on the Indian political scene today, Charan Singh, is strongly for a broad-based, anti-Indira front at the moment. He is no longer very anti-Jana Sangh and RSS. He is keen to join hands with the progressives and Leftists also. However, he has only one stipulation — he should be the leader of this front or adjustment. To the credit of this old man, it must be admitted that he is unafraid of CBI raids, unlike some of his senior former colleagues and has a strong personal base in UP and Haryana.

The other senior political opportunist of the country, Jagjivan Ram, is now playing the most disruptive role in the Opposition. The mother and the son are playing a game through him which can be compared with the game they played through Charan Singh and Raj Narain in 1979 to bring down the Janata Government. If Babuji can play the expected role successfully he may expect "a respected position in the Cabinet and immunity from this or that raid". But would not the example of Bahuguna keep him under constant fear and uncertainty?

The non-communist Left is a small force composed of the former Socialists, PSP-men and other small Parties. All of them want a broad-based front against Mrs Gandhi and they are not allergic to anyone. But, they are not a major force and hence they cannot positively influence national politics very much. The pro-Moscow Communists and progressives are also no major political force of the country. But, with their tact, experience vital positions in different Parties, money power and generous support of the pro-Moscow Press, they play a vital role in all the political manoeuvrings in Delhi. Alas, they are also divided now! Some of them are anti-Mrs Gandhi while others support her. This difference of opinion on the tactical line of the group is expected to continue till clear "friendly advice" comes from abroad.

The major Left force of the country, the CPI(M), though trying to put up a bold face against Mrs Gandhi publicly and advocating a resolute united fight against her, is also trying to buy peace with her secretly. Two of their Politbureau members have met some persons close to Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay separately since the Lok Sabha polls and have pleaded "peaceful coexistence." But the Party as such does not trust her and if there is a joint front to stop Mrs Gandhi they would welcome the idea.

Needless to say, this complicated and confused situation in the Opposition suits Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay perfectly. If they cannot bring almost all the important state Governments under Congress (I) rule and if they cannot secure a two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha they cannot go ahead with all their plans and programmes "to strengthen the country". So, till they do that they will try to keep the Opposition divided. I have no doubt, some of the Opposition Parties and leaders will go on helping them in this task.

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Asterix and the BANQUET

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Introducing the Khasis

By PRADEEP DASGUPTA

Subir Roy

Ward Lake, Shillong

MR J. N. CHOWDHURY's diligence in presenting a continuous narrative of the entire cultural and political history of the Khasis within the compass of a single volume is commendable. Any outsider seeking a broad knowledge about Khasis, one of the most advanced tribal communities of the country, will surely find the book immensely useful and interesting. The 426-page volume not only draws profusely on the accounts of all earlier writers on this and allied subjects, but also contains two illuminating articles by two noted literators of the Khasi-Pnar (Jaintia or Synteng) segment of Meghalaya. Mr Chowdhury, now above 60, has mostly lived in Shillong which is the hub of Khasi life as well as the State capital of Meghalaya. Besides, being associated with the Research Department of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh since its inception, he had access (which was "denied to or ignored by many Khasi writers", as pointed out by Mr S. J. Duncan in his foreword to the book) to all rare materials relevant to the subject of his study. All these undoubtedly make the treatise an authentic one, though its author does not claim to have done very original research on the Khasis.

Geologists say that the beautiful hilly tract, inhabited by the colourful Khasi people and described as the "Scotland of the East", originated long before the emergence of the Himalayas. The Khasi-Pnar people are amongst the earliest migrants into the north-eastern region of India, but there are controversies about their origin. Like all other tribes, the Khasis have their own legends to say that they came down from the heaven with the help of a golden ladder and chose to remain on earth. However, according to Sir E. A. Gait, the Khasis are "a remnant of the first Mongolian overflow into India", whose language "is the only surviving dialect in India of the Mon-Khmer family of languages". But while there are no two opinions about the identity of the language, others differ with Gait about the ethnic origin of the Khasis. According to Rajmohan Nath (*Background of Assamese Culture*), for instance, the Khasis and the Syntengs owe their origins to the same racial stock called 'Besatis', as mentioned in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (first century AD), which lived in the northern neighbourhood of Sumatra in a territory named "This". The Besatis people were Austric. Mr Chowdhury believes that the Khasis are basically Austric, though they acquired some Mongoloid characters in the process of their migration in prehistoric time. He agrees too with E. T. Dalton in his observation that the Austric-speaking people, who steadfastly adhered to their ancient faith, also largely retained their original language.

Mr Chowdhury's comparative approach to the Khasi matriliny and his narratives on the Khasi dress, culture, arts and crafts and religion also make interesting reading. These are factual details narrated by earlier writers in their monographs and the author has hardly added anything to them. One would, though, have expected him to dilate elaborately on the "winds of change" which have affected Khasi society, particularly since the advent of the British in the hills and following Independence, so much so that the Khasi people, in spite of the poverty of a large section of them in the rural areas and retention of some of their original social and cultural usages, can no longer be recognised as "tribals".

Writing his book, as he did, in late 1977, Mr Chowdhury could take a little more pains to further enrich and embellish the chapter on "political events" instead of stopping at the birth of the state of Meghalaya, in which the Khasis constitute a majority of the population. Indeed, the last two decades are a very important and significant chapter in the history of the Meghalayan people, more particularly the Khasis, and a depiction of the Khasi canvas remains incomplete without an elaborate coverage of the important developments of the Seventies as well as of the preceding decade. It was in the 70's that Assam's capital was shifted from Shillong, followed by the shifting of some important offices of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh and the Central Government as well, which must have had some impact on the economy of the Khasi Hills. But there is no reference to all these in book. Very recently Shillong and some other parts of the Khasi Hills witnessed serious violence. But why did this happen? The book fails to provide an understanding of the background of these happenings which must surely be there.

The Khasi Canvas, by J. N. Chowdhury, distributed by Chapala Book Stall, Shillong, Rs. 80

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Indian publishing strikes gold

By NARENDRA KUMAR

ENGLISH language publishing in India has come of age during the last decade. From being attached to the apron-strings of foreign publishing houses through their subsidiaries, it has come to have a personality of its own. While foreign subsidiaries contented themselves with reprinting programmes to feed the Indian market, to the extent that the nursery rhymes taught in public schools are in an idiom alien to Indian ears, indigenous publishing has taken qualitative jumps during this brief period. Previously Indian publishing was like the proverbial coy Indian bride, wholly dependent on the "Lord of the House". As a matter of fact, the growth of Indian publishing during the sixties was centred around the reprint programme under the wheat loan agreement with the US Government.

The programme, an indirect form of cultural imperialism, worked to the satisfaction of all except the long-range interest of publishing in India. It operated in the following manner. Plenty of rupee funds were available under the wheat loan agreement between the Governments of India and the United States. Part of the funds was made available to Indian publishers for reprinting outdated textbooks. The American publisher was happy because he could get huge royalties. The Indian publisher made a huge profit because his risk was entirely underwritten. The U. S. Government was more than satisfied because it could conveniently extend its ideological battles across the seas. The sufferers were the Indian students who were made to read books not written for their needs. From a subsidiary role during the days of British hegemony, Indian publishing was in danger of reaching the nadir by following in the steps of American publishing by accepting the wheat loan subsidies.

The upturn in Indian publishing took place only in the seventies, for which ground was prepared during the previous decade. The change came about as a result of an upswing in several walks of life in India. The Indian elite now had sufficient confidence in its potentialities by the sixties to take the initiative at home and abroad. In other words, propitious conditions were prevalent on account of favourable objective factors. Once this had been achieved, subjective situations acted as catalystic agents to bring about major changes.

There is no doubt that Asia Publishing House of Bombay showed the way like a prairie fire

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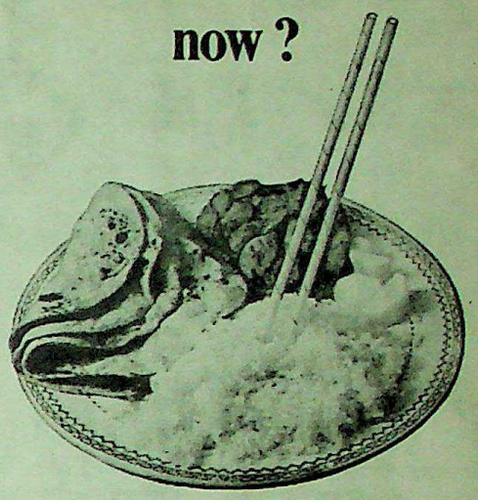
spread wide and far by a single spark. At one time, the premier publishing house came to have a virtual monopoly of quality book-publishing in India, although subsequently it came to a sad end. That is another story. What Asia Publishing House and its live-wire promoter Peter Jaysinghe came to establish was the fact that, with sustained effort, Indian publishing had the potential of being world class. The other event of note was a book that made publishing history in India. It was Lieutenant-General B. M. Kaul's *Untold Story* published by Allied Publishers in 1967. The late general, notorious for his poor leadership during the Sino-Indian war, was as pompous as any human being could be. In this book of over 500 pages, he almost tried to establish that he would have won the war single-handed but for his frequent breakdowns and the cowardly aides that surrounded him. From the fact that 1,000 copies was the outer limit for the most books published in India at that time, the book broke all records. It proved the point that the potential market for books in India was like virgin soil awaiting to be tapped. From then onwards, there was no looking back for Indian publishers. Thus the sixties provided the backdrop for what was to come about during the seventies— opening of the floodgates of the Aswan for everybody to watch in a state of perpetual wonderment.

Paradoxically enough, the seventies have also seen the widening tentacles of the public sector over publishing in India. It has cornered a big chunk of the textbook market. Witness the example of the National Council of Education and Research Training (NCERT) publishing a large variety of textbooks, an agency blissfully unaware of the latest trends in the marketing of books. Similar is the situation with other Governmental agencies like the National Book Trust and Sahitya Akademi, with huge stocks lying unsold because of inefficient management. The public sector, timid to the extreme in expressing bold ideas in print, has entered a sphere which does not legitimately belong to it. With all the advantages, it is unable to compete with private sector.

Seventies was the decade in which Indian publishing came to maturity and is now entitled to be called an industry in its own right. It is now reaching a stage where it can challenge the primacy of Anglo-American publishing in several Afro-Asian countries and match their efforts in these areas. Indian publishing has placed the foreign subsidiaries in a defensive position in general publishing and is attempting to secure a niche in textbook publishing as well. While it has not been roses all the way, Indian publishing has expanded by the ideal combination of improved publishing methods, distribution techniques, and scientific management. There has also been a careful assessment of market potentialities. The crop of Emergency books have established that proper promotion and an accurate assessment of the market can open entirely new areas and attract a wide range of readers who earlier did not buy books. These books have done more for publishing during the seventies than any other category of books.

Besides the Emergency literature, there is nothing to beat as bestseller *Freedom at Midnight*

Would you rather drink your dinner than think about your toothpaste — now ?



Have you ever wondered whether your toothpaste is giving your teeth the protection they need ? Maybe it isn't. That's why you should look at Macleans. Because Macleans actually gives your teeth a two-way protection, which is necessary for their health.

Macleans fights destructive acids harder

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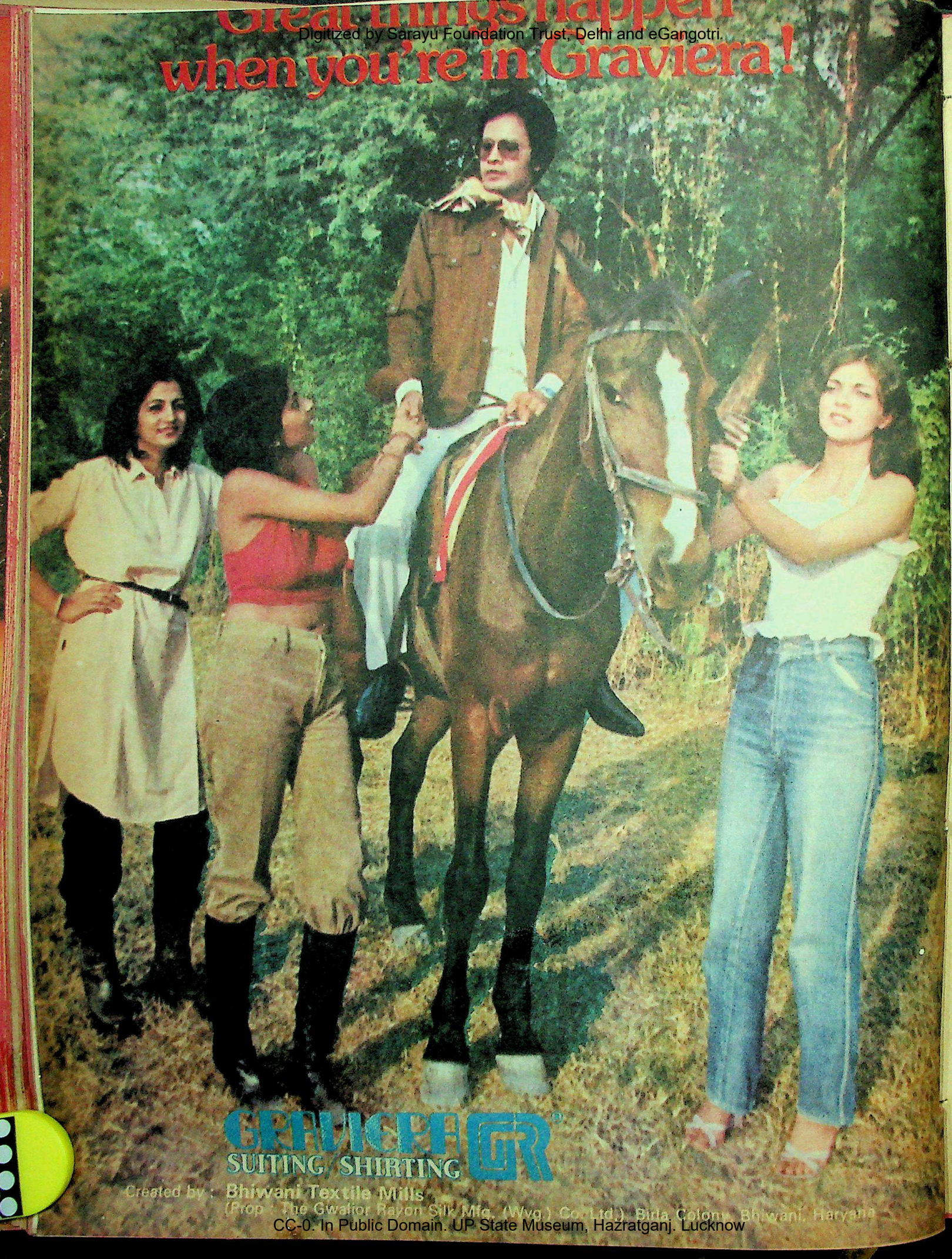

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by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. The book, written in the form of true fiction about the events leading to the independence of India, has set the publishing world practically on fire. Ordinarily, general books sell no more than 1,000 to 2,000 copies. What made so many, who normally do not touch books with a pair of tongs, buy it? This book and the plethora of Emergency books have established once and for all that there is a potential market in the country ready to be tapped. It is to be remembered that prestigious publishers all over the world depend for profits on one or two bestsellers, and the future of Indian publishing also lies in creating a similar situation.

The success of Indian publishing in the eighties is visualised on the assumption that a formula can be successfully devised to admix the bestsellers with books commanding more modest sales. Bestsellers can also be quality books. The success or failure of Indian publishing equally depends upon the academic community which, unfortunately, has not kept pace with the technological and managerial potentialities of publishing in India. High production standards cannot help a book if its contents are mediocre. The fact is that, academically, Indian books leave much to be desired. Where is a *Cambridge History of India* series or a stirring history of the freedom movement? There is not one good economic history of India produced during the last 30 years. Similarly, there is not a single good work on India's foreign policy, in spite of the fact that Jawaharlal Nehru has left rich legacy. In fact, many major fields of activity in the social sciences are totally neglected. The greatest single handicap of publishing breaking through its *Lakshman Rekha* rests on the shoulders of the academics. It devolves upon academic institutions like the Indian Council of Historical Research and the Indian Council of Social Science Research to help rectify the situation.

THE quality of books published in India during the seventies can be gauged by taking a sample of 20 books. These books can be divided into two convenient categories. The first list of ten books consists of those that can be singled out for quality the other of books that could "have been great" It may be worthwhile to make an assessment of each of the books included in our two lists. This assessment can probably be taken as a barometer of the quality of books published in the country.

My favourite book remains *Freedom at Midnight*. This is a book that has been variously described. It has also been called a *book of fiction*. However, the fictional representation has a more life-like quality than the truth itself. What distinguishes this work is the vindication of Gandhi.

The other two of my favourites are books by women authors. *Reason Wounded* is a story of a woman who dared to organize agricultural workers, appropriately described by her as "impoverished, immigrant *purbias*". She landed herself in detention under MISA during the Emergency. Mrs Lewis presents a most authentic image of what might be called the "suburban countryside". The

other book by a woman author, *My Years in an Indian Prison*, is by a young English school teacher who was arrested in 1970 for her alleged Naxalite connections. She was held for five years without trial in a Bihar prison. She presents the most moving picture of day-to-day life in a Bihar prison cell.

Two more books on my list are works of fiction. Indian English has become respectable as a result of Mulk Raj Anand's writings. I have enjoyed reading his latest novel, *Confessions of a Lover*. The book is almost an autobiography. It vividly portrays middle class life in pre-partition Punjab. Mr Anand, like any other good Punjabi, is a romantic at heart and this is amply proved in his novel. My other favourite is a novel translated from Bengali, *It Does not Die*. It is also autobiographical. *It Does not Die* by Maitreyi Devi is about Indian womanhood with its typical Mirabai complex. Her story of self love is very moving, in spite of the fact that it contains a lot of sentimental hogwash.

My Days with Gandhi by Professor N. K. Bose has been hardly noticed. But it is, perhaps, one

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of the best assessments of Gandhi. The book has a curious history. Navajivan Publishing House, which had originally sponsored the publication in the fifties, refused to publish it and the reasons for refusal are best stated in the letter that Professor Bose received from the Managing Trustees of the Publishing House: "I am of the opinion that you better be advised to leave out of the book Bapu's experiment in sex or Brahmacharya and reconstitute the book to say about Bapu's great work in Noakhali."

The remaining four titles are academic, with the exception of *Ancient India* by Professor R. S. Sharma of Delhi University. The book, intended to be a school-level textbook, has become the subject of a raging public controversy. Professor Sharma has been savagely attacked and the textbook withdrawn by the Ministry of Education. For that reason alone, apart from the readability, this book is also my favourite.

I shall include the *Indian Political System* by Professor B. B. Misra for its solidity. It is not an easy book to read but is an excellent case study of how books should come to be written. Professor Misra is a model scholar who puts his life into works. Similarly, *The History and Culture of the Indian People* in 11 volumes, edited by Professor R. C. Majumdar, is not an easy work to go through. It has a definite point of view about Indian history and states it without ambiguity. Several hundred scholars have contributed towards the completion of the series.

The best work in my view is *The Remembered Village* by Professor M. N. Srinivas who has based his monography on intensive field work done by him over a period of 18 years in a village called Rampura. The village has now been placed on the ethnographic map of the world. The records Professor Srinivas studiously compiled were destroyed in a fire, and the present monograph is based purely on memory. In a way, the accident was a blessing because the result is a book that is most readable.

THE ten books in the second list are in the category of the "may have been" greats. Some of those fall short of being outstanding and others are simply mediocre. Of these, seven are autobiographies, memoirs and diaries, two are about the Emergency and the last is a piece of fiction based on a film script. Of these, *Jawaharlal Nehru — A Biography* by Professor S. Gopal is the most meticulous work on the late Prime Minister. Sponsored by the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund with almost full access to private papers, the biography, however, is not definitive. Professor Gopal has so much as confessed in the preface that "Jawaharlal was the hero of my youth." And the biography does not rise above the level of adulation.

Contrasted with this work *The Story of My Life* by Morarji Desai is a mere catalogue of events. The third volume, written under detention during the Emergency, is more pre-occupied with Mrs Gandhi's style of functioning than with his own life. While the sincerity of the man is apparent, this does not compensate for what is normally defined as an autobiography.

The next is *Portrait of a President* by Gyanwati Darbar. This is diary based on daily jottings by the late President Dr Rajendra Prasad. There are more than 500 letters written during six years, i.e., 1956 to 1962 by the President of India, oddly enough, to his personal secretary. The volumes are a fit subject for the psychological analysis of the great man. Apart from revealing some minor facts about Dr Rajendra Prasad, the letters are not very forthcoming.

In a separate category is *Living an Era* by D. P. Mishra, now in two volumes. Mr Mishra was in the thick of major political controversies in the Congress Party. He has done a meticulous job of writing his autobiography but there are no fireworks in it. However, it is excellent as a book of record. It is hoped that in his final volume of memoirs dealing with Mrs Indira Gandhi era, he may come out with some interesting facts.

The next work is an autobiography by the great diplomat K. M. Panikkar. It has been translated from Malayalam and seems to be based on pieces contributed to a periodical publication. This is established by the fact that each chapter is more or less of uneven length. I felt very much disappointed by this work because he seems to be less than frank in stating the facts.

A Dangerous Place by the former American Ambassador to India got undue local publicity because of its brief reference to the activities of CIA in this country. The book is based on his jottings as the American representative to the UN, and it certainly does not deserve the publicity it has received.

There is also the other category of three books relating to Emergency. First of all, mention must be made of *Prison Diary* of Jayaprakash Narayan. The first few words — "my world lies in a shambles around me. I am afraid I shall not see it put together again in my life-time" — are very evocative. Otherwise, the diary does not measure up to the standards expected of the grand old man of Sarvodaya. Similarly, Kuldip Nayar's *The Judgement*, which proved to be a runaway success, could still have been a more outstanding work but for the time available to the author to write the book. However, it has done more for anti-authoritarianism than many other books on the same subject. Nihal Singh's book *Indira's India: A Political Notebook* which was late in coming, contains several perceptive remarks but otherwise there is not much in it.

Last but not least is a piece of fiction by the well-known novelist M. Malgonkar. Since it is based on a film-script *Shalimar*, Malgonkar had to work under creative restraints.

The above assessment of 20 books published during the last decade amply establishes that the breakthrough in Indian publishing is imminent, but for the fact that the academicians in India are not producing works of quality that can place India on the publishing map. Contemporary India is full of unlimited possibilities — only if the intellectual community will awake, arise, and accept the challenge posed before it.

The author is Managing Director of Vikas Publishing House

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Goa's drug rings flourish

Problem for the law

IT took a cartload of firewood, five litres of kerosene, half a dozen old truck tyres and two and a half hours to burn his body. He had died due to excessive drugs on a Goan beach. The police collected the ashes the next day and handed them over to his mother, a Canadian, who had come to Goa for this sole and painful purpose. Since her arrival, she had been moving, for four days, between the city morgue and her hotel.

Hippism is, at long last, dying,—even in Goa—a slow and inexorable death. Drug-running is not. Why? No one has an answer. How drug-running is expanding is partly known. The growth of tourism has also enhanced the availability of willing—and well-paid—carriers, now no more the scruffy, self-incriminating hippy of yesteryear, but a more elusive, ostensibly more affluent "visitor from abroad". It is also known, even if partly, who the men are behind the scenes. Enoch Powells the world over might be delighted to know that Indian migration to the West has become, due to a variety of reasons, a definite "faptor" in the everexpanding racket.

White danseuses in dishabille ("no photographs please" was the agreed condition to my entry) convolute in an ever-accelerating rhythm to a climactic frenzy, with several of them sprawled on the ground and hysterically gyrating their, by now, bared pubis. A while ago, they had been swinging slowly, and almost artistically, their arms while dancing. They held in the hollow of their palms little coconut shells with oilsoaked cotton wicks lit inside. And the little tongues of flickering fire made beautiful zigzag images in the dark, smokefilled room. This, I am told, is no choreographic tomfoolery; this is the latest and unabridged edition of the "Lord's prayer". At the end of it all, every one is given his daily bread and a fair share of "Shit", which is what they call hashish. Morphine and LSD have to be paid for. So must 'hash', if demanded in large quantities. The Nordic girl by my side, her wrinkled breasts hanging from her emaciated ribcage, can afford us more than the free community chillum which she shares with a midget-sized Negro, garishly dressed, wearing dark glasses, and huge silver rings which twinkle every time he appreciatively, and almost frequently, pendulates his head to the tune of the music booming from the sound system.

The day in this commune begins at dawn. The arch priest, a lame French Canadian, asks everyone to queue

Lt Governor P. S. Gill

and makes them peel potatoes, chop cabbages and dice meat. The cauldron is then put to boil. It is a tasty chop-suey, sold at Rs 15 for "a bellyful". In the rooms hired out by the commune, freedom knows no bars. After the chop-suey, a massive and hirsute Indian repaired to his room with two white girls in tow. They had rapturously acknowledged they all had the "right vibes". They left in a hurry.

Here, in this commune, hashish, is chemically refined and a whole kilo converted into tiny pastilles, not much larger than shirt buttons. In fact, some pastilles are camouflaged to look like cloth buttons.

A leading partner of this particular ring is a London-based Indian. He has, rather ingeniously, used his position as a jailer to build up his gang of peddlers, pushers and carriers. All around the beach there are joints with suggestive names. There is one right on the main road which is "The Flower Scene Restaurant. Another, in the midst of a coconut grove, is the "Dog's Place". Nude men and women bathe at the two nearby wells.

In recent swoops, by police, local Excise and Central Excise—all much to the merriment of the dope rings acting disjointedly and, often, at cross purpose—Goa's Calangute-Baga-Anjuna beach belt has yielded, at least, 60 kgs of hashish and opium and morphine worth about Rs 1.5 to 2 lakhs. But this is "Chicken feed" admit the investigators. With the recent events in the Middle East leading to a virtual stoppage of overland tourism between Europe and India, presently the emphasis is on air transport and hallucinogenics are locally treated in order to reduce weight and bulk.

Francis Coralie Mullin, whose habeas corpus petition failed in the Supreme Court is one of the few of her kind held under COFEPOSA, for suspected linkages with major international drug gangs. Recently Goa police stumbled accidentally on "Adolph" a German wanted in his country for the last eight years in connection with a number of major criminal cases, two of which have already earned him a conviction to 12 years of hard labour. This particular German seems to be in league with an Indian who goes by the name of Byriani. Byriani's ambition is that of putting up the largest and most uptodate beauty parlour in Bombay. Reportedly, the CBI had the registers of the luxurious Fort Aguada Beach Resort photographed, after it was established that Byriani was a frequent guest at the hotel. Two years ago, on March 12, 1978, one of his lady friends—the wife of a rich Indian clothier established in Paris—died suddenly and mysteriously in a cottage at the Aguada resort rented by Byriani and where both had been living. According to the account given to the police, they were planning a luxury restaurant in Goa. The lady's death was due to "cardiac ischiemia" and her body was promptly claimed and cremated in Goa by someone who identified himself as her son.

The various enforcement authorities privately concede that they hardly feel encouraged to take to drugracket busting seriously. They have positive information that the gangs have considerable resources, both by way of contacts at the right places with loyal and ruthless liquidators on their payroll. Intelligence sources even suggest that some of the Indian associates of the foreign gangs have, in turn, "clean" business associations with the high and mighty.

Such as? I query

Such as Ruksana, is the answer.

Ruksana who? I insist.

You are asking too much now, I am told and lewd laughter rocks the investigator's tiny cubicle.

According to Central Excise sources, it is difficult to assess what is going on in Goa on the drug scene. "These are all flowing transactions", I am told. What does it mean? Apparently, not much more than that. for some obscure reason, there is a kind of inertia. But bureaucrats' inhibitions are understandable. Goa's State Excise Commissioner, young, petite, intelligent and charming Mrs Dhingra, an IAS, officer has been under pressure from none other than the Lt. Governor himself. The Lt. Governor wanted her to issue a permit of three tolas of opium for his opium-addicted elder brother, Mr. Bhagwan Singh. Mrs Dhingra refused. And a move is now on to have the law amended since an honest officer would neither bend nor break it!

MARIO CABRAL E SA, Panaji

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Sugar prices zoom

Then it must be election time

The Union Agriculture Minister, Rao Birendra Singh, at the swearing-in ceremony

ONE clue that the dissolution of the Assemblies and the resultant elections were certainties was the price of sugar, unfailing indication of the intentions of politicians out on the prowl for election funds. That sugar has become the commodity for swindling the consumer and simultaneously swelling election coffers is perhaps nothing new, but what is new is the soaring height reached by such blatant swindling. Consumers remain helpless despite the so-called 'Consumers' Guidance' and the Essential Commodities Act.

What makes the sugar swindle so scandalous is the fact that politicians are directly involved here. With regard to other commodities, it is an accepted fact that the private sector indulges in profiteering and passes on slush money and election funds to politicians at election time on a quid pro quo basis. But in the case of sugar, since the sugar barons are either Ministers or political chieftans the judge and the accused are one. The Government makes the money and cries wolf at the same time.

In Bombay this is what happened in the period between the Congress (I) victory at the Lok Sabha polls and the first week of March. After Mrs Gandhi came to power, sugar, which was selling around Rs. 5 per kg, zoomed to Rs. 7 and above. In addition, it was not available in several places. Who pocketed this extra money? Till February 15, Maharashtra, which produces one-third of the country's sugar, produced eight lakh tonnes. The total sugar available therefore was eight lakh tonnes plus a further nine lakh tonnes which was the opening stock from the previous season. Of this, 12 lakh tonnes were still with the factories as on January 31, thereby creating an artificial shortage. One of the reasons given by the sugar barons was nonavailability of wagons.

The cost of production of sugar in Maharashtra is among the lowest in the country. Compared to Rs. 3.35 per kg in Bihar it is Rs. 2.20 in Maharashtra. Adding the excise cost plus transport charges it comes to around Rs. 2.90 per kg. But sugar was selling in the market at between Rs. 6 and Rs. 7 which means that the sugar barons made a clear Rs. 3 per kg or Rs. 300 per quintal or Rs. 3,000 per tonne. So assuming that they sold six lakh tonnes the sugar barons made a clear Rs. 18 crores.

The consumers have been swindled to the tune of Rs. 18 crores. One might argue that this money made is not black money and was made officially but then all money in the coffers of the sugar factories is the property of the sugar barons and the barons alone. And this means that the sugar barons have this much money to play around with in the Assembly elections. One has to watch their extravagant election campaigns to know how much they have to throw around. And who are these sugar barons? Today two-thirds of the sugar factories in Maharashtra are owned by the Congress (I) politicians and the rest Congress (U) politicians led by Vasantdada Patil and Mr Sharad Pawar respectively.

Another indication is the mysterious silence of the Union Agriculture Minister, Rao Birendra Singh. Shortly after he assumed the portfolio he promised to hold a departmental inquiry into the muddle which had resulted in the soaring of sugar prices. He promised that stringent measures would be taken against those found guilty. One waited in vain, however, for him to act but nothing happened, because he must have discovered his fellow Congressmen as the biggest beneficaries. Singh was enthusiastic initially perhaps because he thought that the muddle was the making of the previous Government. It is true that the Charan Singh Government had subtly gifted Rs. 3 crores to the sugar mills. As one paper wrote on December 31, 1979; "by raising the price of sugar by Rs. 30 the Charan Government made a subtle gift running into crores of rupees to industry and trade. The Government has imposed an excise duty of Rs. 30 per quintal on old stocks in order to prevent mills from taking advantage of the increased price. However mills (have) already transferred huge stocks from godowns and the amount of sugar in the pipeline is over ten lakh tonnes. It means that hoarders and traders will coolly make Rs. three crores at the cost of the consumers".

In Maharashtra the sugar barons have always manipulated the disposal of sugar for personal or Party gain and do not hesitate to create an artificial scarcity if necessary. During the period from October 1978 to June 1979 they sold only 16 lakh tonnes, averaging less than two lakh tonnes per month because prices were Rs. 2.40 per kg. In the period July-September 1979 when prices went up to Rs. 2.90 per kg they sold seven lakh tonnes or over 2 lakh tonnes per month.

They can keep stocks endlessly because of the liberal loans they get. They got Rs. 62 crores from the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank, Rs. 14 crores from the Urban Cooperative Bank and Rs. 20 crores from the District Central Cooperative Banks to which they hypothecate sugar stocks. This is allegedly how they were able to carry stocks from April 1978 to July-September when prices rose.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

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NOTES

A FRIEND of mine has been living in Western Europe for about ten years now. He is a professional sitar player, travelling where the diminishing Indian music market will take him: not very far now that George Harrison has withdrawn his patronage to this exotic art form and the nirvana-seeking adolescent is under pressure to remain a football hooligan in West Ham. My friend divides the year between England, France, Germany and India with London as his base, and he remains an Indian passport holder.

A few months ago he received a printed letter from the Electoral Registration Officer asking him to enter the Register of Electors 1980 by filling up the enclosed form. Initially he thought this to be a mistake: after all as an Indian citizen how could he be "entitled to vote at Parliamentary, European Assembly' or local elections". But then he read the form and discovered that he was perfectly capable of voting for or against Missus Thatcher if he wanted to. The very first sentence in the form said : "You are required to enter—meaning all British subjects—(Commonwealth citizens are British subjects) and citizens of the Irish Republic who will be resident at your address on 10th October 1979 and who will be 18 or over by 15th February 1981" etcetera. I don't know what the citizens of the Irish Republic feel about this privilege, but the arrogance of that claim shocked me. "Commonwealth citizens are British Subjects." Her Majesty's Government may not be willing to admit it publicly, but we Indians stopped being subjects of Britain three decades ago. All "subject races" get limited franchise, I suppose: the right to vote but no right to full citizenship or elected office—that privilege is reserved for the correct mix of hormones. The horror scenario for a distant future: could British troops come to the aid of their Indian "subjects" in any "crisis"? Old colonisers never die; they simply stop getting into headlines.

IT probably sounds absurd, coming from a resident of Calcutta, but London must be one of the most depressing cities in the world—and believe me cities like Calcutta have a lot to be depressed about. But London must take the first place in the paranoia stakes. For the casual brown visitor the problem is more acute. Walk into a pub and you feel as if a film of hostility has been wrapped over your skin. Walk into a cinema to see *The Canterbury Tales* and people look at you as if they have come for the art and you have come for the tits. Worst of all, London must be the most expensive place to get depressed in.

Actually, I can quite understand the Londoner getting sick of a tourist's face; he sees it so often. Tourism is a very debilitating service industry, consisting largely of selling myths at the maximum rate the market can bear; it's a con game, and nobody is quite sure how long the sting will last. There is too much that is sleazy in this business; you need both insultingly expensive restaurants and cheap pornography to satiate the widely varied needs of the tourist so that he can go back to Prohibition City, Saudi Arabia, or Very Littleville, Utah and brag about the "fun" that was had in London. All this must be especially galling for a city like London : after all once upon a time the Dick Whittingtons came to look at the Queen and the streets were paved with gold — you came then to pay homage to the city that ruled the world, and partook of such crumbs as it deigned to throw your way. London did not have to sell itself; the world came to it bearing gifts. Even after losing its political power London retained its confidence till the Sixties. Then suddenly it changed from vivacious queen into an old whore. Having been stripped of its power, proud London had an Arab sitting on its bum. Enough to depress anybody.

THEATRE and wit seem the only British assets that have survived the many onslaughts on British existence in recent times. It's impossible to get into the theatre since the tourists have bought all the tickets. The peculiar and fascinating British wit is still audible at dinner parties. Indeed this dark wit must be one of the finest achievements of the British upper classes, the only people in today's world who spend time and intellect turning conversation into an art form. It now seems that the egalitarianism of the second half of this century has managed to carry this wit down to the lower levels. When a certain person, whose name I do not want to remember, won nearly a million pounds at the pools, the BBC sent a team to find out what the man in the street (I thought he had gone out of fashion, but he clearly isn't extinct) would have done if a million pounds suddenly dropped into his lap. One old man answered the TV reporter immediately : "I would get rid of my wife". An exclamation mark, not to mention a question mark, hung in the air. Until the old man explained : "She would spend it, wouldn't she?" I challenge anyone to come up with an equivalent story.

IN yet another marvellous episode in the long-continuing and God-knows-when-ending serial, *Operation Bluff*, the rich have managed to divert all the anger that should legitimately be addressed towards them. Once again the diversion has been in the direction of the working class : example, the massive hostility towards the steel strike. The industrialists of the diminishing competence, the financiers with friends in the Cabinet, the traders who get richer with every hiccough in the currency market and every deceit in international relations, the propertied who own vast stretches because of some lecherous or murderous ancestor : all these are respectable people, deferred to by the masses, pandered to by a mass media which has William Hickey instead of a heart and advertising instead of a brain. The working class is the big evil behind all Britain's problems. Every generation needs its whipping boy : the working class has become the target this time around. The hysteria with which the steel strike is being attacked, the passions that are being aroused, seem astonishing to a visitor. These are not the muted tones of democratic socialism or indeed social democracy; this is the harsh jingoism of war. Of course the working class has never made things easy for its defenders. In victory it is uncertain, in struggle it is fractious, and in defeat it is broken. It is lured into too many mistakes. At the moment the British working class seems headed for trouble. All the institutions are concentrating their heavy guns on it.

FOR us *Playboy*-hungry Indians, it is impossible to resist the temptation to pick up a copy upon arrival in the land of the free and the brave and the nude.

Particularly when Bo Derek is on the cover. Once again the American media has provided an international symbol of the wet dream, and once again I too have become a victim. What to do? But the most interesting thing I read in the March issue of *Playboy* had nothing to do with Bo Derek (the piece on her was awful even by the appalling standards set by tits and bum journalism). *Playboy* informed its readers that one place you can still buy chastity belts for the fornicating wife is in England. Apparently David Renwick of Sheffield hand forges them and sells them for 80 dollars each to those gentlemen inclined to keep a grip on their wives' morals in such a fashion.

M.J.AKBAR from LONDON

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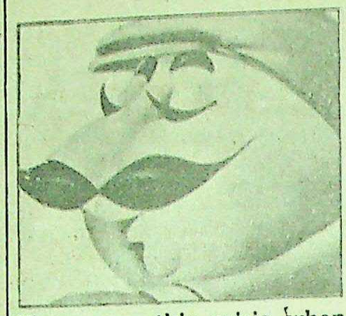
Pageantry and damp eyes

The Dalhousie Athletic Club, Calcutta, which turned 100 on March 8 this year, is the oldest football club in the country. There are no visible signs of age, however, and the lawns of the club are still as immaculately trimmed and green as they ever were. The tennis courts are still in excellent shape and the flower beds are still tended by loving hands. Like other clubs (which were founded later of course) on the Maidan, it is actually a tent-like construction but obviously very solid. There is thick green canvas wrapped around steel girders in order to provide a construction. The reason for this curious form of building is intriguing. When these Maidan clubs were founded, the Army authorities at nearby Fort William discovered that the buildings would obstruct their field of fire in case of an invasion. So the clubs had to resort to this form of tents which could be dismantled in a short while to give the Army an unrestricted field of fire.

The early history of the club is the history of the Indian Football Assiciation. Originally known as the Traders Club, it was founded by British residents working for Hamilton and Co, a jewellery concern in 1874. Six years later it assumed its present name although it is not known whether this had anything to do with Lord Dalhousie. When the Indian Football Association was founded in 1893, the Dalhousie Athletic donated a handsome trophy called the Trades Cup which later merged with the IFA Shield.

The club's president, the warm and popular Pearson Surita, spoke to Syed Nisar Mehdi Abdi on the last day of the centenary celebrations. "We may be 100 years old," he said, "but we are still a very happy family. That's what a club should be."

The Maharajah's puppeteers



There was this crisis when Air India were given a nine-hour ultimatum to remove one of their hoardings at Bombay's Nariman Point. The problem lay in the text of the copy, which ran "Sing, Charan, sing", a delightful spoof on that familiar sentence in every kindergarten reader, "Sing, mother, sing". This resulted in a discreet order to Hindustan Thomson Associates, the agency that handles Air India's advertisement campaign, to lay off politics. There had been other such capers before, like a hoarding which showed Acharya Kripalani and Krishna Menon dressed only in red underwear and competing against one another in a beauty contest. It even raised a major question in Parliament about the media's freedom to spoof our leaders. One recalls, however, that Krishna Menon laughed off the matter.

It is a sad end, according to Ashish Rajadhyaksha, if indeed it has really ended, to a fine age in Indian ad-advertising. Bobby Kooka's 25 by 10 hoardings outside the Air India building all had one thing in common—the stamp of excellence. Ivan Arthur, copy chief at HTA and the person presently behind the hoardings, says "It is one of the most subtle forms of PR that one can imagine. It attempts to give a social comment while simultaneously getting its message across. We are not a big airline, we aren't the best in the world, but we are nice people to travel with, fun people, who can laugh at ourselves. It is this subtlety that most of our imiators—people who have tried to reflect current topics in their hoardings—have failed to achieve". He held up a board to illustrate his point. The legend ran "Let's fly from this 'promise' land to 40 cities worldwide". A neat swipe at the election campaigns.

Martian garbage?

Skylab had fallen long ago, so what could this strange contraption be? One moment it was floating in the sky and the next it was in the nets of a group of fisherman off the Digha coast, in the Bay of Bengal. First there was mild consternation, followed by a flutter of excitement. Could it be a satellite? Whatever it was, there was sure to be a reward for its recovery, so fishing for the day was temporarily forgotten and everyone returned to terra firma, where the news spread faster than a forest fire. The village elders were summoned and the grey-beards were nonplussed as they looked at the strange object from one angle, then another. But none of them could fathom out what the strange object was. A consensus was taken and the UFO was delivered to the nearest police station. A few enquiries, a couple of telephone calls and the mystery was solved. It was nothing quite as exciting as a miniature spy satellite : only an errant piece of meteorological equipment. Newspaper reports described it as a brass pot mounted on a tripod and weighed down by an anchor. When the Calcutta Met Department was contacted, the Director told Tirthankar Ghosh that he had not been informed about the recovery. He did say, however, that weather balloons with scientific instruments were sent aloft to monitor the latest weather reports and conditions. We presume, then that this particular balloon came to grief. Or was the object part of a high-flying B-52?

Dry wit

Nikhil Bhattacharya

Geoff Boycott has a great reputation. Indeed he has two reputations, if we may be permitted to say so. Everyone knows he is a great batsman : that's the first. In cricketing circles he is looked on as a snob ; that's the second. But Haresh Munwani had a pleasant surprise when he met the English cricketer in Bombay when the team arrived for the Jubilee Test. He found Boycott very receptive and warm as the Yorkshireman seemed to be in a very friendly mood. He even referred to Gavaskar with such affection as if he was the boy next door, and referred to him in almost every second sentence. What was more conspicuous was that he did not want to say anything about his teammates. One of his more classic comments was "If anyone ever picked a team with just Sunny and me, he wouldn't have to worry about the other nine players. If Sunny and I made 30 runs each and remained not out, that would be half the battle won. You see, to do that would take us one whole day". Good Yorkshire humour, that.

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Weird encounters of the stilted kind

It could have been a scene straight out of a science fiction fantasy. A "creature" about 12 feet high walked down one of the busiest thoroughfares of Madras. The consequences, of course, can be imagined. Everywhere, traffic came to a halt as drivers and passengers alike stared and rubbed their eyes to make sure they were not having visions. Pedestrians craned their necks to get a better look, while taking care at the same time to ensure that they were reasonably far away in case the monster should turn boisterous. Little children whimpered in fear, and one inveterate alcoholic swore he would never touch the stuff again.

Even while life in the vicinity was paralysed temporarily, the clear notes of a bugle rang out from the pinnacle of the Madras University clocktower. As if by way of echoes, more bugles joined in and within moments the area was crammed with curious people, wanting to know precisely what was going on. Then it turned out that the monsters were only humans on stilts. Unannounced, unheralded, Italian street theatre had come to Madras, by way of a street performance of *Albatri*, the dramatisation of a story written by French poet Baudelaire. A folk band kept everyone enthralled while the performers went through all their antics on the street. Like the Pied Piper of Hamlyn, the "creature" lured its audience—no longer apprehensive—along half a kilometre.

Actually, Tamil culture has its own variety of street theatre known as Tharu Koothu, which is very popular in rural areas. Yet, strangely enough, it took Remzo Vescovi's *Teatro Tascabile di Bergamo* to display the true potential of this unusual art form. Many citizens of Madras who missed the show, adds Ashok Kamath, have reason to rue it.

What could be 'better'?

Nikhil Bhattacharya

Sunday, March 9 was the Big Day, Invitation Cup day. There were 26,000 people at the RCTC (Royal Calcutta Turf Club), half of them the scarred veterans of innumerable battles with their bookies; the regulars who do not mind whether it is a horse race, a donkey race or a zebra race just so long as they get the chance to lay their bets. The rest of the mammoth crowd, who probably wouldn't even be able to tell the difference between horses, donkeys or zebras, were at the racecourse simply because it was the biggest social event of the year. Certainly everyone got what they wanted. The socialites paraded and were admired, the punters betted and lost and the newcomers experienced the hysteria that is racing.

There were two other attractions as a bonus. First there was West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu. Second, adds S. Vijayraghavan, was a yogi tipster, a self styled sadhu giving money-back guarantees if his tips proved to be duds.

Charlie Bronson and all that jazz ...

Satyendranath Mahalanobis

The Jazzfest that was held in Calcutta in late February caused a great deal of excitement for music fans in this city. It was a very festive atmosphere at the grounds of St Paul's Cathedral; indeed it was a welcome change to see so much life and colour in the precincts of a church. The stars were celebrities of course, but not in the same category as cricketers, although there were autograph hunters by the dozen. On the first day, however, there was great excitement. Whisper had it that the famous barrel-chested actor Charles Bronson had arrived and was somewhere in the audience. Everywhere, everybody stared hard in the hope of finding the actor first. One timid young lass spotted someone who fitted the description and told her friend sitting alongside her. The friend told another friend who in turn told yet another friend. But no one wanted to go and see if the rumour was really a rumour or if it had its basis in truth. Eventually the friend of a friend of somebody else's friend decided to beard the lion in his den and clutching an autograph book, walked up to where the great man sat. He smiled at her and signed. She was ecstatic and went back to her friends giggling with glee. Together they examined the signature. It was not Charles Bronson. Nor was it Casimir Buchinsky (the actor's real name). The signature read "Manfred Schoof". Enquiries revealed that Bronson's double was actually a trumpeter with the group Globe Unity. But the friend of a friend of somebody else's friend was still not convinced. So she stood around till Bronson/Schoof left. Alas, though the features tallied exactly with, those of the actor, the man was not half as broad as the Hollywood he-man.

Marry, 'tis passing strange

Everything was going according to schedule. The parents of the young girl had selected a suitably handsome young man and the date for the wedding had been finalised. There was the usual gaiety and last-minute excitement, but there were no portents of what was to happen. On the appointed day, when the car arrived for the bride, it was discovered that the house was surrounded by young men of the locality who had an earnest plea to make. The groom, they insisted, was a notorious character with whom marriage was a way of life. It appeared that he had been married several times before, the sole intention being the lure of a dowry. While these explanations were being made, the groom and his father managed to slip away, but they did not escape for long. The bride's family, accompanied by the young men, arrived on the trickster's doorstep and proved that their allegations were true.

The groom and his father were then looked up in a room, reports Biswaranjan Sarkar, while the local people appealed to the young men to replace the groom. Eventually, one young man, who was asleep in his house, was awoken and told the story. He agreed to marry the girl, but insisted on speaking to her first. His wish was granted and he explained to the girl that though he was educated, he was unemployed and in addition, had also served a term as a political prisoner. The girl, undaunted, agreed to the wedding.

That was not the end of the sort story. The trickster was made to part with his clothes for his replacement and the wedding went off smpothly. The next day, the rogue had his head shaved and was made to run seven rounds of the locality, interspersed with thrashing.

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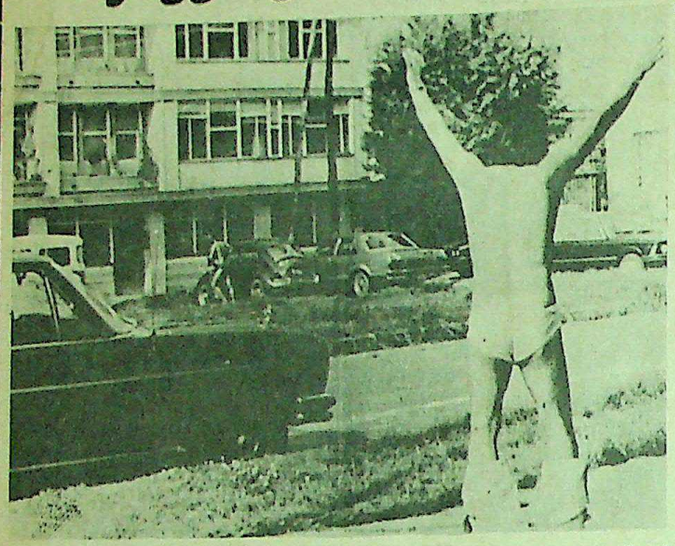
THE WORLD

Jogging to ransom



February 27 was the Dominican Republic's Independence Day. Little did the 27 diplomats suspect that they would soon be imprisoned and kept hostage by a group of guerillas belonging to the April 19th Movement (M-19). All the guerillas wanted was the release of political prisoners of whom they named 311, 50 million dollars and admission by the Colombian Government that it had been holding show trials and torturing prisoners. There was no means of communication between the guerillas and those negotiating the release of the hostages till a reporter ventured forth to the Dominican Embassy with barely his underwear and a two-way radio. It is believed that the Colombian President, Julio Cesar Turbay is unwilling to bend down to the demands of the guerillas. He has a reason since the guerillas cannot be trusted at all. When they went to take over the Embassy they were in the guise of joggers and they carried weapons in their sports bags. They looked so innocent that no one bothered them. Military rulers, beware of joggers with sports bags on their shoulders.

The second sex arrives

Women might after all be allowed to make an entry into a hallowed male precinct—the French Academy. There is a vacant chair among the 40 caused by the death of Roger Caillois. Within the forbidden walls of the erudite institution on the Left bank of the Seine a bitter struggle has been going on since last December between those who have championed the cause of French authoress, Marguerite Yourcenar, and Jean Dorst, the director of the Paris Natural History Museum. The elections had been postponed after an exchange of insults among the intellectuals. Most young members of the Academy have sponsored me Marguerite Yourcenar. One such is Jean d'Ormesson, the former editor of *Le Figaro*. He is 56 years old and has had to be at the receiving end of the insults. He has been called a "leftist" and a "young hooligan". Mme Yourcenar is definitely a favourite of the young since she had her passport restored in record time by 54-year-old the French Justice Minister and author Alain Peyrefitte, also an Academy member. She had become a naturalised American citizen and has a home in New England for the last 30 years. She also has dramatist Eugene Ionesco and Felicien Marceau supporting her. Among her opponents are Andre Chamson who has named her a "Loch Ness monster". The other is Jean Dutourd, the famous columnist who said: "I am against a woman in the Academy". For him the greatest honour one could do to a woman was to admire her without electing her. But his words proved useless. The members of the Academy did elect after 345 years by 20-12 votes the Belgian-born 76-year-old Marguerite Yourcenar.

Shakespeare to provide relief

There were nine young "Elizabethans" rolling off "words, words, words" written by the illustrious Bard of Avon. They were trying to read the complete works of William Shakespeare — all 37 plays, 154 sonnets and 5, poems consisting of 107,098 lines—in an effort to break the world record of 37 hrs 22 mins. This speed reading performance took place on February 29 in England. The competitors were drama students from Bretton Hall College, Wakefield and the Royal Holloway College of London, the present record holders. Altogether ten students were chosen to exercise their vocal chords and tongues. However, one woman had to drop out as she had chicken pox. The readers looked after their voices and their stomachs with sausages and chips, throat tablets, peppermints, aspirin tablets and water. All this frenzy and speed were indeed for a good cause since the students were collecting aid for OXFAM relief.

Fourthcoming ?

This should be a lesson to all weight watchers and fans of that special American ambassador with only three credentials: a hefty physique, a big mouth and a beautiful wife. He was not successful in arranging the Olympic boycott of the African countries. Perhaps that spurred him on and he declared that he was going to make a comeback by winning the world heavyweight title for the fourth time in succession. And Muhammad Ali, preacher and boxing champ—in that order, since he prefers to do more preaching now — meant business. He went in to his Deer Lake training camp weighing 251 pounds and by March 4, after his rigorous workout he was down to 243 pounds only.

Olympian interpretations

Whether the Moscow Games eventually take place or not, the Soviet Union is going ahead with preparations. And for the Russians everything is centred around politics: even the students being trained as interpreters for the Olympics are being closely scrutinised under a political microscope. For a start, their political knowledge has to be as vast. In addition, of course, their knowledge of a second language has to be considerable. The Komsomol members of Moscow, therefore, have the best chances of being selected as interpreters since they are, the only ones who can demonstrate their dependability by their attendance at political meetings. Consequently, preparations are also afoot at the Moskovsky Komsomolets Institute for oral political examinations and for the assessment of socio-political awareness.

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A street named home

Around 52,000 people needed houses in the Dutch capital of Amsterdam. So what did they do? On March 3, the homeless set up barricades on the streets and squatted. The authorities acted. More than 1,000 troops and policemen using tanks and armoured cars cleared the barricades. But they had nothing against the squatters so they let them stay on the streets. According to the Amsterdam city council the Dutch capital has not seen such violence since 1975. However, at that time the issue was different. The protest was against the demolition of houses to accomodate a new metro. The city fathers hope that the tempers of the protesters will cool down by April 30 when Princess Beatrix will become queen. Meanwhile, the city council is undaunted. It is planning to bring new legislation against protesting on streets and it will then be punishable by fines. Till then, for the Dutch, a street is a home away from home.

Not cricket

Football players in Italy are believed to be playing a different type of game. Recently, a fruit dealer and a restaurant owner filed a complaint on behalf of a gambling syndicate, which had suffered heavy losses, that 27 players of 12 teams including two national stars were guilty of taking bribes to change the outcome of the league games. This upset the gamblers who had lost a lot of money. The Italian state prosecutor's office has already started investigating although no proof has yet been offered. The two national players supposedly involved are Paolo Rossi of Perugia and Lazio's striker, Bruno Giordano. Rossi and other Italian footballers earn millions and are idolised by the fans. Meanwhile, those who filed the compiaint had fled Rome and are "in fear of their lives". Different type of ball game, what?

Second in line

Their prince was sure to win. After all, why wouldn't he? He was riding the best horse — Long Wharf — owned by the American millionaire-art collector, Paul Mellon. In fact, such was the confidence in both jockey and horse, that punters and gullible housewives put a lot of their money on them. They made him favourite at 13-8 to win the two-mile race. But Charles, Prince of Wales, and heir apparent to throne of England, betrayed their trust. At his first public race — the Mad Hatters' private sweepstake, at Plumpton on March 4. — he proved that he was content to remain number two. The one who beat the Prince was an amateur rider and an equestrian journalist from the BBC, Derek Thompson. Others who raced were Richard Meade and Vic Lowndes, controller of the Playboy empire. At the end of the race Prince Charles limped out and surveyed his domain of torn betting slips for his horse and told the 5,300 record crowd : "I would like to say how sorry I am to those who have put so much money on me ... next time I shall know better how to catch up on the man in front".

Marrying for the cause

The American hostages might not be pleased with what Imam Khomeini of Iran has done for their release and their future but there are two young Iranians who should be grateful to him. They are Miss Zahran Gholami Balouk, a nurse in the intensive care unit of the Mehoi Rezai hospital near Teheran where the Ayatollah was recovering. The other is Mr Ahmad Davudi Haghighatalab, a technician of the same hospital. The two lost their hearts to each other and what better proposition than being married by the great man himself? The Ayatollah did just that and added an autographed Koran.

Heart warming

Major Catastrophe had been given a new pacemaker some time ago. Although he has lived life to the full he has a weak heart : hence the pacemaker. When the operation had been performed at the Bristol University Veterinary Hospital, England, the Major had revived a shade earlier than expected and in trying to be his usual old energetic self had dislodged a wire in his "second heart". The doctors had no other option but to operate on him once again to connect the lead. Major Catastrophe is a close friend of Mr and Mrs Barry Harcombe of Somerset. He is a yellow labrador.

Whose Pakistan ?

Smart, fair, immaculately dressed Salmaan Taseer, free - thinking Pakistani journalist, is a Zia-hater with a difference. He is not afraid of speaking out, sometimes even a trifle too loudly. Expectedly, he's got into trouble, but doesn't seem to bother.

After a telephonic appointment, Mr Taseer strode into our Delhi office one day and sat down to tell us what he thought of Zia, the army and the Americans. Author of *Bhutto : A political biography*, Taseer is a wistful admirer of the dead leader, and thinks, as many others do, that his ghost haunts the junta. "Bhutto is still very much a symbol in Pakistan, and the People's Party is still very much intact with opportunist elements staying on," he holds. In Lahotri, for instance, which is Mr Bhutto's hometown, the People's Party still commands the allegiance of 80 to 90 per cent of the electorate. Popular feeling all over the country, even among the peasantry who form as much as 80 per cent of the population, is still very obviously against General Zia, and for the PPP, now being led by Bhutto's widow and indefatigable daughter.

As for the Army, most of the Generals around Zia know they "are riding on the back of a tiger". Nobody would like falling off now, but are waiting for the right moment. The Afghanistan flare-up has only given the strongarm dictator an ideal excuse to go on—just the kind he was waiting for.

Things have come to a sorry pass already. Prices are much higher than in India and people are tired of being ruled by Generals, Taseer says. Not many political prisoners remain in jail now, even the dissident journalist Salaamat Ali may be let off, because the junta is scared of widespread trouble. "They know protest would become uncontrollable," Taseer remarks. Zia has enough trouble already: Pakistan lacks an industrial base, the oil bill, now a massive burden, has shot up to a billion dollars, and the trade deficit is about Rs two billion.

If the people do not support Zia, who does? "The mullahs and the Jamaat," Taseer replies. "But Islamic fervour is confined only to the urban petty bourgeoisie. The Jamaat-e-Islami won only three seats in 1972. Its only strength lies in a well-knit organisation: it can muster 20,000 people at the drop of a hat." But such is his bankruptcy of support, he has taken to entertaining mullahs from abroad: "A delegation of mullahs from China had visited Pakistan, as if there aren't enough in Pakistan," the journalist remarks, smiling.

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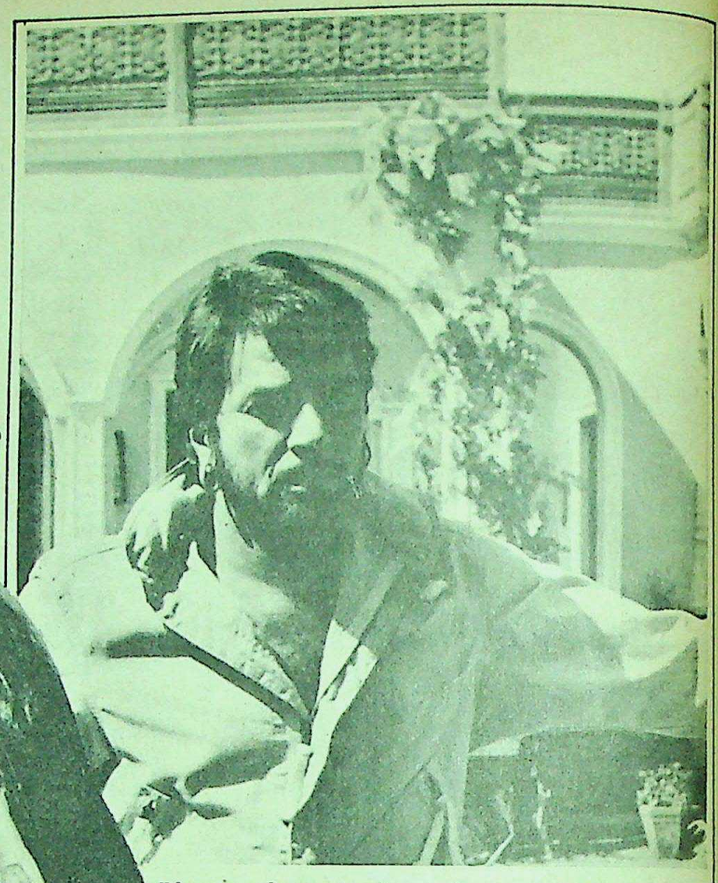
KHAAS BAAT

WHILE talking of female stars, and *Mumtaz's* attempts to come back to films, it is *Dimple Khanna*, who looks a real knockout, with her milk-and-roses skin, her svelte, smart appearance in spite of two kids. She is still capable of bagging roles by the dozen. But given a choice between family life with *Rajesh Khanna* and a career, she says the choice she has made is giving her lasting happiness—how long would a career have lasted?

IN contrast, one thinks of *Neetu Singh* the sweet little girl who never gave herself airs—the higher she got in films, the humbler she seemed to be.

While other girls declare that they want a husband and a home to settle down, it is only this girl who truly loved setting up a home with Chtniu Kapoor. So, while she loved him she quietly completed all her films, refused more offers at the very peak of her career, and had a date fixed for marriage which was comfortably ahead of her last shooting-day. There are girls who follow the dictates of the heart, proved Neetu, but not at the cost of giving others heart-attacks.

Dimple : still vivacious young mom



Dharmendra, sturdy and evergreen

Dinesh Nagar

AND age is no factor when you meet *Dharmendra* who still looks like the big top male hero that he is—not a washout. When be walked in along with a young 20-year-old boy at a muhurat, they looked like brothers—but the boy was his son, who has been in London training for an academic course. Whether his films become a hit or flop, he is still the same, loyal as ever, both to his family and to *Hema*. He is finally planning to direct a film, based on an idea which has been shaping in his mind over the past year or so—it is a comedy and he is the hero of the film. He expects to start on it by the yearend.

AN established actress remarked that the problem with today's stars is that they won stardom all too quickly. That's why they behave as irresponsibly as they do *(Parveen, Yogita, Sachin,* etc). She advocates a good, sound knocking around the doors of fame as a recipe for steady, reliable performances ■

Umesh Vyas

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A COUPLE of years ago actor *Vijayakumar* would have pledged his "loyalty" to *MGR* in his own blood. The young actor who's married to Manjula, one of MGR's celluloid favourites, not only joined MGR's party, but also propagated the ideology of his "annan" on screen. In more than a dozen films, Vijayakumar was seen wearing MGR medals. He also reformed incorrigible alcoholics by showing them pictures of MGR and he sang songs extolling the virtues of his guru.

But such films didn't click. And Vijayakumar who certainly nurtured ambitions of turning into a minor MGR slowly began to train his eyes on new pastures, and even thought of leaving of the Party. But then he took this decision only after the recent election results. And even then, he didn't walk out of the Party. He slowly let the impression go around that he was planning to leave MGR's fold. His presence at *Sivaji Ganesan's* son's wedding, and his anxiety to pose for pictures along with Karunanidhi and Sivaji provided enough clues as to how his mind was working. The diehard MGR fans and also the troublemakers didn't stomach Vijayakumar's "betrayal". On March 2, the day the AIADMK organised a huge rally to protest against the dissolution of the state assembly, posters and hoardings of Vijayakumar's forthcoming films were torn, and some abusive phone calls were made to his wife. This might have made Vijayakumar rather happy. For quite some time now, he has been in tthe "dog-house", and now since he's in the "limelight", he hopes that some producers will realise that he's alive—and is being kicked around by unruly movie fans.

A YEAR after his maiden venture was released, *M. G. C. Sukumar*, nephew of MGR (whom he tries to imitate) released another film, *Karadi*. But the emphasis seemed to be on the bear, and Sukumar who carries a beer-barrel in place of his stomach, seemed totally lost in the film. Well, inspite of the bear's presence, the film hasn't made much of an impact: not even on children.

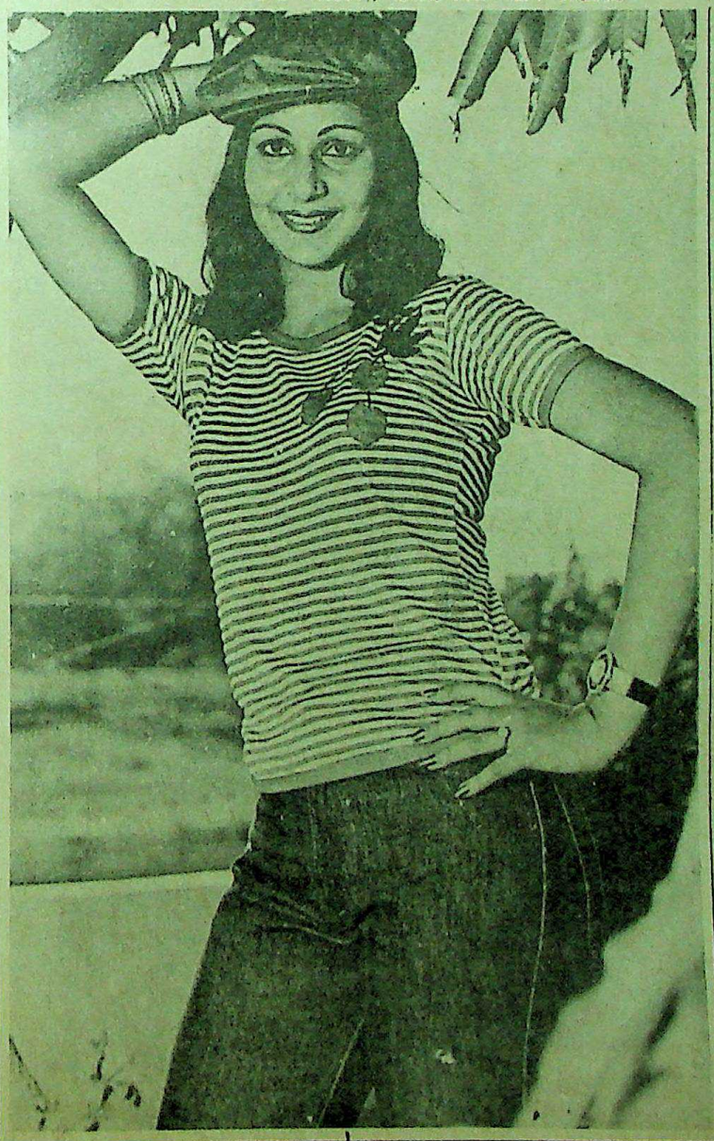
WHAT if *Sivaji Ganesan* has decided to leave Manmohan Desai's *Desh Preeme?* After all, his ambition to act in a Hindi film was fulfilled years ago when he was given a meaty role in Sridhar's *Dharti*. The film flopped badly, and Sivaji must have thought that *Desh Premee* would make him famous all over the country. And now that he has quit the film after some misunderstandings cropped up, he gives the impression that he was least interested in the venture.

Frankly speaking every South Indian hero or heroine has the strong urge to succeed in Hindi films. Even MGR had a couple of his films dubbed in Hindi. One of them was even entitled *Love in Kashmir* but these films didn't do well.

THE dusky actress sponsored by an editor cum producer just couldn't make it but her "godfather" used to keep her happy by his generous gifts: never mind, the highly puritanical and moralistic stories he penned. But then the man got too ambitious, and produced a lavish Hindi film which proved an utter failure. Now he's making a quickie in Tamil with new faces but his favourite mare isn't in it. Won't she be worried by his cold attitude? I bet she's going bonkers.

RATHI AGNIHOTRI is excited about two of her new films. *Ullasa Paravaigal* pairs her with *Kamalahasan*, and the film has had an excellent opening. The second film's her maiden Kannada venture *Kalinga* in which she's paired with *Vishnuvardhan*. And of course the prized film is *Aur Ek Itihas*, a remake of an all-time Telugu hit *Maro Charitra*.

Rathi: all set to create history with "Aur Ek Itihas"



Subha

RAJNI SHARMA (of *Balika Bodhu*) is yet another Bombay star who's looking around for a break in Tamil and Telugu films. Apart from *Kashmir Kadali* in Tamil in which she's paired with up-coming hero *Rajkumar*, she has a couple of Telugu films on hand.

MALATHI, the small-time Kannada starlet who was seen in *Kanneshwara Rama* and *Kaadu Kudure* isn't exactly busy these days. And she would have gladly accepted a role in *M. S. Sathyu's* much discussed, up-coming Kannada film *Bara*. But she claims some jealous people gave the impression to Sathyu that she was busy with a couple of other units and hence she couldn't give suitable dates.

IS it a hit or a flop? This is a regular question that's asked about *Kallukkul Iram*, a film sponsored by director *Bharatiraja*, whose last four films have been hits. Directed by his cameraman P. S. Nivas, the new film has also featured Bharatiraja in a pivotal role. The first week's collections were truly impressive and the black market was cheerful. But many among the audience yawned and a few even walked out. But then such things did happen in the case of his previous film *Niram Maratha Pookal*: pronounced a immediate flop, it slowly warmed up and continued doing reasonably good business for 20 weeks at a stretch.

GIRISH KASARAVALLI'S second venture *Akramana* in Kannada was a slick affair compared to his first, *Ghatashraddha*. But the film couldn't do very well, even though it was exempted from taxes.

PIOUSJI

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Beginning March 23

This week the Sun is in Pisces, Venus is in Aries, Mars, Rahu and Jupiter are conjoined in Leo and Saturn alone is in Virgo. Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio. Mercury and Rahu are in Aquarius. The Moon will be moving through Cancer, Leo and Virgo from Gemini.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) You will have several excellent opportunities to expand your activities as to be praised by all. Let your own intuition be your guide to fortune. You will also benefit through secret association or information and by travel. Your professional career will continue to prosper and your work will now be recognised. A happy and auspicious journey is also indicated. **Good dates:** 23, 25, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Your home front will be a source of joy and happiness. Lovers are likely to come up against new hurdles. Elderly people will stand in the way and guide you. Some may get transfer orders in the near future. Letters will bring good news from distant places. Businessmen are advised to go in for new contracts and acquire stocks to seek profits. **Good dates:** 24, 26, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

GEMINI (May 21 — June 21) This week will be slightly difficult and trying. Guard against quarrels and accidents. Curb impetuousity and watch finances and correspondence closely. Avoid over-strain. This week is unfavourable for making auspicious arrangements. Some success will be registered at the weekend. Deal tactfuly with those in authority. **Good dates:** 24, 25, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 9 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) You will gain in diverse, unexepected ways. A journey may provide a solution to your problems. Relatives and new friends will prove very helpful. Many will win promotions through timely hunches. Your own intuition can be your best guide. Elders and female relatives will benefit you. You may inherit property. Avoid litigation and answer all letters promptly. **Good dates:** 23, 24, 25 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 9 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) A favourable week is predicted for you. Somebody may, try to deceive you. Exercise caution in your dealings with the opposite sex. Elders and family-friends will prove encouraging. Some people will win laurels in games and sports. Partners and spouses will play an exceptionally big part in your life. People in services are advised to accept transfer orders. **Good dates:** 24, 25 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 12. **Favourabe direction:** West.

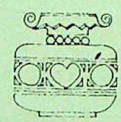
VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) You are advised to conserve your resources and consolidate all recent gains. Your professional and financial affairs will continue to prosper and promotion too is on the cards. Follow your own intuition. Original business methods will bring success in all your undertakings. Your achievements will by praised by all your friends and relatives. **Good dates:** 23, 26, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Your prospects are very bright. Good fortune will be accompanied by domestic bliss for most Librans. Some unreasonable opposition on the part of an old person of the opposite sex is to be expected. Your outlook is now completely changed and your achievements will be praised by all. Push your affairs to the utmost and forge ahead on all fronts. **Good dates:** 23, 24, 25 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 10, 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** East.

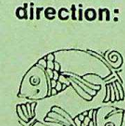
SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) A beneficial change of job or residence is not unlikely. This week will prove to be a happy one. Pay extra attention to business details and take the advice of elders. Travel and push business to the utmost. Auspicious arrangements will be finalised at home. Take care not to arouse the hostility of your employers and those in authority. **Good dates:** 23, 26, 27 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 8 and 6. **Favourable directions:** West and North.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You may suffer a small loss this week. Close relatives may prove very annoying but do not lose your temper. Otherwise, this will be a fortunate week. Exercise care in legal matters. Opposition from an old person is indicated. Be content to mark time and do not antagonise your employer. Your health will improve and letters will bring good news. **Good dates:** 24, 26 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 6, 3 and 5. **Favourabe direction:** South.

CAPRICORN (October 23 — January 20) Once again your fortune will spring from your own intuition. Hunches will prove an excellent guide to success. Many will win promotions through their own efforts. You will soon undertake a short journey. Romance is indicated. After a minor setback your business and financial affairs will continue their successful run. The domestic scene will give you pleasure. **Good dates:** 24, 25 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 11. **Favourable direction:** East.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Your outlook is brighter than last week. This week unexpected upheavals, long journeys and immense gains are indicated. Your financial affairs will continue to prosper. Exercise circumspection and watchfulness in dealings with elders and strangers. Changes, travel, law and property matters favour you. You will be successful in your dealings with people of the opposite sex. **Good dates:** 23, 25, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 10 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



PISCES (February 20 March 20) Expected and unexpected developments or changes in your life should bring in a lot of happiness and good fortune. On the business front you will make rapid progress. Womenfolk in the family may give you cause for worry. You may have to play host this weekend. **Good dates:** 25 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 9 and 10. **Favourable direction:** North.

M. B. RAMAN

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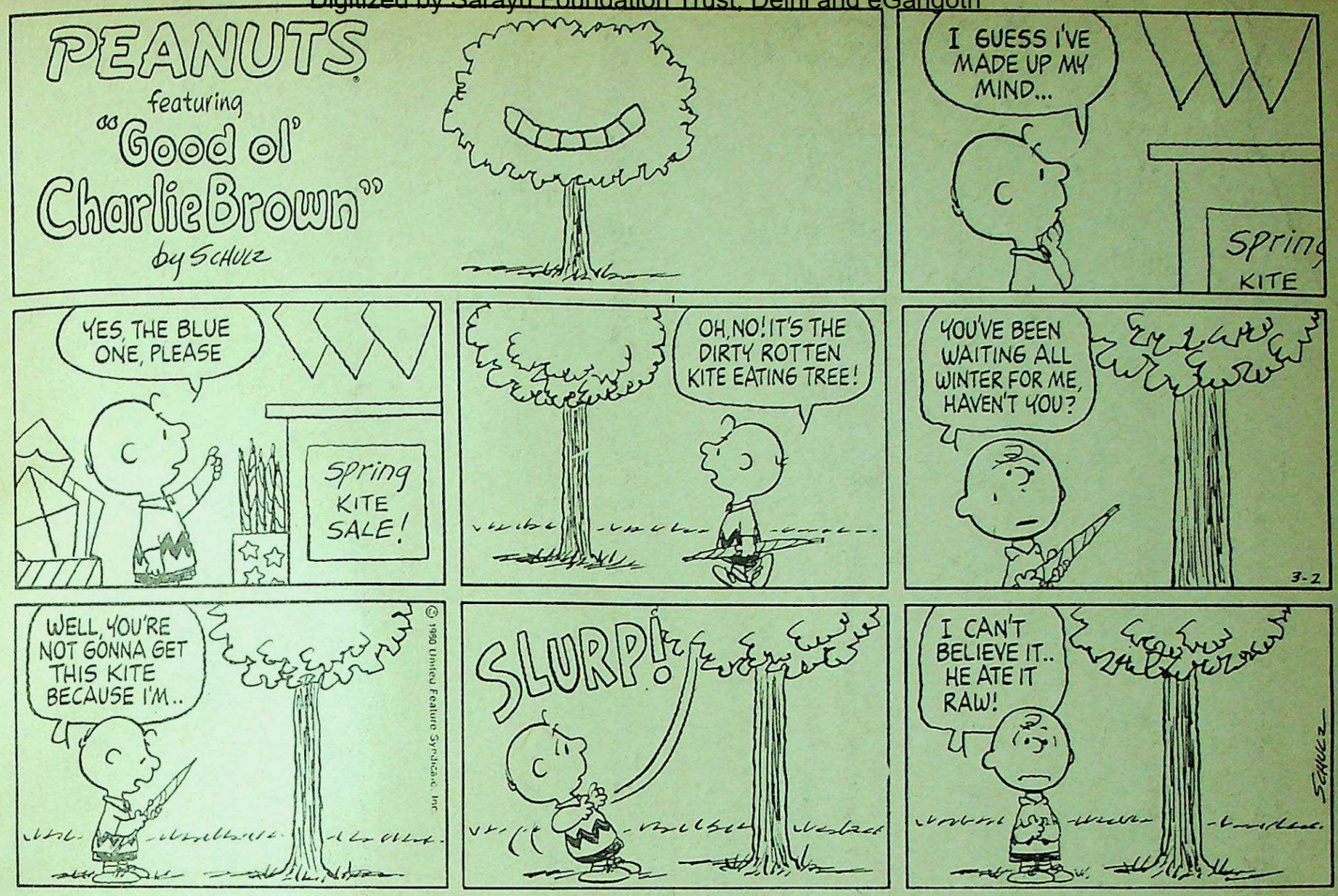

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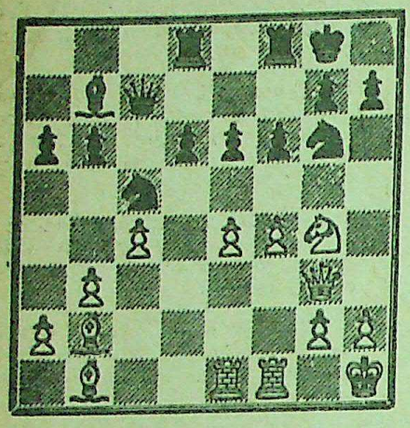
chess

Vilela (Black)



Hartston (White) to move

Position after Black's 24th move

Controlled aggression

ENGLISH PLAYERS rarely have the opportunity to compete in the Soviet Union. Part of the reason is that, despite the great chess activity in that part of the world, comparatively few international competitions are held there. Most Soviet tournaments are played within the framework of regional or national championship systems and so do not entail the invitation of overseas players.

However, in 1975, with the aid of the Robert Silk Chess Fellowship, I had the good fortune to obtain an invitation to the Alekhine Memorial Tournament. This was quite a coup as the only other English player ever to take part in this event was Harry Golombek in 1956. More recently, also with the aid of the Robert Silk Fellowship, Bill Hartston took part in this year's Keres Memorial Tournament in Tallinn. As always with Soviet tournaments the event was very strong but Bill emerged with a highly creditable 50 per cent score with only Petrosyan 12 (from 16); Tal, Vaganyan 11½; Bronstein 10; Sax and Veingold 9½ ahead of him.

Bill Hartston will probably be most familiar to readers as the highly entertaining co-presenter of BBC2's 'The Master Game'. Just a few years ago he was undoubtedly the strongest player in the country and, although he may since have dropped one or two places in the English rankings, his play is nevertheless probably stronger now than then. I give a good illustration of his controlled aggression taken from Tallinn.

White: W. R. Hartston. Black: J. Vilela (Cuba).
Keres Memorial Tournament, Tallinn 1979.
Queen's Indian Defence.

1. P—Q4, N—KB3; 2. N—KB3, P—K3; 3. P—QB4, P—QN3; 4. P—K3, B—N2; 5. B—Q3; Aptly enough this move was an old favourite of Keres.

5. . . ., P—B4; 6. O—O, B—K2; 7. N—B3, P—QR3; 8. P—QN3, P—Q3; 9. B—N2, QN—Q2; Black is constructing a 'hedgehog', but it is not very effective against White's set-up.

10. Q—K2, O—O; 11. QR—Q1, R—K1; 12. P—K4, P x P; 13. N x P, N—B1; Larsen once said that you never get mated with a knight on B1, but this game proves to be the exception.

14. P—B4, N(3)—Q2; 15. K—R1, Q—B2; 16. B—N1, QR—Q1; 17. Q—R5, B—KB3; 18. Q—R3, Q—B4; His first sally beyond the third rank, but not a very successful one.

19. N—B2! A sneaky retreat threatening as it does to win the QP with B—R3.

19. . . ., Q—B2; 20. N—K3! The arrival of the knight on N4 will be very unpleasant for Black.

20. . . ., N—B4; 21. N—N4, B x N; A drastic solution. Hartston now quickly demonstrates that Black has no answer to the two bishops.

22. Q x B, P—B3; 23. Q—N3, N—N3; 24. R(Q1)—K1, R—KB1; (DIAGRAM) 25. P—B5, P x P; Or 25. . . , N—K4; 26. P x P, N x P(K3); 26. N x P+.

26. N x P+!, R x N; Absolute desperation, but after 26. . . , P x N; 27. P x P, the bishop pair will tear Black to pieces.

27. B x R, N x KP; 28. B x N, P x B; 29. B x R, Q x B; 30. R—Q1, Q—K1; 31. Q x QP; Resigns. He is mated after 31. . . , P—K6; 32. Q—K6+!, Q x Q; 33. R—Q8+.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THOUGH bridge writers seldom comment on the fact, the most difficult part of the game is to discard well on an opponent's long suit. You have to gauge the declarer's distribution and you have to tell partner what is happening. The defenders on both sides failed when both Norway and France reached Seven Spades on these cards:

Dealer, South. Love all.

	♠ K J 9 8 7 ♥ A ♦ A 8 ♣ 8 7 5 4 2	
♠ 5 3 2 ♥ J 8 5 3 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ 10 9 6	N W E S	♠ 6 ♥ 10 9 6 4 ♦ J 10 9 6 5 2 ♣ Q J
	♠ A Q 10 4 ♥ K Q 7 2 ♦ K 3 ♣ A K 3	

When France played in Seven Spades from the South position, West led a trump. To ruff a heart in the long trump hand obviously gains nothing, so Lebel played off five rounds of trumps, discarding ♣ 3. East let go a heart, subjecting his partner to a criss-cross squeeze.

	♠ — ♥ A ♦ 8 ♣ 8 7 5 4 2	
♠ — ♥ J 8 5 3 ♦ — ♣ 10 9 6	N W E S	♠ — ♥ 10 9 6 ♦ J 10 ♣ Q J
	♠ — ♥ K Q 7 2 ♦ K ♣ A K	

The next diamond destroys West.

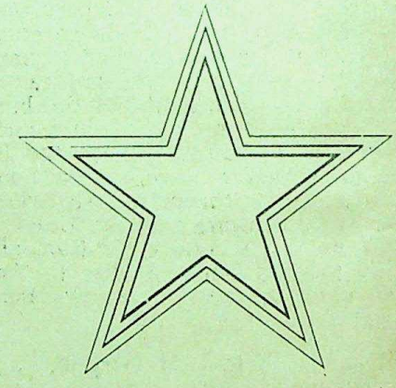
At the other table the declarer had things easier. West, not seeing the value of his ♣ 10 9 6, let go a club on the fifth spade. Using ♥ A for entry, the declarer made five spades, five clubs, two diamonds and one heart.

No doubt East, at both tables, should have let go his two clubs. These could hardly win a trick and the situation becomes immediately clear to partner. But West, at the second table, where North was the declarer, could have drawn an inference from the play of the five trumps. The loser in the North hand could only be a club, because obviously a losing diamond could have been ruffed.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

BY ITS NATURE, philately is one of the cultural pursuits that blind people cannot enjoy. But an interesting and thought-provoking collection can be formed of stamps which have been issued in tribute to blind celebrities, among them John Milton, Leonhard Euler, the Swiss mathematician, and Homer, who is traditionally supposed to have become blind. Louis Braille, who has already been honoured by French and Russian stamps, is portrayed on a new Luxemburg stamp which marks the 125th anniversary of his death. A companion stamp honours Marguerite de Busbach, a seventeenth century pioneer of girls' education in Luxemburg.



A NEW series of definitive stamps being issued in the Falkland Islands features some of the ships which have carried mail and cargo for the islanders during the 145 years of British administration. The 4p stamp (above) shows the Fitzroy, which was built at Leith in 1931 and sailed between Port Stanley, in the Falklands, and Montevideo, in Uruguay, until 1957, when it was brought home to Grays, Essex, to be broken up. One of the smallest ships featured in the series is the Foam, on the 20p stamp. A Portsmouth-built schooner of 88 tons, it averaged six return voyages every year between Port Stanley and Montevideo during the 1860s. The new stamps replace a series featuring wild flowers of the Falklands, which has been in use for 10 years.

C. W. HILL

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this india

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

BANGALORE : Ignorance of the fact that the buses of the State Road Transport Corporation have no brakes is as inexcusable as the ignorance of law. This was the lesson that a former minister of state was taught by a driver of the KSRTC recently. An incident which had imparted him this lesson was narrated in the state assembly by M. C. Nanaiah during a discussion on a bus accident near Nelamangala. According to Mr Nanaiah, he had signalled to a bus coming from the opposite direction to allow him pass the narrow bridge he had already entered in his car. But, he was shocked to find that the bus did not stop, but came towards the car. The driver of the bus after a while approached him and questioned if he had any sense and if he did not care for his life. The next question posed by the driver was whether he was not aware that the KSRTC buses do not have brakes. Mr Nanaiah could do nothing but apologise to the driver—*Indian Express*' (J. Sreekantha, Shimoga)

JAMMU: A male baby born during the eclipse period was named as Grahan Singh. Several names were suggested to the father by his friends but he has agreed to call the baby Grahan Kumar. He said that will remind him that his son took birth at the time of the eclipse— *Deccan Herald* (R. Mulathy, Bangalore)

BELLARY: A new mode of punishment has been evolved by the Sholapur police to curb the sale of cinema tickets in the black market. A slate with the names of the blackmarketeer and the film written in bold letters on it, is hung to the neck of the person and he is paraded through the main streets of the city. The new method started by Messers A. S. Inamdar, SP, and Sagar, Sub-Inspector, has rid the city of black marketing in cinema tickets. Theatre owners cooperated with the police department and college students were among those found selling tickets in the black market. A similar mode of punishment is being adopted to curb gambling, preparation of illicit liquor and pick pockets—*Deccan Herald* (K. P. Raju, Bangalore)

SRINAGAR: The people of Kashmir had a heart-easing experience when an old Hindu woman was carried to the burning ghat by Muslims. They also requisitioned the services of a Hindu priest who performed the last rites of the old woman. The woman who belonged to Zaindar Mohalla in Srinagar had reportedly none to look after her. Her own son had also left her to the mercy of God. But Muslim neighbours came forward to dispose of the dead woman's body. They also defrayed all the expenses at the burning ghat—*Indian Express* (D. R. Sarkar, Meerut)

BANGALORE : Complaints that official machinery moves at snail's pace is no news these days. But its operation at agonisingly slow speed afflicts both layman and legislator became evident in the Assembly today (February 27) when a member's question came up for hearing after three years. The member himself wondered whether there was any relevance for him to seek an answer after such a long period. Speaker, P. Venkataramana advised the member to take it in the stride since "such delays" do occur. The question tabled by Mr V. M. Ghadi (Congress I) in 1977 had sought the Government reply on difficulties caused to farmers due to the Marketing Society stopping collection of levy paddy in Huliyal taluk of North Kanara. The question hour in fact ended within half an hour since very few questions were listed on the agenda. When Mr B. B. Sayanak (MES) complained against this, Mr Venkataramana said he would pull up the departments concerned and see that the replies were furnished promptly—*Deccan Herald* (Sivaram G., Bangalore)

india abroad

LONDON : Mystery shrouds the deaths of a young Indian doctor and his wife at their home in Abergavenny in Wales in the third week of February. They died from stab wounds. The bodies of Nargund (28) and his wife Shashikala (25) were found in the bolted bedroom of their flat on Tuesday (February 19) when the authorities of Neville Hall, in which the doctor was working, sent their staff to find out why he had not turned up for work. According to police reports, the couple had gone to Heathrow airport on February 16 to take a flight to India but for some reason cancelled their journey and returned home—*The Statesman*

Illustration /Ahi Bhusan Malik

without comment

I WILL not bite you — you are free to go in—Sanjay Gandhi to Subramaniam Swamy at the door of the Central Hall of Parliament. Quoted in *Surya*

THIS was the best time to try and win a Parliamentary seat — Arun Nehru, Mrs Gandhi's nephew on his victory at the Rae Bareli by-election

TO a certain extent Mrs Gandhi is a prisoner of the system in which she has to operate—S. Nihal Singh in *India Today*

NEVER say die—Devaraj Urs on the prospects of his Party's performance in the coming Assembly polls

A POLITICAL Party has the right to ask its members not to join even a cultural organisation—Chandra Shekhar, Janata Party President

WE are proud of our association with the RSS which ingrained in us the spirit of selfless service and patriotism—Nanaji Deshmukh, Janata Party General Secretary

ONE cannot imagine that a Belchi or a Parasbigha, a Narainpur or a Pipra can take place in West Bengal—*Mainstream*

THERE is no way in which the Soviets or anyone else can resist the power of God. Something terrible is going to happen to the Soviets, something supernatural and nothing to do with military force—Muhammad Ali

WHENEVER a country takes to the road of radical socio-economic reforms, the CIA barges in—Babrak Karmal in an interview with *Blitz*

DO YOU suppose we talked about oil in bed?—Christina Onassis on her short-lived marriage to Sargei Kauzov

UNLESS the commercial cinema suffers a severe setback in terms of audience attendance, I don't see any great hope for theatre in the 1980s — Naseeruddin Shah, noted theatre personality and film actor

SHE is not a feminist. She's not even a woman. She is a machine. She's been a Tory ever since she was a child—Germaine Greer on Margaret Thatcher in *Newsweek*

ONCE kissing is liberalised, let the kiss fall on the lip and not on any other part of the human anatomy—Mrinal Sen

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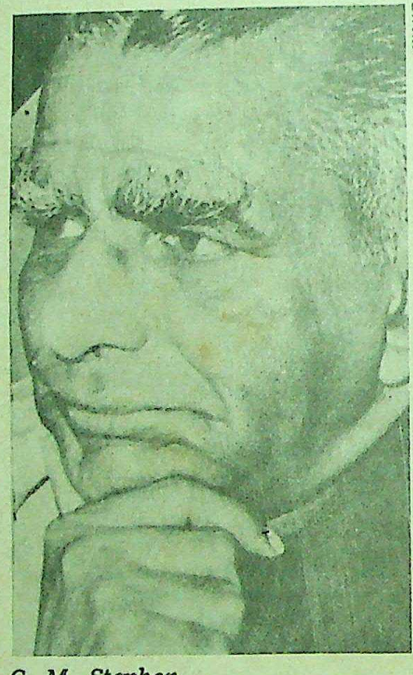
HONEST TIMES

THE daily newspapers in the capital did an unprecedented thing by declaring a holiday on the occasion of Holi, so readers had to go without newspapers on March 3. The *National Herald* was the only paper which was published on the day after Holi. While most of the papers announced on their front pages that there would be no edition on March 3 because of a holiday on Holi (March 2), one paper was honest enough to admit the reason for the unusual decision. Only the *Times of India* announced that the decision to skip an edition was due to an "acute newsprint shortage". The dailies in the capital are reportedly considering the possibilities of adopting the European system of a six-day week in view of the newsprint supply position. While it is too early to say whether the new scheme will materialise at all, the attempt on the part of one of the dailies to cash in on the inability of others to come out on March 3 backfired and that paper too was closed for Holi. This newspaper suffered a prolonged strike last year, when it reportedly helped other groups tide over their newsprint crisis by supplying them newsprint from its quota at no premium. This management now went to all those managements seeking a "return" for the favour done last year. The smaller newspapers wriggled out by pleading that the amount of newsprint needed by this large group for one day's printing was perhaps equivalent to a small paper's weekly requirement. Two large groups were blunt in their refusal. One of them said that newsprint was available, but at a premium. When it was pointed out that the strike-bound management had not sought any premium while supplying newsprint last year, the Marwari owner of the other group is supposed to have said, "If you were foolish in business, that does not mean I should follow suit". Another group was more candid. Newsprint was available in exchange for the favour shown last year, but only after March 3, they said, pointing out that they could not allow one of the competitors to cash in on their inability to bring out an edition.

DISAPPOINTMENTS

COLD WATER was thrown on the hopes of many Ministerial aspirants twice within a week in early March when C. M. Stephen and Veerendra Patil were inducted into the Union Cabinet along with four junior Ministers. Apart from bigwigs like H. N. Bahuguna, who had cause to feel that they were being kept out of the Cabinet in order to belittle them, there were many young MPs who were hoping to make it to the Ashoka Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan before the commencement of the Budget Session on March 11. C. M. Stephen was inducted because he had been promised a berth in the Cabinet as soon as he was elected to the Lok Sabha. Although he was expected to get an important portfolio, he instead relieved Bhishma Narayan Singh, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, of the additional Communications portfolio. Apparently Mrs. Gandhi did not want a debacle of the sort when the Rajya Sabha amended the vote of thanks to the President in the last session. Therefore, apart from ensuring that B. N. Singh devotes all his attention to the Parliamentary Affairs portfolio, she has made Sitaram Kesari as his junior Minister. Pranab Mukherjee also being in charge of the crucial Civil Supplies portfolio urgently needed an experienced junior Minister like Z. R. Ansari, who was earlier a junior Minister in the Commerce Ministry as well. But the most significant appointment was that of Patil as Petroleum Minister. The Works and Housing Minister, P. C. Sethi, had been holding temporary charge of this important portfolio and being a former Petroleum Minister, was devoting most of his time to his additional charge. He has also expressed the desire to quit the Housing portfolio in favour of Petroleum. But his public actions and statements in the recent past must have embarrassed the PM, who did not perhaps went Sethi to be given a portfolio like Petroleum, on which many questions are bound to be asked in the coming session due to the diesel and kerosene shortages.



C. M. Stephen

C.N.S.

EFFICIENCY AT PREMIUM

THE AICC (I) headquarters at New Delhi's 24 Akbar Road has been placed under efficient management. B. Dutta, Mrs. Gandhi's former security officer, has been appointed the administrative officer of the office. Dutta, a former Deputy Superintendent of police attached to Mrs. Gandhi prior to 1977, was retained as her security man even after her defeat. He retired from service a year ago and Mrs. Gandhi's confidence in him was such that she immediately offered him a job in her personal secretariat. Dutta's efficiency was evident during the days when the Lok Sabha results started pouring in early January. Even before the police authorities realised the possible outcome of the initial trends broadcast by All India Radio, Dutta had streamlined the security arrangements at the "likely PM's" house by putting up rope barricades to control crowds and deputing personal staff of the house to guard the barriers. Now that he has been posted at the AICC (I) headquarters, it is evident that Mrs. Gandhi wants to ensure that the Party office functions efficiently. His presence has also scared many; after all, he is a former security policeman.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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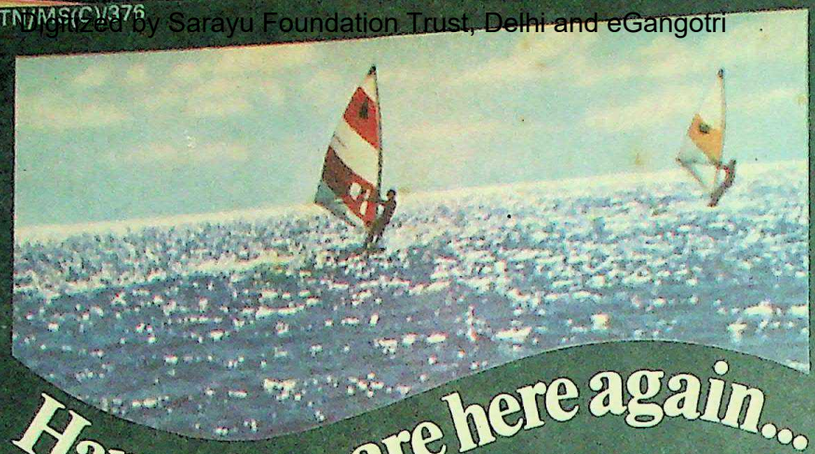
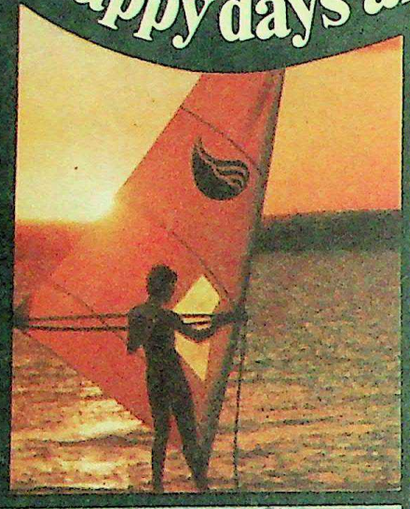
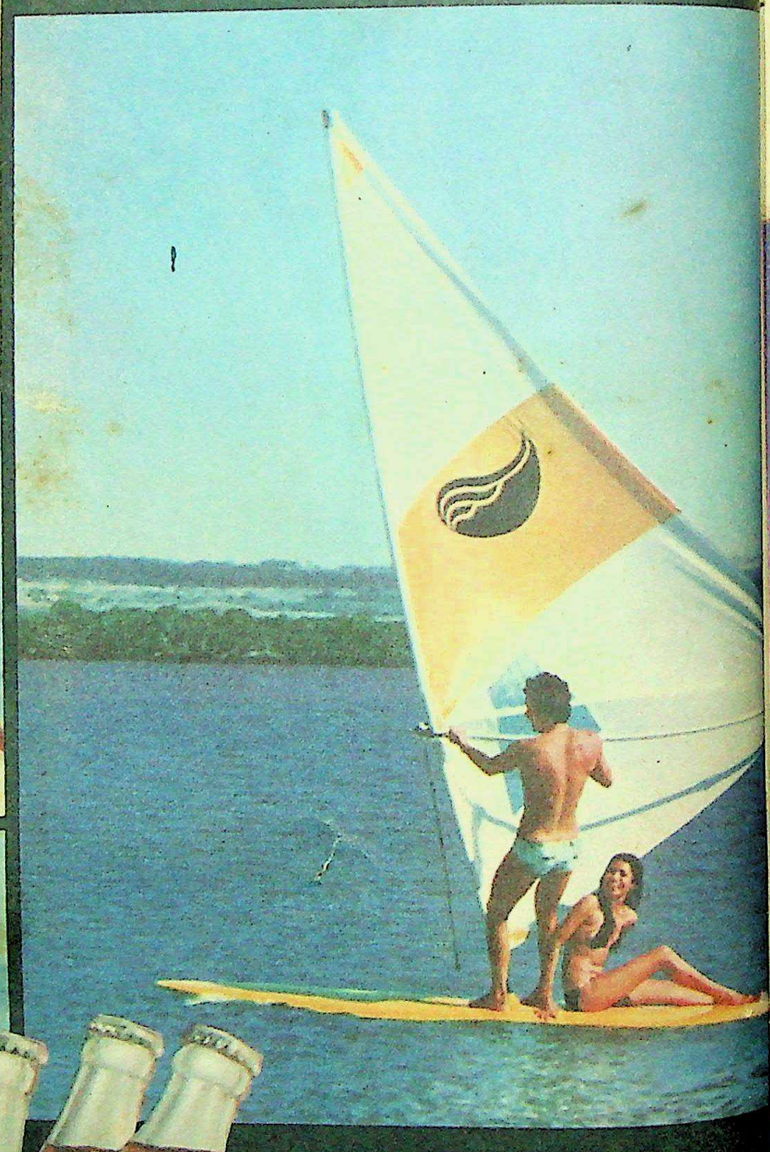
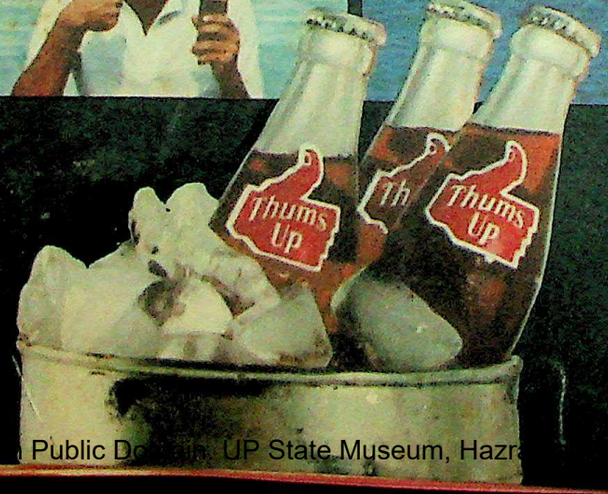


Happy days are here again...





Everybody is feeling great on Thums Up.



Thums Up

The refreshing Cola

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SUNDAY

Our Armed Forces
A QUIET CONFIDENCE

Pakistan: Paradise lost

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THE EYE-CATCHERS

HINDON

SUITINGS, SHIRTINGS, DRESS MATERIALS, SAREES.

HINDON RIVER MILLS

Fabrics from the Most Modern Mill

DCM TEXTILES

There are more than 600 Retail Showrooms throughout the country— one close to you.

asian HRM/2

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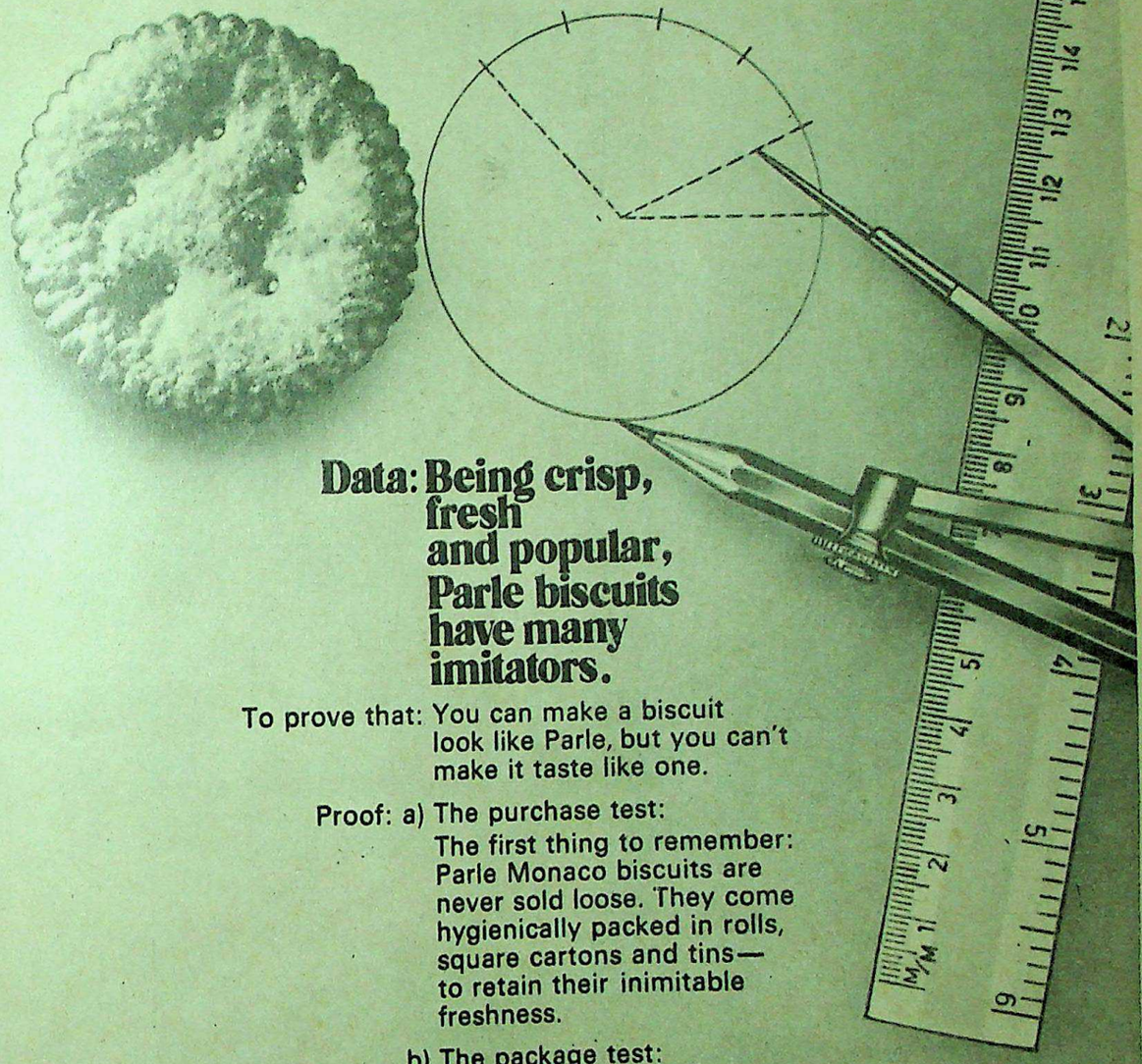
Theorem:

You needn't go round in circles to get a genuine Parle Monaco biscuit.



Data: Being crisp, fresh and popular, Parle biscuits have many imitators.

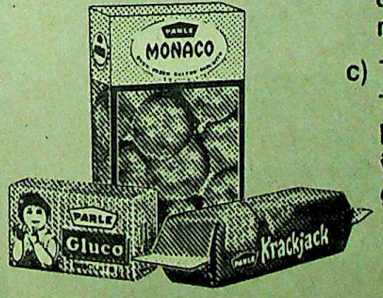
To prove that: You can make a biscuit look like Parle, but you can't make it taste like one.

Proof: a) The purchase test:
The first thing to remember: Parle Monaco biscuits are never sold loose. They come hygienically packed in rolls, square cartons and tins— to retain their inimitable freshness.

b) The package test:
It's easy to recognise the attractive Parle Monaco pack on any shelf. To make doubly sure, check out the name P-A-R-L-E on the pack.

c) The taste test:
Take a bite of the biscuit. If it's crisp and flaky you can be sure it's a genuine Parle Monaco.

Q.E.D.



PARLE Gluco PARLE MONACO PARLE Krackjack

Their sum total is the finest enjoyment in biscuits.

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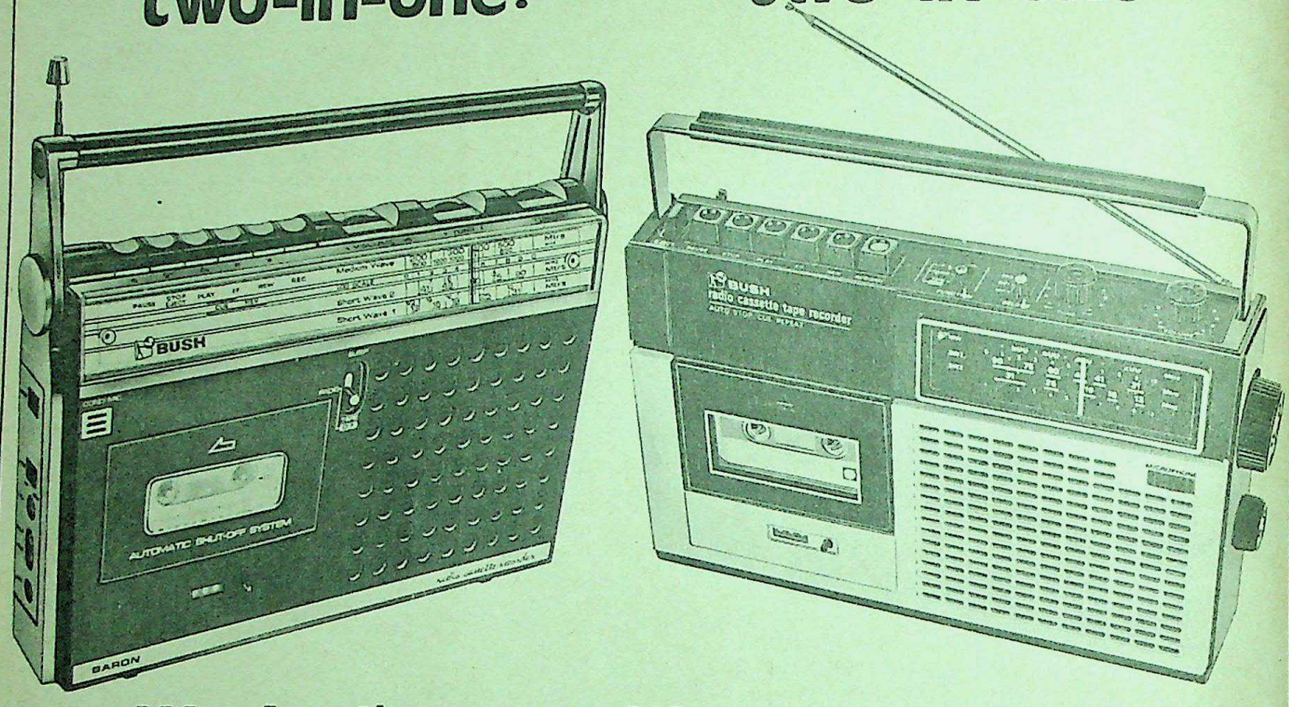
The largest selling two-in-one:

The second largest selling two-in-one:



We don't care which brands are in the third, fourth, fifth and other places.

Would you?

The only reason one Bush two-in-one has sold more than the other Bush two-in-one is that it was introduced in the market earlier.

And both Bush two-in-ones together are outselling all the other brands put together.

In fact, the only choice you may need to make will be which Bush two-in-one to buy.

Because we believe that it's always great to have a choice . . . even between the best.

BUSH

The No.1 two-in-ones.

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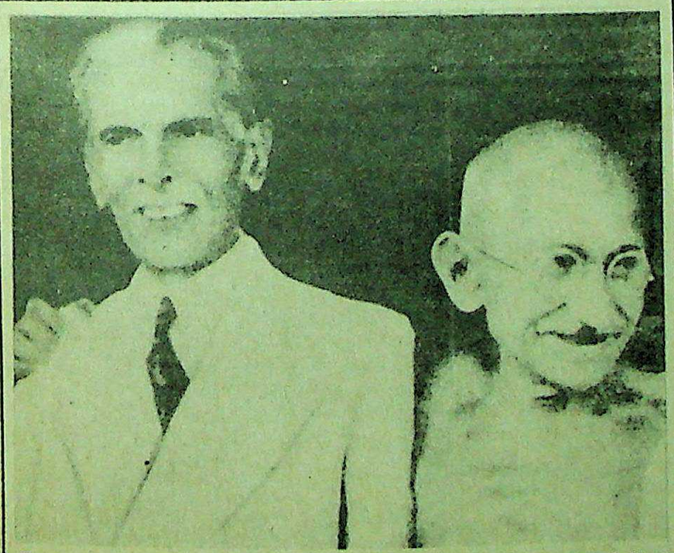
SUNDAY
VOLUME 7
ISSUE 38
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

March 23, 1980

Our armed forces have come a long way since the debacle of 1962 and today there is a quiet confidence in Delhi over the country's security; this notwithstanding the new tensions in the region after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. What is the substance of our defence preparedness vis-a-vis China and Pakistan?

Robert Mugabe's massive victory in the Zimbabwe polls astounded everybody. The whites, whose shock bordered on trauma. The blacks, whose elation knew no bounds. And even the British whose hopes for a broad-based multi-Party coalition evaporated.



Forty years ago the Muslim League passed a resolution that laid the foundation stone for the ultimate creation of Pakistan. But Pakistan, though a viable state, did not solve the 'Muslim problem' in the subcontinent. Today Indian Muslims are settling down to a long hard struggle for a better deal for themselves within India.

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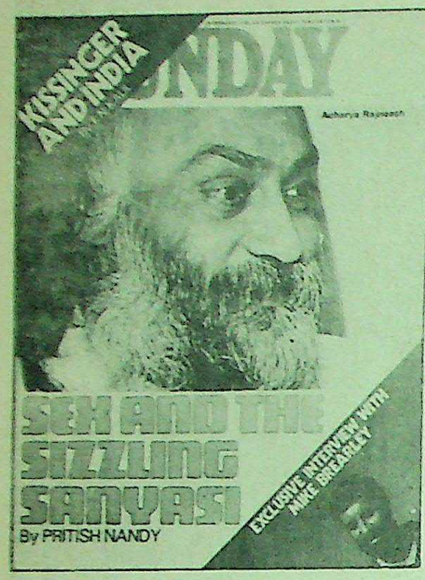

Freud to fantasy

PRITISH NANDY'S article "Sex and the sizzling sanyasi" (February 24) eloquently explained Rajneesh's philosophy that at a certain point, both experiences, the sexual and divine, mingle and become one, which is then samadhi. The Bhagwan has most intelligently understood Freud's interpretation of human psychology and sexual theses, which considerably influenced modern society. Where Freud ended, the Bhagwan took up the thread to develop a novel theory of salvation. Now, in pursuit of a fuller life and samadhi, frustrated men and women from East and West, even their children, are flocking around the Bhagwan to realise the divine by spontaneous sexual action, and dancing naked according to free will.
Vipin Viplawi, Mongyhr

NO LOVE or samadhi can ever happen without the will of god. May I ask what the mind is? Who gives us inspiration? Nothing can happen without someone behind it, and behind all these occurrences is god. The man who realises the existence of god may explain what samadhi is. Sexual intercourse is nothing but a biological urge for satisfaction. Besides love comes into play in a variety of experiences, not sex alone.
N. R. Das Gupta, Kharagpur

MR NANDY's article was a lot of well-written mush. The impression one gets after reading it is that Bhagwan Rajneesh is a rational man with a misdirected sense of divine mission. Why doesn't he have the honesty to advertise himself as a sex-therapist, rather than a godman? Religion, one hopes, is a way to god rather than a way to achieving prolonged orgasm. God help us the day we equate the two!
S. Sanyal, Calcutta

RAJNEESH's conjecture that man "had his first luminous glimpse of Samadhi during the experience of intercourse" is far from the truth. How can one concentrate on two things at a time? His argument that during sexual intercourse there comes a moment of climax when the mind is devoid of thought is unconvincing: one does not experience such a moment at all. What concerns the Acharya is not the problem of achieving "Nirvana" but controlling the duration of intercourse. To my mind, the only remedy to this problem is circumcision, as practised by the Jews and Muslims. However, this has nothing to do with religion, and is only a sexual necessity.

Men like Rajneesh are only misleading innocent people. He is one of a vast network of so-called avatars like the Sai Baba, Bal Yogeshwar, Mehar Baba, Mahesh Yogi and and others who have flourished in the post-Independence era, and are exploiting religious sentiments. Rajneesh is a political agent who is discouraging socialism. It is painful to equate him with Jesus or the Buddha.
Sreeniwas Sharma, Calcutta

THIS is the finest expose you have published in a long time, even better than the author's article on the Sai Baba you published a few months back. What is amusing is to see one cult figure take on another. SUNDAY doesn't need a 'demolition squad' anymore. Now you should ask Satyajit Ray to review M. F. Husain's work and Ravi Shankar to write on M. S. Subbalakshmi!
S. K. Bhadury, Bangalore

I HAVE great sympathy for Pritish Nandy's intelligence, wide knowledge and good vocabulary, but what he has produced is all humbug. Anyway, thanks to him for showing the way from roadside sex, to Rajneesh's Sex Knowledge. Nandy is on a path that leads man to insanity. Let the author experience emptiness for "a while", and he would start realising the ultimate truth.
Swami Ram Vedant, Tatanagar

All bull

PRITISH NANDY is a glorious addition to your contributing team. A few pages of his book review appear to be more rewarding than the platitudes of the popular godman, Rajneesh himself. But while the idea of encouraging this kind of "intangible export" may augur well for the nation's balance of payments, the notion that the Crotch is a gateway to the Paradise of Heaven needs to be guarded against. I would even dare to draw a parallel between these neo-tantrics —for tantra is what the bhagwan practises, though disguisedly — and Satanists. Again, it is darned funny that one can cohabit at all with "attention betwixt the eyeballs". This, to twist the idiom, is surely no cock and all bull (I mean, the eye).
T. R. Ramalingam, Calcutta

I THOUGHT Mr Nandy was open-minded and liberal. Instead of commenting on the present activities in the Rajneesh Ashram, he has chosen to write about a book "From Sex to Superconsciousness", published as long back as 1969. The author seems to have read very little of the Bhagwan's literature, and even so, misinterpreted it. He is typically conservative, and bases his ideas on just one book. All the same, he has done well to bring out a few good traits of the Bhagwan.
Nidhi Bhargava, Allahabad

MR NANDY has tried to publicise Sree Rajneesh at the cost of the harmony of young minds. He has described Rajneesh as the sexiest baba and supported his views about reaching god through free sex. Both these notions are incorrect. Rajneesh is neither handsome nor sexy. And the free sex he preaches will lead people to ruination. I am surprised to learn that Sree Rajneesh preaches ways to copulate for three hours at a stretch.
K. Mishra, Patna

RAJNEESH is convinced that prostitutes and perverts exist in direct proportion to a society's civilisation. Assuming civilisation to be an advanced stage of social development, the change from barbarism to refined, enlightened living, what refinement or enlightenment did Sodom and Gomorrah experience that saw their total destruction? All socialistic revolutions, be they Christian or proletarian, preach civilisation and enlightenment. To what extent do condemned prostitution and sodomy exist in these societies? Alternately, if we renounce civilisation, will according to the sanyasi, prostitutes and perverts diminish in the same proportion?
Violet Mac Gibbon, Calcutta

MOST people, as I see it, are sexually repressed hypocrites and that is why they see the Bhagwan as a symbol of sex. But we do not bother for them. I can only say that the time is fast approaching when human history shall be divided into periods "Before Rajneesh" and "After Rajneesh". Only those who recognise the significance of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh are wise.
Swami Ageh Bharti, Satna

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Truth about a lie

CONGRATULATIONS to T. N. Kaul for his candid, rational and well-written article "Will the real Kissinger please stand up?" (February 24), wherein he revealed how Henry Kissinger, shrewd as he was, distorted facts about the 1971 Indo-Pak war, and Indo-American relations. It is deplorable that a diplomat of his calibre should manufacture such blatant lies. Even the candid American Press commented about his book ("The Kissinger Years"): "Kissinger ... revives an eight-year-old lie". Mr Kaul at one point stated commendably: "Modern diplomacy must have some basis of honesty and sincerity". But when politics creeps into diplomacy, credibility automatically suffers. Also diplomacy void of credibility is like political debauchery. Mr Kissinger underplayed the stances India adopted to persuade Yahya Khan to find an amicable settlement to the problem of East Pakistan to ease tension in the subcontinent. Mrs Gandhi's missions to other neighbouring countries was a commendable step hailed by all right-thinking men. One wonders how the Americans shut their eyes to the repeated provocations of the Pakistan junta to drag India into war with them. Mr Kissinger was the architect of Nixon's policy of friendship with China, and by creating hostility in the Indian subcontinent, thought he could achieve this better. Needless to say, the attempt finally failed.

Mr Kaul rightly points out that "Relations between countries like America and India must not depend on the personal likes and dislikes of individuals who happen to occupy positions of power in either country." It is a fact that the people of America have an entirely different opinion of the US policy towards India.

Jasvinder Singh, New Delhi

Roots of revenge

I WAS shocked to read the report "Moonlight murders" (February 17) by Milap Chand Dandiya. The incidents clearly show the extent to which our country, especially the North, is obsessed with feelings of caste and revenge. The South is relatively free from such atrocities. Also, revenge appears to be common among the illiterate. I think it is not the fault of the criminals, but the fault of the government that such incidents should continue to occur: little effort has been made to spread literacy.

S. Sankaranarayanan, Coimbatore

Just great

IT WAS highly imaginative of you to have started new columns and sections just when your readers needed them. The new sections are not only useful and interesting but also provocative. The fortnightly column "Civil liberties" by A. G. Noorani promises to be useful to all readers, especially students of law like myself. Congratulations to all those behind the new columns.

B. B. Chhetri, Siliguri

Medical mistake

APROPOS of the "This India" item on a "Fake vasectomy operation" in Gorakhpur (February 17, 1980). The case may not be a fake vasectomy but actually a failed vasectomy. The presence or otherwise of a scar on the scrotum indicates whether the person has been operated on or not. What could have then gone wrong? Firstly, the doctor might not have cut the vas deference, the tube carrying the male spermatozoa from the testes to the urethra, at the base of the penis through the spermatic cord. This is quite likely since the spermatic cord looks like a bag of worms, especially if the veins and lymphatics are dilated for any reason. One of these strands might quite likely be mistaken for the vas and cut. For this reason, a doctor, after cutting the vas, should inject a fluid through one end of the cut portion and confirm the presence of a lumen by observing whether it jets out through the other end or not. To be doubly sure the cut portion should be sent to a pathologist for histo-pathological confirmation. Even when the cut portion is found to be the vas deference, there is still the possibility of an anomalous double vas existing congenitally, in the same spermatic cord. This will continue to carry the sperms (vasectomy has to be done on both right and left sides).

Similar failure to cut the right tube can also occur in a female undergoing tubectomy. In fact, my own aunt had given birth to a baby girl—her sixth child—after tubectomy. In such cases the husband must surely be medically knowledgeable. An ordinary person would have suspected his wife's fidelity.

Dr. Ravindra Kudrimoti, Hyderabad

Officers, not dummies

UDAYAN SHARMA's special report on "What happened to N. K. Singh" (February 10, 1980) was thought-provoking. The affair is a shame on the Central Government. Mrs Gandhi and her cohorts are known for their clandestine operations. Mr N. K. Singh was obviously victimised for his role in the *Kissa Kursi Ka* case. The Government should understand that civil servants are mere cogs in the wheel of the administration. Politicians should not interfere in it.

K. P. Andavan, Gobichettipalayam

Bad and worse

I READ with interest Ajoy Bose's report "Behind the dissolution" (February 25). Once the British statesman Benjamin Disraeli, a well-known 19th century British personality, was asked to distinguish between "misfortune" and "catastrophe". Disraeli replied that if his political rival, W. Gladstone was drowned in the Thames it would be a misfortune. And if somebody happened to rescue Gladstone, it would be a catastrophe. This witty illustration reflects the trauma of the long, bitter duel between the two Parliamentary giants that went on to make the British Parliamentary process stable and strong. Similarly, one can say that the recent toppling of nine State Governments is unfortunate, but their continuance might have been disastrous in the changed political climate.

Bijay Kumar Jaiswal, Katihar

UPTO the end of the Sixties, elections to State Assemblies were always held simultaneously with those to the Lok Sabha. Then elections to the Assemblies were delinked from those to the Lok Sabha; it was argued that the issues involved in the Lok Sabha elections were different from those in the State elections, which are generally more localised, like setting up of schools or tubewells. The questions posed to the electorate in the 1977 and 1980 Parliamentary polls were stability at the Centre and the issue of dynastic versus democratic rule. Never from any platform were the merits of one-Party rule mooted, nor were either the 1977 or 1980 elections won on this slogan.

Yet, immediately on winning massive poll victories, the victors forgot the slogans on which they won, and started ousting State Governments elected on issues of regional importance, in the control of Parties other than their own. Suppose in the ensuing elections to the nine State Assemblies the electorate once again demonstrates its political maturity and, in the light of the local issues involved, gives the limited Opposition a massive poll victory, will Mrs Gandhi, computing it with the situation in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, advise the dissolution of Parliament and seek a fresh mandate? Again, supposing in a simultaneous election to Parliament and State Assemblies, the electorate puts one Party to power in the Centre and another in majority in the States, will the Parliament or State Assemblies be dissolved?

J. Basu, Calcutta

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Our Armed Forces
A QUIET CONFIDENCE

By SAUMITRA BANERJEE

Raghu Rai

PARADOXICALLY, New Delhi is one of the most relaxed capitals in the world today as far as national security considerations are concerned. One hundred thousand Soviet troops are in Afghanistan. The second traditional buffer in the region after Tibet has disappeared. American Marines have taken up positions in the Gulf for the first time since 1958. A huge US armada is now stationed in the Indian Ocean region that directly impinges on India's security. Pakistan can still become an advance base in the US strategy of containing Soviet power in the Gulf region. China has been given an undetermined role in this containment policy. Thus the benign security environment which India enjoyed since 1962 has begun to change, taking on aspects on malevolence. But Mrs Gandhi has a Defence Minister and there is no evidence that any new thinking on national security has occurred either at the Cabinet level or at the level of service chiefs and senior defence officials. The mood in Delhi is one of quiet confidence. And this is reflected in the interim budget presented to the Lok Sabha on March 1. In 1980-81 India will be spending on defence 15 paise out of every rupee spent by the Government. This is one paisa per rupee less than what was spent in 1979-80.

Of course, the Indian armed forces of 1980 are not what they were even a decade ago. The Indian Army has come a long way. The 7.62 SLR has replaced the .303 used in the war with China in 1962. The Jaguars are here. With 1,096,000 men in uniform India sports the world's fourth largest standing armed force. As a matter of fact the programmes of modernisation got a major boost during 1977-78. Replacement of outdated World War II weapons which started with the first defence plan of 1964-69 took place at an increased pace during this period.

The strength of the armed forces comes from the 28 infantry divisions including 10 mountain divisions, 186 heavy/medium tanks, 1,000 combat aircraft, one aircraft carrier, eight submarines and 32 major surface vessels. For this considerable set up the budget allocation for 1980-81 is Rs 3,300 crores. The revised military expenditure for the year just passed is Rs 3,273 crores, an increase of Rs 223 crores over what was budgeted for. Nearly two-thirds of the budget is claimed by the Army and one third is shared between the Air Force and the Navy. It is significant that 23 per cent of the budget for the Army or, Rs 705 crores, is spent on pay and allowances of officers and men.

The overall importance of the Army notwithstanding, the Navy and Air Force have received special attention in recent times. Naval development for instance, had a low

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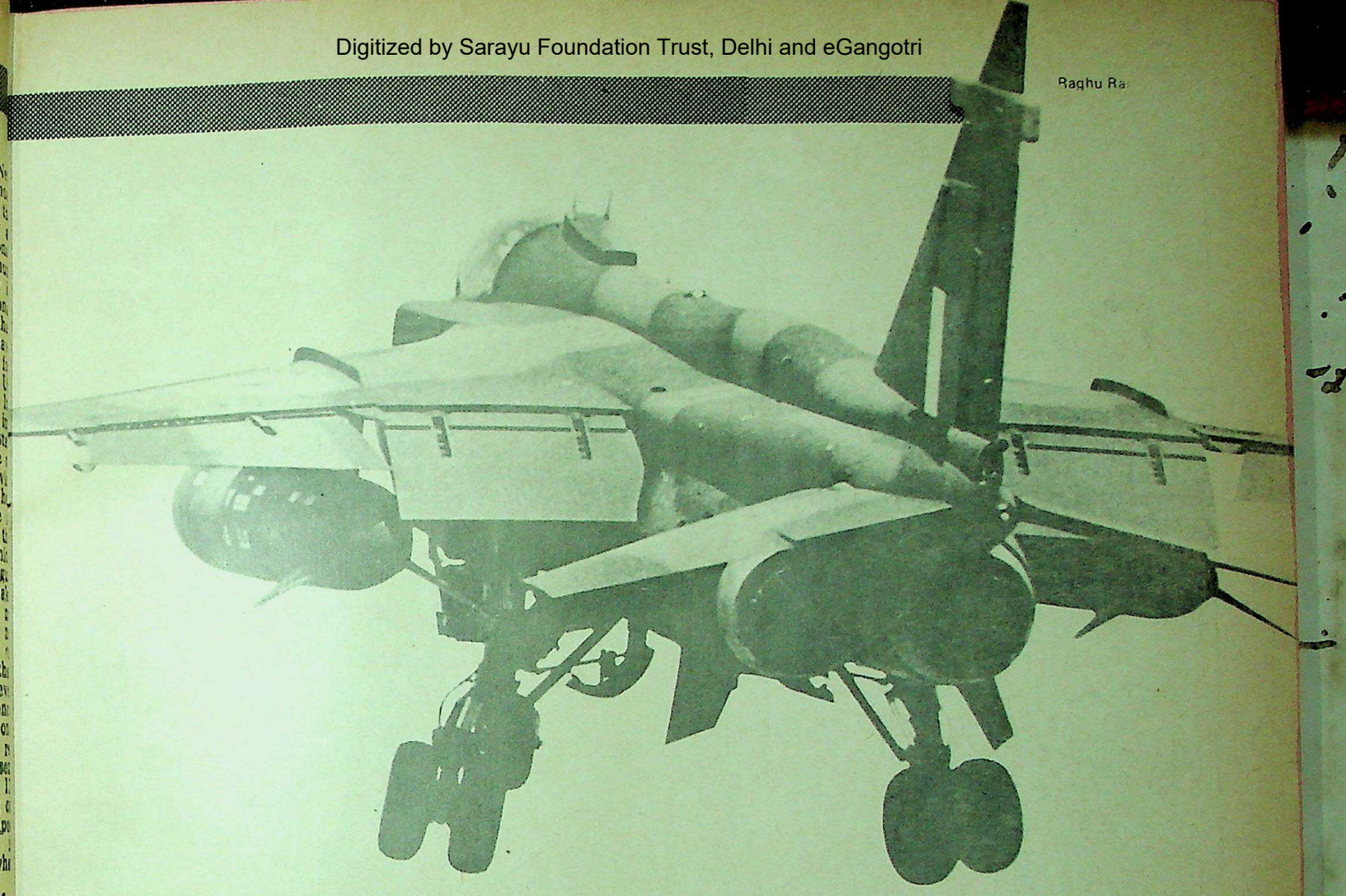

priority in the sixties. The policy changed along with the geo-strategic changes and an almost instant growth in the importance of the seas. The super power rivalries have highlighted the need for India to enlarge its naval presence Besides India's stakes in the off-shore areas have vastly increased with the discovery of oil. The Government has approved the indigenous construction of several warships which will partly fill the gaps in the security of the Andamans and Nicobar group of islands. The acquisition of a submarine is in a very advanced stage of decision making and the Vikrant, India's aircraft carrier, may soon have Harrier aircraft. Besides, a country like India with reasonable backing from the Air Force may not be easy to invade by sea. Although the USA succeeded in ensuring a stalemate in Korea by an amphibious landing at Inchon, no such action was taken in Vietnam. The risks have greatly increased. For the Air Force, besides the decision to induct the Jaguar there is also a proposal to acquire a new medium range transport aircraft along with licences for its manufacture in India. MI-8 helicopters are being acquired to replace the ageing MI-4s.

India's defence capabilities have been acquiring teeth over a period of 30 years without permitting military expenditure to consume a disproportionately large slice of the limited national resources. Only once during this period, that is in the sixties after the trauma of the border war with China, did defence expenditure take a big leap forward. Soon, however, the level of defence expenditure was stabilised at one of the lowest percentages to national income in the world. At least 16 Asian and African nations spend on defence a greater percentage of their national income than India. With military expenditure at less than five per cent of the GNP, India is bracketed with Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea in Asia and West Germany, France and Sweden in Europe. As Emile Benoit has shown in his work on the relation between defence and defence expenditure in the third world, India's defence expenditure has contributed to overall economic growth, more than compensating for the diversion of foreign exchange.

THE worth of this military capability, impressive in physical and absolute terms, can be judged qualitatively only vis-a-vis the two main potential security threats facing India—Pakistan and China. To take Pakistan first, the difference in the degree of dependence on external military support between the two countries is a major factor. India has the capacity to replenish much of its own arms inventories even with lessening external assistance. Besides, there are limits to Chinese capabilities as a supplier of arms to Pakistan, and the equipment that has been supplied is not very advanced or reliable. Even strategically, Pakistan is more vulnerable, since several of its major cities like Lahore and important road and rail links are within fairly easy access of the Indian border. Again, modern armoured forces require a substantial amount of space for manoeuvre, and Pakistan has felt the lack of this. This has led Pakistan into a strategy of defending its own territory by attacking Indian soil. This was evident in 1964 (Runn of Kutch), 1965 and 1971 (western sector). It was the Pakistani forces which struck first in armour-air assault designed to slow down or deter any thrust into Pakistan. Now, however, Pakistan's preemptive thrust may not be penetrative as India's superiority in air power (the ratio is 4:1,) and constituting generally a more modern force, means that any future armoured thrust by Pakistan will lack any meaningful air support.

Pakistan has, however, strengthened her defence services, is engaged in a rapid arms buildup, has made good her losses in the 1971 conflict and replaced obsolete equipment. Her defence expenditure, a very high percentage of her budget, had doubled since 1971. And according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Pakistan has

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been able to expand her Army by 70 per cent and now has parity with deployable Indian forces on the India-Pakistan border. Therefore, if Pakistan were to launch a zero warning attack, the danger to India is very acute. But it should also be noted that the Afghanistan crisis has, to a certain extent, lessened the tension between India and Pakistan. Following the crisis Pakistan, anticipating danger, has moved some of her troops to the Afghan border and her buildup along the Indian border has thus been lessened.

As far as the India-China military balance is concerned, the Chinese have their 18th Regular Army in Tibet with three divisions, plus four divisions of border troops. There are some other formations which are useful for defence. We have on our north-eastern border with China around ten mountain divisions. Ten against their seven might sound reasonable, especially since it is possible to reinforce them even now. Besides, our forces can seize the initiative and attack where they want along the long border. If we are to consider the Chinese equivalent of a division, then the Indian strength is much more. And the Indian border divisions include some very fine infantry battalions: Scouts, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Assam Rifles and the BSF. Backing these are many battalions capable of defending but not attacking like the CRP and armed police. So even if the Chinese bring their total to ten divisions, the Indian Army would still outnumber the attacked 2:1 and still have a margin. India has a reinforcement capability too. Around 50 infantry battalions would have at any time completed a three year stint in the mountains within the previous 12 months. Reintroducing these battalions into the mountains is fairly simple.

But China's modernisation drive of the armed forces, which is one of the four modernisations called for, could have important implications for India's defence. If Peking were to acquire the Harrier vertical take-off and landing(VTOL) aircraft, which Britain has agreed to sell to China, it would certainly enhance Peking's capabilities, both on the Indian and Soviet borders. The deployment of Chinese Spey fitted F-12, which is reportedly an all-weather aircraft, will also have to be watched closely. In the northern borders, helicopter gunships would be of great help to the Chinese. Moreover, air-to-air, surface-to-air, and surface-to-surface missiles could also be used by Peking to great advantage in a border conflict. Equally significant is the probability of Peking acquiring and manufacturing anti-radar missiles which could be capable of attacking the Indian radar network in the northern frontier. These would mean that India should think of acquiring a counter weapons system. But as P. S. Chari, director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, said: "China's modernisation drive is not getting off the ground. They don't have sufficient money and besides there is no ideological consensus on this. And in any case, if China attacks the Indian mountain divisons are better off."

But China has improved its logistic capabilities in Tibet. A pipeline now supplies oil to Lhasa and added to this are a number of airfields, which can deploy aircraft all the year round. The Sining-Golmo-Lhasa railway has already altered the supply equation in Tibet. New railway lines are under construction, including some in Sinkiang, which would bring Ladakh within 100 air miles of the railhead. Apart from this the Chinese are also improving the Karakoram highway, which will step up their supplies to Pakistan at times of need. To counter this, India would perhaps need some more divisions.

Bangladesh, too, cannot be ignored while assessing India's defence strategy. Over the past three years the Bangladesh Army's strength has moved up from a couple of brigades in 1972 to about five divisions, including an armoured brigade. This, in view of the disturbances in the north-eastern states of India, assumes significance. While the insurgency in Nagaland and Mizoram is not as acute as it was before, the turmoil in Assam has gained ascendency. And in this region, anti-nationals are taking over. Freely circulated literature from the north-eastern states call for "the federation of states in the region, completely independent of India." This problem, with the active assistance of foreign countries around the region, especially China, may soon become a problem for India's defence also.

Since the basic strategic divide in this sub-continent is between India and Pakistan and in South Asia between India and China, an important part of India's defence preparedness is her friendship with the Soviet Union. The Soviet connection made a difference in international diplomacy since the Russian intervention in Afghanistan. Even Henry Kissinger, a strong advocate of rearming Pakistan, admitted in January this year that, "a real threat will develop if the Soviet Union and India co-operate. We must, of course, prevent this from occurring." America realised that a combination of Soviet and Indian power would be far superior to anything that the USA could assemble in this distant region to defend US and western interests.

Apparently anticipating such a contingent security problem of a US-China-Pakistan axis taking shape in South Asia and threatening India's position as a leading regional power, Mrs Gandhi has asked Moscow for $2.6-billion worth of military hardware. And according to western sources the Soviets have agreed. There is no deal yet, and there may be none if Pakistan is not substantially re-armed. But the point is that much of the strength that Indian diplomacy has been able to show has been derived as much from India's own military capability as from its strategic ties with the Soviet Union. Under article nine of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty, the Soviet Union is obliged not to assist a third party with whom India is locked in conflict. Similarly, the treaty bars Indian military cooperation with a third party with whom the USSR is locked in armed conflict. Besides, in case either side is attacked or threatened with attack, "the two countries would immediately enter into mutual consultation in order to eliminate this threat and take appropriate effective measures to ensure the peace and security to their countries."

An urgent need to build up India's forces was first felt after the 1962 war with China which resulted in a new awareness of the threat along the northern borders of the country. India, initially, looked to the west for military equipment. Y. B. Chavan led a purchase mission seeking naval vessels and jet aircraft. But the USA gave a negative reply and Britain was equally unsympathetic. It was in these circumstances that India turned to the Soviet Union for military hardware. As a result, from 1964 until recently, India's main external source for weapons has been the Soviet Union. And this has covered equipment for all services — tanks, naval vessels and combat aircraft. Dependence on the Soviet Union thus extends to spares and ancillaries also. Recently, India has had deals for the supply of weapons with other countries. For example, India has decided to obtain Harrier aircraft from the UK and a recent agreement with Britain provides for the outright purchase of 40 Jaguar aircraft. Recent acquisition of equipment from the Soviet Union has been mostly for the Navy and the Air Force. Nanchuka class missile corvettes and Kashin class missile destroyers are on order from the Soviet Union. It has also been reported that India is evaluating offers for getting submarines from western nations.

But dependence on external sources for equipment could also mean that the supplying nation could exercise political leverage within the country. It was precisely for this reason that in the defence policy framework after the 1962 war it was made clear that reliance on external supplies was to be minimised as much as possible and restricted to advanced types of weaponry only. As a matter of fact now there are 32 ordnance factories and defence public sector undertakings producing a large variety of items for the defence and military sectors. Besides, there are 32 defence research establishments in the country which support the defence production effort. The highest in value is made by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bharat Electronics Limited and three shipyards. HAL is manufacturing the MIG and Ajeet aircraft, the Avro (HS-748-M) transport aircraft and the Alouette (Chetak) and the SA-315 (Cheetah) helicopters for the Air Force. BEL is producing sophisticated electronic communi-

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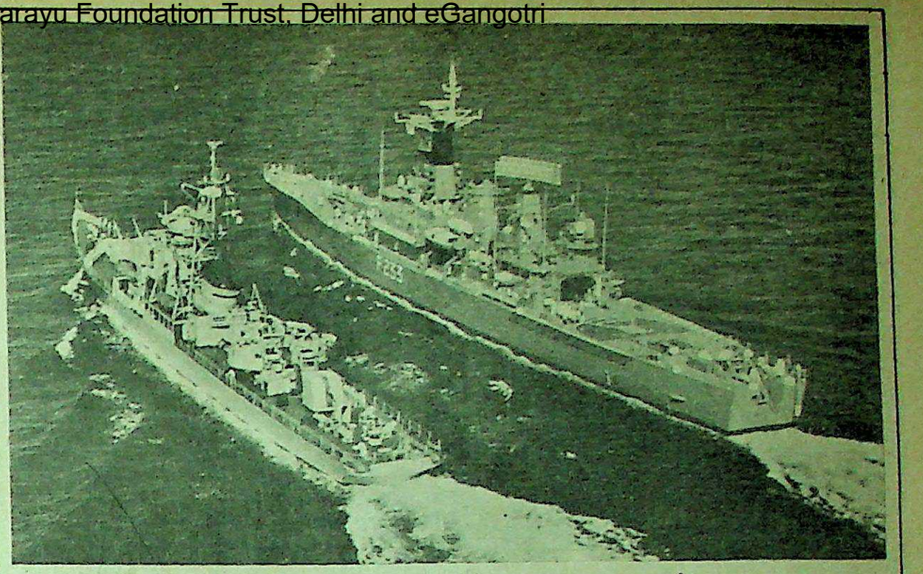
cation equipment and radar for the three defence services. And while the Mazagon Dock is building Leander class frigates for the Navy, Garden Reach Workshops is producing seaward defence boats, survey vessels and ocean going tugs. The value of production in ordnance factories has risen from Rs. 178 crores to Rs. 414 crores and in the defence public sector undertakings from Rs. 714 crores to Rs. 1454 crores between the years 1971-72 and 1978-79.

UNFORTUNATELY, most of the defence equipment produced in this country at present is under manufacturing licence from foreign countries granted that we have on our own designed a number of electronic communication systems, a field gun, a self-propelled gun, a frigate and a number of smaller vessels.

But building up competence in R and D is of utmost importance and our investment here has been very modest. A weapons' system of today needs fairly large numbers of electronic sub-systems and very high quality sophisticated alloys. Much of this is not made in this country because the quantities required are not economical for production here. Again, what is needed is a sophisticated electronic component industry. But our industrial sector is only equal to that of an advanced industrial nation with a market for 50-60 million people. Barring France, no industrial economy of that size is able to afford a self-reliant defence production base. In effect it means that a self-reliant defence production base can be achieved only in the context of an overall industrialisation of the country and a large scale industrial market within it. "Sophisticated defence production cannot function successfully as an island in a limited industrial economy restricted to a market of 50 to 60 million people and that too largely based on licenced production. A country that relies largely on licences for its civil industrial product, which does not achieve optimum indigenisaton in respect of its civil industrial products and does not invest heavily in R and D is not going to find it easy to achieve self reliant defence production in a short period", says T. Subramaniam. This has been largely due to the compartmentalised approach to defence and development. And for the defence industry to grow it is essential that industrialisation, as a whole, takes place in the country. Said P. R. Chari, "as far as the super powers are concerned, 15 per cent of their military budget goes into R and D. In India of course this is not possible. But there should be more emphasis on this aspect. If you are talking of military preparedness of a country, then R and D is a very vital factor."



A question which is being raised in view of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the US response to it is whether the relaxed mood in Delhi is justified. Even before the Afghan crisis, but in the context of the collapse of the Shah of Iran, Mr C. Subramaniam, during his brief tenure as Defence Minister in the Charan Singh Cabinet, had raised the question whether India should not opt for a planned upgrading of the force levels of the armed services so that it could cope with the threats building up to its security and interests. In a lecture to the officer students of the National Defence Academy in October, 1979, Mr Subramaniam drew the worst possible scenario of the region's security environment and called for India's readiness to meet the bleakest possible contingencies. He suggested that the measure of adequacy for India's defence should be China, and not Pakistan, better still, China and Pakistan combined. He perceived China embarking on a massive military modernisation programme with substantial US and western aid, a China that intended to "punish" Vietnam and was supporting insurgencies in Southeast Asia. He said, "China is definitely attempting to gain a foothold in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean". He added that India could hardly rely on China's verbal assurances that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against any country. India, he said, already had an assymetrical defence position vis-a-vis China. India's position will be worse if Pakistan too developed a nuclear capability.

To this Dr. Bhabani Sengupta, member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said: "The main problem with the Subramaniam thesis is that it does not pause to calculate the cost of India's optimum defence preparedness. Optimum against whom? It is always possible to overreact to the strength of China and to Pakistan's ability to get help from others. But the Americans seem to be very disappointed with the big gaps in China's military and economic capability. In any case, China punished itself more than it punished Vietnam in the war of February 1979. Pakistan does not seem to be exactly itching for

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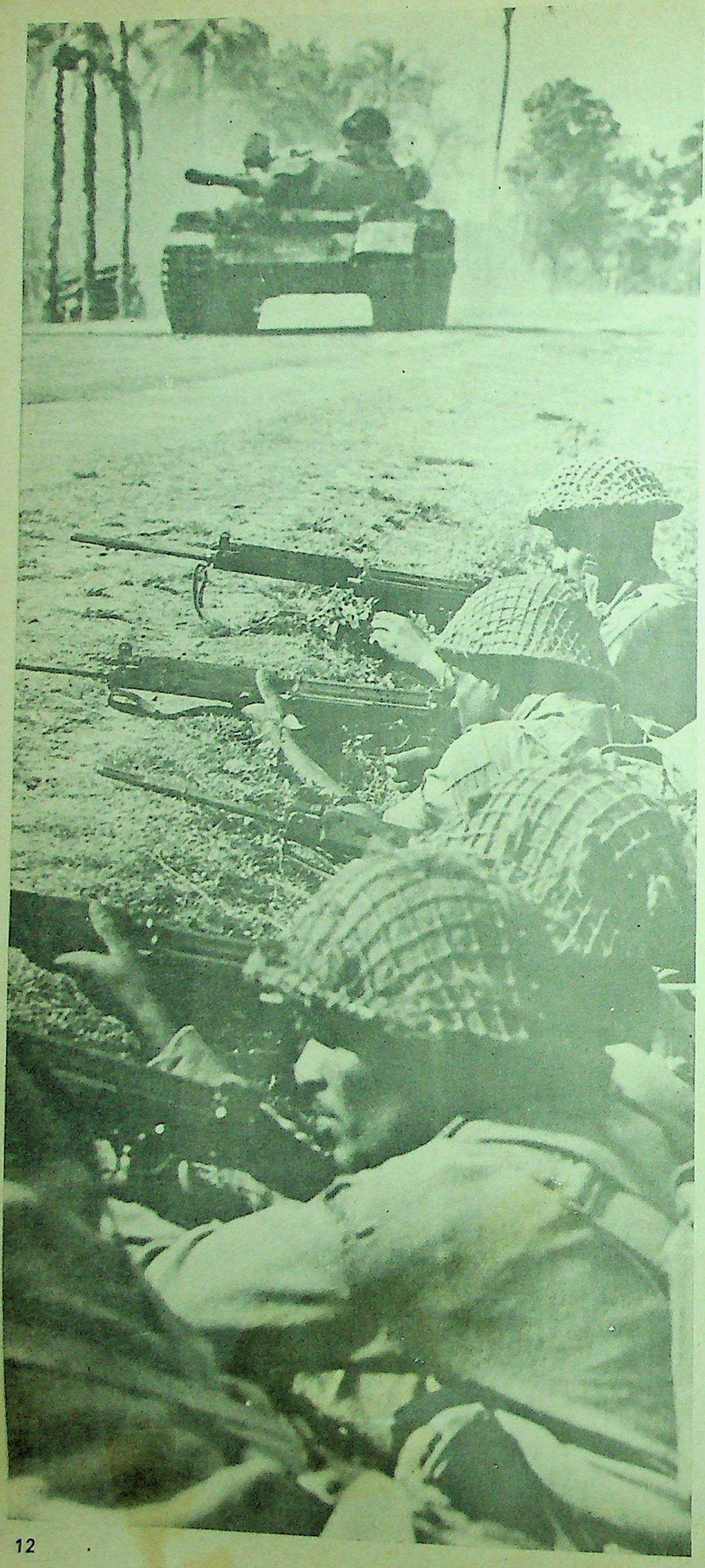

Raghu Rai

another war with India. If the military junta of Pakistan knows one thing for sure, it is that in a war with India, very little will remain of Pakistan."

Dr. Sengupta said India's defence forces have developed in a rather haphazard manner in response to demands and needs of the three services and the necessity to match, and surpass, the armour of Pakistan. On the other hand, India has been able to avoid a choice between guns and butter. "What we need now is a system of integrated defence. This means far greater reliance on our own R and D, our own industrial capability and trained manpower. It is not necessary to match the air-power of Pakistan or the manpower of China. Nor it is necessary to seek weapons parity. And it is always wise to keep a low military profile. An integrated defence system, relying overwhelmingly on indigenous skills and resources, and tuned to the objective security needs of the country, taking sober account of who are, and can be, our friends and adversaries, will give us the strength we need and will not, hopefully, frighten our smaller and weaker neighbours."

Whate er apprehensions there might have been soon after the peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE) at Pokharan in 1974, it is now generally accepted that India has no nuclear arsenal. But the question which arises is: would India going the nuclear way add to her military preparedness? This, of course, would depend on a number of factors like whether Pakistan goes nuclear, whether the superpowers continue with their nuclear proliferation, whether clandestine proliferation continues to take place in countries like South Africa and Taiwan and whether nuclear weapons get increasingly legitimised or not. There is little doubt that nuclear arsenals are important for a country to increase its bargaining power vis-a-vis other countries. And, as Mr C. Subramaniam mentioned in his speech in October: "Under conditions of assymetry (vis-a-vis nations in possession of nuclear weapons) there is no guarantee that nuclear nations will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear nations. In India we have a situation of assymetry vis-a-vis China. No doubt China has given a pledge of no first use, but the question is how far can we rely on these pledges?" Again as P. R. Chari said: "India should be prepared for this contingency. We should not be caught with our pants down."

But at the moment, the mood is neither militarist nor jingoistic. And though the Prime Minister has been stressing the possible threats to India's security, she attributes this to the super power cold war in the region. rather than to regional adversaries like China and Pakistan. Sometime soon Mrs Gandhi will have a Defence Minister. The Cabinet will have its defence sub-committee and a good hard look will be taken at our defence needs during the coming years. ■

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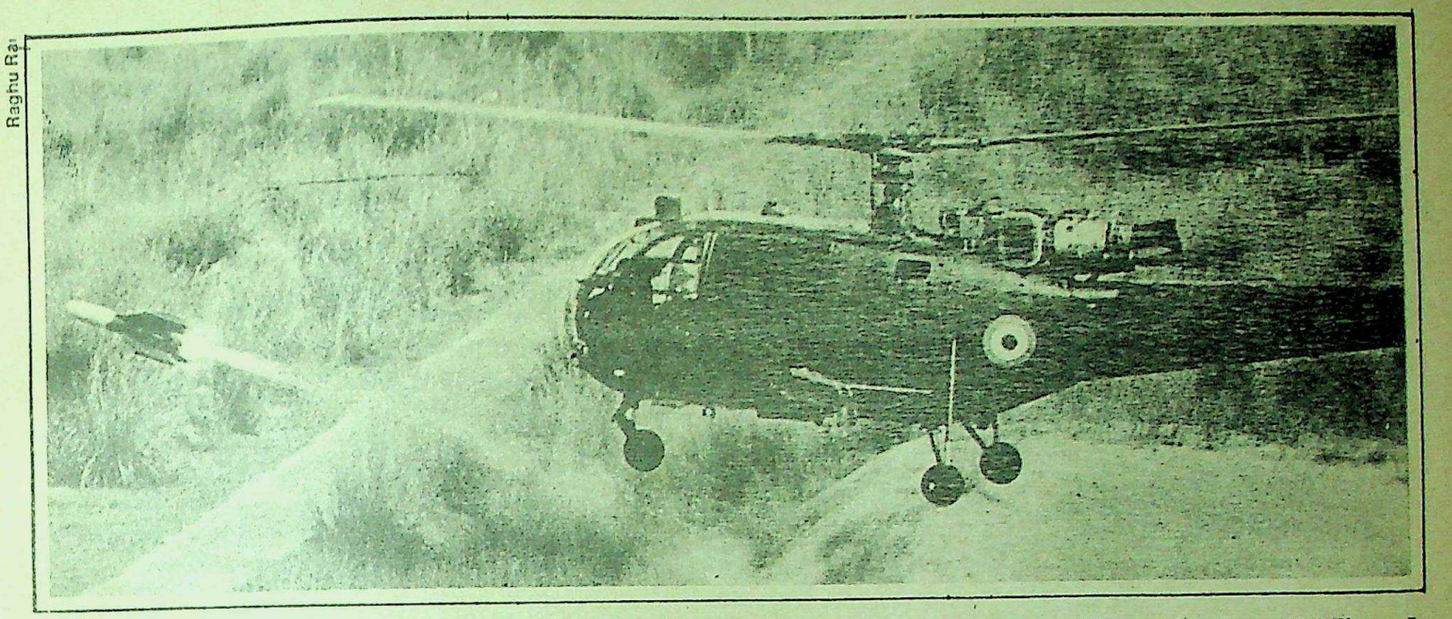
Is the South exposed?

By Air Commodore S. Nair (Retd.)



WITH the emergence of India as the most dominant nation in the area after 1971, a new power configuration has come into being. The presence of the US fleet and air force with a base at Diego Garcia and the Russian fleet to match, have caused protest tremors across the littoral states including India. Indonesia, which is closer to the Andamans and Carnicobar group of islands, had never made secret of its hostile intentions whenever there was a conflict with Pakistan, and has now armed itself very well, in the wake of the oil boom. There are a few Arab countries, who are equipped with the most sophisticated array of arms, who were similarly disposed, whenever we had confrontations with Pakistan. The peninsular nature of our country with the far flung islands has inbuilt chasms, wherein unseen forces could lurk for advantage at the most crucial time. This threat is now more real. To top it all there is an unprecedented arms build-up in the whole region.

On the assumption of twin threats from Pakistan and China, we have four operational commands for the Army—Northern, Western, Central and Eastern. All the fighting formations including the artillery and armour are deployed in those commands. In the peninsular portion including the islands, there is only the Southern command; already an over-sized formation with a number of training, static units and a few fighting units on peace-time locations in turn. There is hardly any artillery or armour worth reckoning anywhere in the region. Except an odd unit, perhaps, the islands are also devoid of any effective punch.

So far as the Air Force is concerned the three operational Commands —Western, Central, Eastern and the group—are all poised against already acknowledged threats. In the peninsula below the 18th parallel, there are only Training and Maintenance commands, responsible for the functions their names signify. So far as is known there are no operational wings located below the Bombay sector. Thus the two main arms of the defence mechanism, Army and Air Force, are facing north-west and north-east.

Our Naval forces form the only real operational vanguard of the defence for the peninsula and the islands. The Western and Eastern commands of the Navy control their respective fleets and the Southern command has also a few ships. The Western fleet has the aircraft carrier Vikrant, a few cruisers, frigates, missile boats, reconnaissance aircraft, some helicopters and supporting vessels. The Eastern fleet is armed to a lesser degree; there are a few fighting ships, but it is doubtful whether there are any modern frigates. The Submarine force is too small and its deployment is governed mostly by tactical considerations. The fleets have a long list of tasks ranging from protection of our commerce, Bombay High oil complex,. defence of ports like Calcutta, Haldia, Paradeep, Vishakpatnam, Madras, Tuticorin in the east and Cochin, Mangalore, Goa, Bombay and Kandla in the west. Though, for its size the naval forces have adequate fire power, this is in no way compatible with the onerous tasks assigned to it. Judging from any standard there is no doubt that at least double the amount of naval forces are required to assure reasonable defence reliability. In short it is more than apparent that the under-belly of the Indian defence system is really soft and highly vulnerable.

As the peninsula and the islands are skirted by the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean, it is only logical to expect a threat from the naval forces and sea-based or land-based aircraft. The Indian Ocean has the most powerful naval forces of the USA with nuclear capability, sailing in the international waters. Only eight years ago, when India was engaged in a conflict with Pakistan, a US task force of the Seventh Fleet led by aircraft carrier Enterprise and a host of attack ships headed towards Bangladesh, to extricate the Pakistani forces. If an engagement did not take place, it was due more to the speed of the Indian offensive in that area, which culminated in the fall of Dacca, before any damage could be done. Our defence preparedness should take, due cognisance of the physical presence of the US Navy and Air Force, so close by. Indonesia, a staunch ally of Pakistan, with its revitalised armed forces, who had embarked on attacks on some of the neighbouring islands could without any qualms, take advantage of proximity and pose a direct threat to Andaman/Carnicobar island groups.,

Due to the great expanse of the, Indian Ocean and the superhuman efforts required to mount a major naval offensive by an enemy, the possibility of a diversionary move is more than a main attack. If a main or diversionary move to the peninsula or any one of the islands materialises, as things are at present, the entire weight would have to be borne by the naval forces. Against this the fact that the fleet is too small stands

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out as a hard reality. As our Navy's power is bound to be diluted by the varied tasks entrusted to it, a determined enemy bent on diffusing the northern defences, would be able to find his way to the place he may choose.

The Army and Air Force, with their orders of battle to the north would have to make a 180 degrees turn and even if it only means partial deployment, both the services are likely to be in a spin. In a similar situation in Kutch in 1965, when Pakistan struck at a place of choice below the western defence belt, the hasty retreats we had to make, the insurmountable logistic problems that arose in rushing troops can all be recapitulated vividly. The international community awarded Pakistan The Kutch round. With the present airlift capability of the IAF. even if supported by Civil Aviation, it is doubtful where one division with supporting armour and artillery can be airlifted. Surface transportation, rail or road over long distances would provide the answer, which of course would be the main target of enemy air action, resulting in delay and consequent losses. Here it is very relevant to cite, the utterly disjoined and chaotic move of No. 1 Armoured Division, the pride of the Army, from base to concentration during the most crucial days of 1965 conflict, which was mainly the outcome of lack of forethought on the part of planners in not moving the division at least after commencement of our offensives in the Hajipir pass in August and not after our forces had crossed the border on September 6, 1965. Also in 1971, the tremendous array of problems experienced in transporting some forces from east to west after the fall of Dacca, must have been recorded in the operational lessons of both the Army and the Air Force.

The Army should raise and locate a minimum of one corps, with an adequate number of divisions, armour and artillery in the South. On account of the more integrated type of fighting involving the three services in the arena, formation of task forces of a highly mobile nature to strike with rapidity may provide one of the answers. Likewise, the Air Force should establish an operational group, in the peninsula with at least a couple of wings and some squadrons to afford ground and ocean air assaults without having to make risky movements from north during a critical phase of the operation. It may become essential either to renovate or establish new military airfields, some of which could be manned on skeleton basis, and exercised to test operational worthiness. The many oil, port and industrial complexes could be defended by surface-to-air missiles employed on a permanent basis.

The existing naval offensive capability would have to be virtually doubled to assure reasonable defence safety. The Naval expansion should be towards acquisition of attack submarines, missile cruisers, missile boats and similar fire power packed naval weapon systems. The aircraft carrier Vikrant may have its due place in the scheme but fresh procurement of such monolithic platforms with a highly volatile cargo and a huge compliment of personnel, which always requires a large number of ships as escorts for each move, may not be a practical proposition. Unlike the super powers, who are involved in global armed strategy wherein carriers could play a pivotal role, our need is for a physical presence of a very large number of highly destructive naval task forces over a vast area. Moreover the land based aircraft could easily provide the ocean strikes if required.

The creation of an amphibious force and a huge airlift capability are two essential pre-requisites of the defence of the islands. It would only be wise not to rely too much on static type of defences on the lines of Singapore in World War II, but the islands should be so manned by a force as to absorb the initial shock, a certain amount of damage and destruction. The amphibious forces, kept in readiness could move in to support the defences of the islands so affected by enemy action at the opportune time.

In the civil defence sector, at present, there is a complete lack of awareness in the deep south. There may be a few officials already trained on the subject but the very concept is non-existent so far as the general public is concerned. Experience has shown that it takes a lot of time and effort to build up a civil defence organisation. As the cities of the south have a variety of industrial complexes the southern states should give civil defence urgent attention.

The violence, ferocity and swiftness with which the next round is likely to be fought, need not have to be reiterated. There may never be a repetition of the frontal blows but mostly a passing of strongholds through indirect approaches. Even the vacuum of the arid desert may become the most likely main scene of deep thrusts into each other's heartland or the vulnerable passes in the Himalayan sector may become jumping boards. In the midst of such a conflagration, a purposeful enemy or his allies may find it most ideal and convenient to intervene in a limited manner which would cause sufficient confusion and partial paralysis of our defences. Any hotch-potch device to induct forces so deep below the 18th parallel, can only spread apoplexy in the defence spectrum. Therefore there is a great need to restructure the defence set up of the southern region and islands with the permanent presence of operational formations of the Army and the Air Force and a vastly enhanced naval offensive power with clear-cut operational plans. Only then can the soft under-belly be considered as reasonably safe. ■

Mrs Gandhi

Power and Politics

By KEWAL VARMA

EVIDENCE is gathering that Mrs Indira Gandhi's Government is lurching towards the right. She, indeed, has never been even a mild socialist by conviction. When she first became Prime Minister in 1966, she gave a sharp right turn to policies with the aid of Ashoka Mehta and C. Subramaniam. She was so under the spell of the World Bank that she devalued the rupee at its behest. But she was rebuffed in the 1967 elections. This was followed by a serious challenge to her leadership from within her Party from the Syndicate. By that time P. N. Haksar had taken command of her think-tank. She was made to understand that, if not by conviction, she should become a socialist by convenience. The 1969-71 story is well-known. She gave radical slogans, took some radical steps and encouraged the radicals within her Party. She also entered into an alliance with the CPI. This really created a socialist euphoria. Many were misled. But even in her heyday of socialism, a Delhi-based perceptive foreign correspondent in a private communication to his editor, summed up Mrs Gandhi's ideology thus: "Slightly left-of-centre in her self-interest".

The radical hangover persisted for some time after the 1971 elections. But she felt most uncomfortable, particularly because of the prominence which radicals acquired in her Party. The Socialist Forum became a strong lobby within the Congress. She prepared a plan to immobilise it. First, she encouraged and created a rift between Congressmen with socialist and communist backgrounds, giving encouragement to the latter. An idea of how she used to operate in those days could be had from one incident. She got K. R. Ganesh included in the Congress Working Committee after the split. Then she told Chandra Shekhar: "What sort of person's Subramaniam? He has packed the Working Committee with ex-communists". The dissension weakened the Socialist

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takes a right turn

Forum, bad blood was created between ex-socialists and ex-communists in the Congress. Then she asked Uma Shankar Dixit and Yashpal Kapoor to launch a Nehru Forum as a counter to the Socialist Forum. An unseemly controversy was encouraged. At that time Mrs Gandhi came down with a heavy hand and by a resolution of the parliamentary board got the Socialist Forum dissolved. This freed her from any radical pressure from within.

When Mrs Gandhi faced difficulties, she remembered her socialism and radical followers again. The outcome was the 20-point programme. But soon Sanjay Gandhi's five-point programme relegated the 20-point programme to the background. On the third day of the Emergency she went on the air to assure industry that there would be no more nationalisation. Radicals also became unwanted. It is a fact that for none of the radical policies, initiated between 1969 an 1977, had the initiative come from her. She agreed to bank nationalisation when she was made to understand that there was a link between bank nationalisation and her political survival. She agreed to the abolition of privy purses as a part of election gimmicks. After the 1971 elections, she agreed to radical policies most reluctantly. She agreed to a constitutional amendment taking the amount of compensation outside judicial review most grudgingly. She admonished Mohan Kumaramangalam for his speech in Parliament on the subject. Kumaramangalam, in fact, died a demoralised person. Earlier when he brought forward the proposal to nationalise the coal industry, she egged on D. P. Dhar to oppose it in the Cabinet. Later, when Dhar wanted to push through the take-over of the wholesale trade in wheat, she encouraged Kumaramangalam and Haksar to oppose it. The collapse of wheat take-over marks the closure of the radical chapter in Mrs Gandhi's Government.

Unlike 1971, when she won on the "garibi hatao" mandate, she does not carry any radical "deadweight" in 1980. She raised no such slogan. She won on the slogan "Indira lao, desh bachao". It is being impressed on her that the 1980 mandate has demonstrated that elections can be won without radicalism. Second, the radical pressure from within the Party has been considerably weakened. Most of the radicals went over to the Congress (U). Some who are still left in the Congress (I) like Bahuguna and K. R. Ganesh, are treated as untouchables. Some like V. P. Sathe have been more interested in colour TV than in more mundane matters. There are no Mohan Kumaramangalams, no D. P. Dhars, and no Chandrajit Yadavs in the Cabinet. Third, the CPI is also no more an ally and as such no radicalism is transmitted through it. Fourth, and this is most important, Sanjay's influence has tremendously increased over the policy-making apparatus in the Government and the Party. He is unofficially monitoring the Government's policies. Sanjay makes no secret of his distaste of radicalism. He is against nationalisation of the public sector, against Communists, current or former. Within a few days of the imposition of the Emergency, Sanjay gave an interview to Uma Vasudeva of *The Two Faces of Indira Gandhi* fame and attacked communists, the public sector and nationalisation of coal.

Let's gather together all the straws in the wind which indicate some direction. The Home Ministry has asked the intelligence agencies to start keeping a close watch on pro-Russian elements in the country. It has circulated a list of these elements. The list includes a large number of those who were once used by Mrs Gandhi as her "unofficial ambassadors" to Communist countries. Such a close watch ceased to exist 15 years back. Even the Janata Government did not start it. It is significant that the Home Ministry has not yet started keeping close intelligence watch over the RSS, a practice which was stopped by the Janata. This is, perhaps, Sanjay's response to Balasaheb Deoras' offer of cooperation to Mrs Gandhi. In foreign affairs, it is for the first time that the Soviet Foreign Minister came and went back without signing a joint communique.

The clearest indications of a shift are in the field of economic policies. A. B. A. Ghani Khan Chaudhury is the most bold in giving these indications, of course in his private durbars. He has threatened the DVC authorities that if power generation did not improve, he would hand over the management to the private sector. One often hears in the corridors of power the suggestion to denationalise coal mines. J. B. Patnaik said in Parliament that he would consider the suggestion of allowing the private sector into the airline business to foster "healthy competition" with the public sector. When a junior Minister, Makwana, talked of nationalisation of the sugar industry, he was pulled up. Nationalisation is taboo with this Government. The hands of those who talk of denationalisation are strengthened by the fact that the performance of the public sector has slumped. In a similar situation in 1971-72 there were then committed Ministers like Mohan Kumaramangalam, C. Subramaniam and D. P. Dhar who saw in the public sector an instrument of social change. They showed perseverance and doggedness to improve the public sector. But the present Ministers are looking for some good excuse to hand over the public sector to the private sector.

Another area where pressure is being mounted to dilute existing policies is in regard to multinationls and monopoly houses. Vice President Hidayatuallah is virtually campaigning publicly to allow multinational companies to enter India "lock, stock and barrel". Such a blatant advocacy of multinationals by a person occupying a high public office has never been done in the past. Surely, he cannot be speaking of his own accord. The Government has so far not contradicted Hidayatullah. It is also a fact that a former Coca Cola king, Charanjit Singh, a Congress (I) MP from Delhi, is among the loyal followers of Sanjay. Those who used to make easy money from Coca Cola have not reconciled to the exit of Coca Cola ordered by George Fernandes. Similarly, there is talk to remove all restrictions on the expansion of large houses in the name of increasing production. Even the will of those who have been opposing the growth of monopolies is weakening as a result of the continuing poor performance of the public sector. The forcefulness with which Vasant Sathe is advocating the introduction of colour TV sounds like the funeral oration of the "Garibi hatao" phase. We should now be prepared for a new era of laissez faire where profit and riches will be given social respectability and production will increase to meet the increasing demand of the elite. It is well known that industrialists supported Mrs Gandhi to the hilt in the elections in the name of getting a Stable Government. This time their investment may not go to waste.

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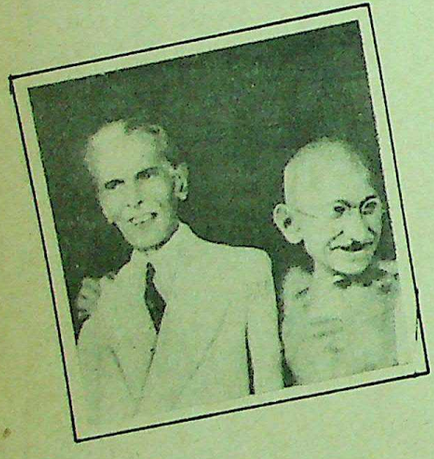
A meeting before the transfer of power. (Clockwise around the table, from left) Baldev Singh, J. B. Kripalani, Vallabhbhai Patel, Nehru, Lord Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan. Extreme right, Lord Ismay

Lahore Resolution

Resolved that it is the considered view of this Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute Independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Musalmans are in minority; adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This Session further authorises the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communication customs and such other matters as may be necessary—March 23, 1940.



Pakistan: Paradise lost

RAJENDRA SAREEN covers in his sweep 40 years of the subcontinent's history to demonstrate how the Muslim problem' was not solved and how Indian Muslims are now fighting for a place in the sun here.

FORTY years ago on March 23 the All India Muslim League session at Lahore adopted a resolution which at that time was described as the charter of the political aspirations of the Indian Muslims. Later it was hailed as the proclamation of Pakistan. Today it enjoys the status of a sacrament and constitutes the ideological sheet-anchor of the state of Pakistan. However, the word Pakistan does not occur in the text at all.

Pakistan was brought into being ostensibly as a solution of the Muslim problem in India. It was conceived as the homeland of the subcontinent's Muslims. It was the fruition of the two-nation theory defining the Hindus and Muslims as two separate nations straddling the length and breadth of India. The logic of this was highly dubious even at that point of time. Since then, however, the absurdities of the two-nation theory have become ever so patently manifest.

The strength of the Pakistan movement stemmed from the failure of the Congress leadership to understand and appreciate that the primary motivation of the Muslim upsurge was not separatist but a search for economic emancipation on par with the more advanced sections of Indian society. Had the situation been tackled at that level and appropriate correctives devised, the story would have taken a different turn. The Muslim strivings were basically modern and a clear repudiation of orthodoxy. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's intransigence found sustenance from the Congress proclivity to seek cosmetic remedies by drafting in the mullahs as a counterpoise to what it considered as the bogus Muslim League claim to speak on behalf of the Muslims. Since religious orthodoxy was not the real motivation, the Ulema became the object of Muslim ridicule and the Congress lost its credibility. All its arguments fell on deaf ears. The Muslim mind was not receptive to anything coming from the Congress. In retrospect it can be seen that Maulana Azad had the vision and the foresight to see the problem in all its dimensions but such was the blind fury driving the Muslim community that he was denounced as a show-boy, insulted and humiliated.

Thirty-three years after Pakistan became a reality, it is none of the things it was supposed to be. Through the partition of India in 1947, the Muslim community split itself in a manner that brought about a marked diminution in its collective strength, prestige and influence that it had come to possess as part of a historical process. The fallout from the im-

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pulse generated at the time of partition was that ethnic, cultural and linguistic facets of the human existence came to be considered antagonistic to and incompatible with Islamic identity. This attitude culminated in the split of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh. Far from a solution of his problem, it has been instrumental in a sharp deterioration in the position and status of the Indian Muslim. As for being a Muslim homeland in the subcontinent, one need not go beyond recalling the inability of Pakistan to accept the people still in Bangladesh who claim to be its citizens. Equally irrelevant is the claptrap about Pakistan being the citadel of Islam. Islam has been there for 1,400 years while Pakistan is no more than 33 years old. The industrial and economic infrastructure of Pakistan is barely adequate to sustain it as a national entity. The oil-rich countries have not shut themselves away from the non-Muslim world and there is no indication that they propose to tie themselves up with Pakistan to the exclusion of everybody else. Pakistan can play the pan-Islamic angle only to the extent it serves the geo-political objectives of the oil-rich nations. So far none of them have ever agreed to invest Pakistan with a veto on their relations with India.

Then, does it mean that Pakistan stands doomed, having lost its raison d'etre? The answer is an emphatic no. Its ideological origin is no longer relevant. Regardless of that, Pakistan is a political reality. It is a nation state enjoying the consent and acceptance of its people and constituent territories. If Pakistan lets go the temptation of playing games that are inconsistent with its geo-political and economic imperatives it is perfectly viable and feasible. Those who talk of disintegration of Pakistan as a result of regional controversies display their ignorance. No, there is no secessionist situation in Pakistan.

Soon after the Lahore resolution, Mr K. M. Munshi came out with an equally illogical, much more irrelevant, but emotionally evocative concept of Akhand Bharat. Earlier, Veer Savarkar had spoken of the inviolability of the 'Hindu Bhoomi' from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and Indus to Brahmaputra. Right from the word go, Akhand Bharat has been music to the Hindu chauvinist's ear. It makes every Hindu chauvinist chest expand an inch or two. Correspondingly, Akhand Bharat has been the proverbial red rag to the Muslim bull. It turns the taste in a Muslim mouth bitter. This single word has been the source of such colossal emotional upheaval! It has over the period attained a connotation which evokes extreme abhorrence, apprehension and anxiety in Pakistan and undisguised disgust among the Indian Muslims.

And yet it is essentially a non-issue, a bogey. Its emotional and psychological overtones notwithstanding, as a political factor it is pure fiction, shorn of reality. In any event it is altogether irrelevant to any of the policy objectives which India as a nation has been pursuing since Independence.

The Indian subcontinent's unity as a political concept has in fact an entirely non-Hindu origin. The cultural unity of the subcontinent and the religious bonds welding the Hindu society have been a reality for quite a few thousand years going back into the pre-historic times but Hinduism as a political factor has never been instrumental in promoting consolidation of the various centres of state power and binding them together as a step towards expanding the frontiers of a unified Hindu state.

Even before the advent of Islam in the Bharatvarsha, this huge land mass had never known a unified central political authority extending from north to south and east to west. There is thus no evidence of a unified political structure transcending the length and breadth of the subcontinent. There have at best been periods of regional consolidation, seldom lasting more than a generation or two.

What Jinnah said

Excerpts from Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's speech before the Constitutent Assembly of Pakistan.

"I KNOW there are people who do not quite agree with the division of India and the partition of the Punjab and Bengal...Any idea of united India could never have worked and in my judgement it would have led us to terriffic disaster. Maybe that view is correct; maybe it is not; that remains to be seen. All the same, in this division it was impossible to avoid the question of minorities being in one Dominion or the other. Now that was unavoidable. There is no other solution. Now what shall we do? Now, if we want to make this great state of Pakistan happy and prosperous we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor. If you will work in cooperation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last citizen of this state with equal rights, privilege and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

"I cannot emphasise it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities the Hindu community and the Muslim community — because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vaishnavas, Khatris also Bengalees, Madrasis and so on -- will vanish. Indeed if you ask me this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain freedom and independence and but for this we would have been free people long long ago. No power can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subject, nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened, nobody could have continued its hold on you for any length of time but for this. Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this. You are free, you are free to go to your temple, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed — that has nothing to do with the business of the state. As you know, history shows that in England conditions sometime ago were much worse than those prevailing in India today. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants persecuted each other. Even now there are some states in existence where there are discriminations made and bars imposed against a particular class. Thank God, we are not starting in those days. We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state. The people of England in course of time had to face the realities of the situation and had to discharge the responsibilities and burdens placed upon them by the government of their country and they went through the fire step by step. Today, you might say with justice that Roman Catholics and Protestants do not exist; what exists now is that every man is a citizen, an equal citizen of Great Britain and they are all members of the nation.

"Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state." ... August 11, 1947, Karachi.

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IT was that controversial Moghul monarch, Aurangzeb, who initiated the first effective moves for the political consolidation of the subcontinent. Simultaneously his excessive commitment to Muslim orthodoxy and religious intolerance generated impulses which were destructive of the thrust of his political achievement. But the fact remains that he was the pioneer of India's political unity, setting in motion a process which survived through the uncertain and unsettled times that followed his reign and was to become the principal objective of the British policy in the subcontinent.

What was started by Aurangzeb was consolidated by the British and those who talk glibly of Indian nationalism as a historical phenomenon would do well to remember that in the political sense it was the British rule and the English language which provided the flesh and bones to a concept which throughout had been no more than a religio-cultural ethos that never got translated into a political reality until Gandhiji emerged on the scene.

The vivisection of India was strongly resented and opposed by the Hindus, but, when the event did finally come about, it was the Muslims who got divided. Today the Muslims of the subcontinent stand split into three bits between Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. They are incapable of acting in concert. The political dispensation is not conducive to that. On the contrary the distinct Hindu orientation of the Indian polity that has taken place during the last 32 years would have been inconceivable if the Muslim influence in the political, social and cultural terms had not got dissipated in the wake of the partition in 1947 and all that followed.

India has moved a long way off from the days when some of the most ticklish, sensitive and explosive issues capable of blowing up a society were obliged to take a back seat in front of the searing controversies around the Hindu-Muslim question. It has been a long haul, but India today is a better consolidated polity than it ever was before. The regional and linguistic aspirations of the people in the east and the west and the south asserted themselves and secured satisfaction of their legitimate aspirations. The Indian polity today has developed a system of adjustment which is something to be truly proud of and must be the envy of not only nations such as Pakistan but many another polyglot society.

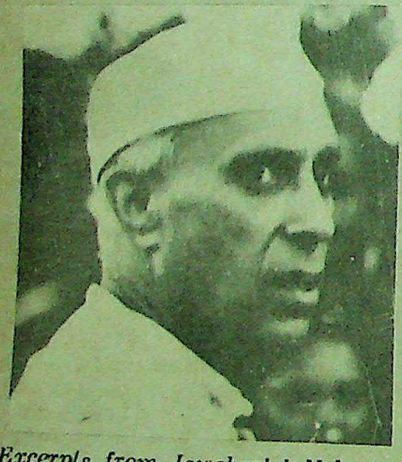
The Muslim problem in India, alas, is still crying out for a solution. The trauma of 1947 is long past but the Indian Muslim has yet to attain his full stature as an equal partner in the country's affairs. National commitment to secularism, duly enshrined in the Constitution, did create the framework for that attainment. Nevertheless realities on the ground leave much to be desired. The Indians Muslim has passed through three distinct phases since 1947. Immediately after the partition he faced the problem of physical survival. It took quite some time for things to settle down to an extent that survival was not in jeopardy. But, there were clear symptoms of withdrawal. A sort of guilt complex for having divided the country gripped the Muslim mind. Economic and employment opportunities were neither sought nor offered and such were the times that no grievance was made of the denial of even the most elementary rights. A major part of the political elite moved over to Pakistan and in the process not only denuded the hapless Muslim community of leadership but also subjected it to the added burden of suspicion from the rest of the nation. On completion of educational and professional courses of training, young Muslims found it easier to get jobs in Pakistan and by and large went in for that.

By the turn of the decade in 1960 the opportunities in Pakistan had begun to dry up. The domination of the mohajirs in the administrative, political and economic fields in Pakistan during the first decade had by then begun to be subjected to serious challenge by the local elites. But even so the process did not quite come to a dead-end until a few years later.

The second phase started around 1965. Pakistan had ceased to be the land of opportunity for the Indian Muslim, but the lure survived. Many an Indian Muslim did some odd job, saved money and went over to Pakistan to try his luck. He came back disappointed but the attraction abided. This was the darkest period of the last 33 years when the Muslim mind was torn between the myth that was Pakistan and the reality of their being Indian nationals. Thus ran the process that virtually shattered whatever illusions remained among the Indian Muslims about Pakistan.

The complete breakdown of communication between the two countries after 1971, though heart-rending and emotionally cruel, was instrumental in putting the Indian Muslim back on the road to recovery. The lure of easy options disappeared and he began to look for the solution of his problems and economic opportunities within the Indian polity. Pakistan ceased to loom large on his consciousness. The next few years witnessed him seeking his rights and opportunities and getting them in an ever increasing measure. The process is by no means fully what it must ultimately be, but it is only a matter of time before the matters are set right.

What Nehru said



Excerpts from Jawaharlal Nehru's speecch at the AICC meeting on June 15, 1947:-

THE most urgent task at present is to arrest the swift drift towards anarchy and chaos. Disruptive forces are at work and the most important disruptive force is that of the Muslim League. Their first task should be the establishment of a strong central government to rule the country firmly and to ensure individual's liberty of life; all other questions were of secondary importance.

A responsible body must not think in terms of today only, but there was a tomorrow and the day after that. It would be ridiculous to suggest that the British should be everything before they quit. The June 3 statement could not have come about, had there been no agreement. It was not an imposed award. Circumstances were such that the Congress agreed to it. It was not like one of those old decisions of the British Government which they could accept or reject. The acceptance for which, I am wholly responsible does not mean that I agree to every word in that statement. But I agree with the fundamental principle therein.

It was sufficient to compare what happened in Noakhali and Calcutta and again what happened in Bihar. By supreme efforts the Congress was able to control the situation in Bihar, but they could do nothing in the Punjab. Why did such things happen in the Punjab and why was the Khizar ministry broken and how was it? No one seemed to be capable of controlling the Punjab disturbances. The answer was patent. The Congress Working Committee passed a resolution in favour of the partition of the Punjab into two administrative provinces. Partition is better than murder of innocent citizens. — *Hindustan Times, June 16, 1947.*

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IN the fourth decade of their freedom, what are the prospects of India and Pakistan evolving a co-operative relationship such as exists between the USA and Canada? The process of normalisation since 1972 which provides the framework of mutual relations under the Simla Agreement is all right as far as it goes. But, it is clearly not enough to subsist as peaceful neighbours without any measure of warmth, if we are to meet the challenges that have recently emerged. The important thing is to dispel the fears and anxieties that inhibit the two countries from coming together to share each other's joys and sorrows.

Pakistan's understanding of Indian objectives in relation to her is largely conditioned by a belief that, having opposed the Muslim demand for the partition in 1947, the Hindus continue to nurse a grievance over the existence of Pakistan so that they would like to restore the status quo ante and in the meanwhile make things as difficult for Pakistan as possible. The Indian role in the emergence of Bangladesh continues to loom large over the Pakistani consciousness.

In this respect, fact and fiction are so inextricably mixed up that an article such as this cannot even attempt to unscramble the two. It is a pity that this aspect has not been researched to the extent it should have been because an objective analysis of the events since partition may help light up many of the dark corners of the web of make-believe that has come to determine the view of each other by India and Pakistan.

However, even a preliminary examination of the records would show that in the penultimate stages of the political talks which preceded the withdrawal of the British from India, acrimony between the Congress and the Muslim League had assumed such a dimension that the former had decidedly veered round to the view that partition, indeed, was the only viable solution. What is more, the sections of the Congress leadership who articulated the Hindu view of things were more forthright in demanding partition. Maulana Azad remained the lone opponent of partition as a political solution. Mahatma Gandhi, too, had acquiesced. Mr G. D. Birla, who exercised no mean influence in the counsels of national leadership recalls with obvious satisfaction that he "not only believed in the inevitability of partition but always considered this as a good way out of our difficulties" (*In the Shadow of The Mahatma*—p. 316).

Mr Allen Campbell Johnson records in his book *Mission With Mountbatten* at page 98 that "Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel accept partition on the understanding that by conceding Pakistan to Jinnah they will hear no more of him and eliminate his nuisance value, or, as Nehru put it privately, that by 'cutting off the head we will get rid of the headache'...Gandhi refuses to align himself with this concept, and is putting up a fierce rear-guard action against it. How far he will carry this opposition is one of the big imponderables."

Maulana Azad records that Sardar Patel was the first man to agree to partition. According to the Maulana, he "found Sardar Patel so much in favour of partition that he was hardly prepared even to listen to any other point of view...I was surprised and pained when Patel said that whether we liked it or not, there were two nations in India. He was now convinced that Muslims and Hindus could not be united into one nation. There was no alternative except to recognize this. In this way alone could we end the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims... Jawaharlal spoke to me in sorrow but left no doubt in my mind as to how his mind was working..... (He) asked me to give up my opposition to partition. He said it was inevitable and it would be wisdom not to oppose what was bound to happen... I saw clearly that we were taking one wrong decision after another. Instead of retracing our steps we were now going deeper into the morass..." (*India Wins Freedom* pp 184 to 186).

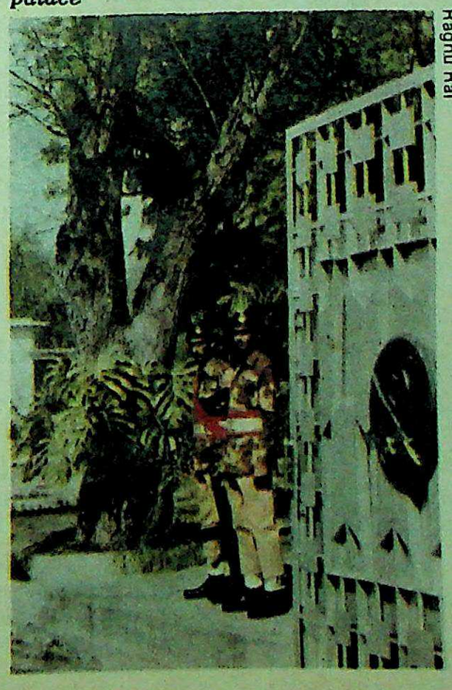
When Maulana Azad took up the matter with Mahatma Gandhi on March 31, 1947 the Mahatma said, "if the Congress wishes to accept partition, it will be over my dead body". Later that day Gandhiji met Lord Mountbatten after which Sardar Patel spent two hours with him. Subsequently, Mahatma had two further meetings with Lord Mountbatten on April 1 and 2. When Maulana Azad met the Mahatma again he found the latter too had changed. The Mahatma "was still not openly in favour of partition but he no longer spoke so vehemently against it...In despondency I said at last, 'if even you have now adopted these views, I see no hope of saving India from catastrophe'. Gandhiji did not reply to my comments." (*India Wins Freedom* p 187).

At this stage Gandhiji put forward the suggestion that the Congress should let Mr Jinnah form the Government and choose the members of the Cabinet. Lord Mountbatten is quoted by Maulana Azad to have expressed the view that if the Congress accepted Gandhiji's suggestion, partition could still be avoided because such an offer would convince the Muslim League and perhaps win the confidence of Mr Jinnah. This move, however, could make no progress as both Pandit Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel opposed it vehemently and forced Gandhiji to withdraw the suggestion.

Raghu Rai

Jinnah's mausoleum

Sentries outside the Presidential palace



Raghu Rai

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AND that brings us to the question whether the thrust of Indian policy in respect of Pakistan has been towards the latter's destruction. War, it is said, is an instrument of policy. Policy, in turn, is determined by the objectives pursued by a country.

The concept of Akhand Bharat, which according to most Pakistanis determines Indian policy towards their country, is altogether illusory. In terms of contemporary political realities it is positively detrimental to the Hindu economic and political interests. There is no Hindu political factor worth the name in Pakistan. There is a barely 10 per cent non-Muslim population in Bangladesh but it counts for very little in terms of effective political strength. The Muslim factor in India, on the other hand, has the capacity to determine the course of events in the country and to that extent is a material factor to be reckoned with. No political Party seriously contending for power in India can be unmindful of the Muslim factor. From this point of view Akhand Bharat cannot but undermine the Hindu position by consolidating the Muslim factor at present conveniently dispersed amid three nation states. No, unification of the subcontinent through military conquest or otherwise is not worth the candle so far as the Hindus are concerned.

Dr Henry Kissinger only shows his ignorance of the objective realities of the subcontinent's politics when he talks of the possibility of an Indian attack on West Pakistan after the fall of Dacca, It appears the myth of Hindu frustration over creation of Pakistan has distorted the understanding and perception of quite a few even among those who ought to know better.

In this regard it is well to recall that having successfully destroyed the Pakistani military strength in East Pakistan, Mrs Indira Gandhi lost no time in pulling back the Indian troops from Bangladesh. If Akhand Bharat had, indeed, been an Indian objective the military occupation of East Bengal was half the job done. Bonafide long-term national objectives are not surrendered after military victory for cosmetic reasons.

Then, why did India participate in the break-up of Pakistan? The answer lies in the policy of hostility pursued by Pakistan which had actively connived at, promoted and sustained secessionist insurgency in the eastern areas of India. East Bengal had become the sanctuary and jumping board for the insurgents of various hues. Even so, India could not do a thing until the Pakistani ruling military junta itself created a situation in which the continuance of East Bengal as a constituent province of Pakistan had anyhow become impossible. The option before India was to act or look on as a passive spectator while the consequences of the wanton brutalities unleashed by the Pakistani army were overflowing into our territory. Failure to act then would have increased Pakistani belligerence towards India to unmanageable proportions.

It is not my case that India has been oozing with goodwill towards Pakistan, while all the wrong things have been done by the latter. The decision to hold back Rs 55 crores, which constituted Pakistan's share of the Reserve Bank balances, was devoid of legal and moral justification. So was the refusal to deliver Pakistan's share of ordnance supplies. There have been numerous other instances when India has acted petulantly rather than generously. But, no single action by itself or all combined together have been calculated to obliterate Pakistan as a nation state. Even the wars beween the two countries have not been fought on the basis of non-acceptance of Pakistan by India.

Be that as it may, the long story of unsatisfactory relations between Pakistan and India needs to take a turn for the better. Hostility with India has hurt Pakistan far beyond the lost wars. Nor for that matter has India escaped the evil consequences of the unhappy situation. The failure of Pakistan to evolve a viable political culture or build a sound economic base can be directly traced to the distortions arising out of the obsessive fear of and preoccupation with India.

The new situation that has developed in the neighbourhood of the subcontinent has imparted a new dimension and urgency to the task of improving relations between the two countries. There is no basis for the assumption that co-operation and good relations must inevitably be in derogation of the national sovereignty of one or the other. On the other hand improved relations cannot but contribute to their collective security.

The clouds of fear and suspicion that have so far plagued Indo-Pak relations are traceable to the myths surrounding their emergence as free nations. Since then the two countries have drifted apart to an extent that even people, whose business it is to know, are ignorant of, rather than well-informed about, the realities in the other country. The situation in respect of Bangladesh, too, is not exactly what it should be. The result is that public opinion is a negative factor in improvement of relations.

There is thus need for a more concerted effort to promote a systematic study of the entire gamut of factors affecting the relations between the countries of the subcontinent. I would strongly urge institutions like the Gandhi Peace Foundation and the Aligarh Muslim University in India, the Quaid-e-Azam Academy and the Quaid-e-Azam Foundation in Pakistan and some such body as the Carnegie Endowment For International Peace to act in this direction. ■

I HAVE considered from every possible point of view the scheme of Pakistan as formulated by the Muslim League. As an Indian, I have examined its implications for the future of India as a whole. As a Muslim, I have examined its likely effects upon the fortunes of Muslims of India.

Considering the scheme in all its aspects I have come to the conclusion that it is harmful not only for India as a whole but for Muslims in particular. And, in fact, it creates more problems than it solves.

I must confess that the very term Pakistan goes against my grain. It suggests that some portions of the world are pure while others are impure. Such a division of territories into pure and impure is un-Islamic and a repudiation of the very spirit of Islam. Islam recognises no such division and the Prophet says, 'God has made the whole world a mosque for me.'

Further, it seems that the scheme of Pakistan is a symbol of defeatism and has been built up on the analogy of the Jewish demand for a national home. It is a confession that Indian Muslims cannot hold their own in India as a whole and would be content to withdraw to a corner specially reserved for them.

One can sympathise with the aspirations of the Jews for such a national home, as they are scattered all over the world and cannot in any region have any effective voice in the administration. The condition of Indian Muslims is quite otherwise. Over 90 million in number they are in quantity and quality sufficiently important element in Indian life to influence decisively all questions of administration and policy. Nature has further helped them by concentrating them in certain areas.

In such context, the demand for Pakistan loses all force. As a Muslim, I for one am not prepared for a moment to give up my right to treat the whole of India as my domain and to share in the shaping of its political and economic life. To me it seems a sure sign of cowardice to give up what is my patrimony and content myself with a mere fragment of it.

As is well-known Mr Jinnah's Pakistan scheme is based on his two-nation theory. His thesis is that India contains many nationalities based on religious differences. Of them the two major nations, the Hindus and Muslims, must as separate nations have separate states. When Dr. Edward Thompson once pointed out to Mr. Jinnah that Hindus and Muslims live side by side in thousands of Indian towns, villages and hamlets, Mr. Jinnah replied that this

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What Maulana Azad said

in no way affected their separate nationality. Two nations according to Mr Jinnah confront one another in every hamlet, village and town, and he, therefore, desires that they should be separated into two states.

I am prepared to overlook all other aspects of the problem and judge it from the point of view of Muslim interests alone. I shall go still further and say that if it can be shown that the scheme of Pakistan can in any way benefit Muslims I would be prepared to accept it myself and also to work for its acceptance by others. But the truth is that even if I examine the scheme from the point of view of the communal interests of the Muslims themselves, I am forced to the conclusion that it can in no way benefit them or allay their legitimate fears.

Let us consider dispassionately the consequences which will follow if we give effect to the Pakistan scheme. India will be divided into two states, one with a majority of Muslims and the other of Hindus. In the Hindustan State there will remain 3½ crores of Muslims scattered in small minorities all over the land. With 17 per cent in U.P., 12 per cent in Bihar and 9 per cent in Madras, they will be weaker than they are today in the Hindu majority provinces. They have had their homelands in these regions for almost a thousand years and built up well-known centres of Muslim culture and civilization there.

They will awaken overnight and discover that they have become aliens and foreigners. Backward industrially, educationally and economically, they will be left to the mercies to what would then become an unadulterated Hindu raj.

On the other hand, their position within the Pakistan State will be vulnerable and weak. Nowhere in Pakistan will their majority be comparable to the Hindu majority in the Hindustan State.

In fact, their majority will be so slight that it will be offset by the economical, educational and political lead enjoyed by non Muslims in these areas. Even if this were not so and Pakistan were overwhelmingly Muslim in population, it still could hardly solve the problem of Muslims in Hindustan.

Two States confronting one another offer no solution of the problem of one another's minorities, but only lead to retribution and reprisals by introducing a system of mutual hostages. The scheme of Pakistan therefore solves no problem for the Muslims. It cannot safeguard their rights where they are in a minority nor as citizens of Pakistan secure them a position in Indian or world affairs which they would enjoy as citizens of a major state like the Indian Union.

It may be argued that if Pakistan is so much against the interest of the Muslims themselves, why should such a large section of Muslims be swept away by its lure? The answer is to be found in the attitude of certain communal extremists among the Hindus. When the Muslim League began to speak of Pakistan, they read into the scheme a sinister Pan-Islamic conspiracy and began to oppose it out of fear that it foreshadowed a combination of Indian Muslims with trans-Indian Muslim States.

The opposition acted as an incentive to the adherents of the League. With simple though untenable logic they argued that if

Hindus were so opposed to Pakistan, surely it must be of benefit to Muslims. An atmosphere of emotional frenzy was created which made reasonable appraisement impossible and swept away especially the younger and more impressionable among the Muslims. I have, however, no doubt that when the present frenzy has died down and the question can be considered dispassionately, those who now support Pakistan will themselves repudiate it as harmful for Muslim interests.

The formula which I have succeeded in making the Congress accept secures whatever merit the Pakistan scheme contains while all its defects and drawbacks are avoided. The basis of Pakistan is the fear of interference by the Centre in Muslim majority areas as the Hindus will be in a majority in the Centre. The Congress meets this fear by granting full autonomy to the provincial units and vesting all residuary power in the provinces. It has also provided for two lists of Central subjects, one compulsory and one optional, so that if any provincial unit so wants, it can administer all subjects itself except a minimum delegated to the Centre. The Congress scheme therefore ensures that Muslim majority provinces are internally free to develop as they will, but can at the same time influence the Centre on all issues which affect India as a whole.

The situation in India is such that all attempts to establish a centralised and unitary government are bound to fail. Equally doomed to failure is the attempt to divide India into two States. After considering all aspects of the question, I have come to the conclusion that the only solution can be on the lines embodied in the Congress formula which allows room for development both to the provinces and to India as a whole. The Congress formula meets the fear of the Muslim majority areas to allay which the scheme of Pakistan was formed. On the other hand, it avoids the defects of the Pakistan scheme which would bring the Muslims where they are in a minority under a purely Hindu government.

I am one of those who consider the present chapter of communal bitterness and differences as a transient phase in Indian life. I firmly hold that they will disappear when India assumes the responsibility of her own destiny. I am reminded of a saying of Gladstone that the best cure for a man's fear of the water is to throw him into it. Similarly India must assume responsibility and administer her own affairs before fears and suspicions can be fully allayed.

When India attains her destiny, she will forget the present chapter of communal suspicion and conflict and face the problems of modern life from a modern point of view. Differences will no doubt persist, but they will be economic, not communal. Opposition among political Parties will continue, but they will be based, not on religion but on economic and political issues. Class and not community will be the basis of future alignments and policies will be shaped accordingly. If it be argued that this is only a faith which events may not justify I would say that in any case the nine crores of Muslims constitute a factor which nobody can ignore and whatever the circumstances, they are strong enough to safeguard their own destiny.—April 15, 1946.

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"In a place like Africa, your 'V.I.P.' is always a rrr-roaring success!"

"People like me are wild. Just wild about your 'V.I.P.'," said Alake Uwaleke*, in fluent, cultured English. She sat there, looking tall, dark and stunning.

We had no difficulty in returning a compliment. "Black" we said, "is beautiful."

"I agree" she said serenely, "but I also like brown. I just love your 'V.I.P.' colours. All twelve of them. You have everything except white. Now, that's unusual!"

We promptly assured her that there was nothing either racial or discriminatory about this. Why, our business associates would vouch for the fact that we like everything in black and white!

We congratulated her on her English. "In India" we complained, "we have 14 major languages. Not including English."

"I understand" she said sympathetically, "back home in Nigeria, we have 200!"

After that, we decided not to trade problems!

"We're trading know-how" we said, "a joint 'V.I.P.' venture will be set up shortly in Nigeria."

"I'd be tempted to invest. Only my family's interest is in oil. Not travelware."

"Black gold!" we said, triumphantly.

"What do Africans like specially about our 'V.I.P.'?" we asked.

"Everything!" was the understated reply. "The style of your Classic range. The beautiful brocade lining. Especially your combination locks. They work like magic!"

"But" she carried on "your Travelite range is great too. Of course, nobody could travel as light as my grandfather. He was the tribal Chief for 50 years. Sometimes he wore a smile. Most often he wore a scowl. And, I can assure you he didn't need any luggage to carry either around!"

Well, Africa has changed a lot lately. Thankfully!

"We believe" she said, "that 'V.I.P.' is the luggage of today. And this attitude is coloured. Coloured by the fact that in Africa we are now slaves to progress!

"Everywhere I go, they ask about my 'V.I.P.'s. I tell them all. We Nigerians, never lose an opportunity to drum a message home!

"I'm off now" she said, "to Timbuktoo."

Was she pulling our leg? "No, no" she said, "Timbuktoo is almost next door. You people are so much in the dark about Africa. That's probably why it was called the Dark Continent!"

We saw her into a sleek limousine. And, as she stepped in, it was evident that blood would always tell. She would undoubtedly be like her grandfather, the Chief attraction!

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'Bugging' by law?

Civil Liberties

By A. G. NOORANI

EVERY so often and especially at times when a political crisis occurs or political infighting intensifies, one hears complaints from politicians that their telephones are being tapped. Such complaints have been heard from many in recent days as well. As it happens, Opposition leaders can freely air their resentment but those of the ruling Party must keep their suspicions to themselves for they know that the tapping is done to check on their loyalty and complaints can make matters worse.

The last time the subject was considered in Parliament in any detail was on December 20, 1977 in the Lok Sabha. Mr Vyalar Ravi had given notice of a motion of breach of privilege of Parliament by the Home Minister which the Speaker referred to the Minister for his comments. There were complaints by Opposition leaders as well as by members of the Janata Party. Mr Samar Mukherjee (CPM) added that besides tapping their telephones, members of his Party were also being shadowed.

The then Prime Minister, Mr Morarji Desai's reply was as comprehensive as it was unsatisfactory. Telephones of anti-national or anti-social elements or those who indulged in violent activities were being tapped, he said. Mr Desai claimed that Government was entitled to do so and whatever was done was "within my knowledge." He, however, denied that any tapping was done to keep a track of political activities.

Mr Desai made an interesting disclosure. Within a week of assuming office he instructed the officers concerned to show him the list of names of persons whose telephones were being tapped. "I have seen the list", he said and claimed that it did not include MPs. No names would be added to the list without his permission, either.

Successive Governments of India have relied on an absurd provision in an archaic statute—Section 5 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885. It reads thus "(1) On the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of the public safety, the Central Government, or a State Government, or any officer specially authorised in this behalf by the Central or a State Government may . . .

"(b) Order that any message or class of messages to or from any persons or class of persons or relating to any particular subject brought for transmission by, or transmitted or received by, any telegraph shall not be transmitted, or shall be intercepted or detained, or shall be disclosed to the Government making the order or an officer thereof mentioned in the order.

(2) If any doubt arises as to the existence of a public emergency, or whether any act done under sub-section (1) was in the interest of the public safety, a certificate of the Central or, as the case may be, the State Government, shall be conclusive proof on the point."

Section 26 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 is similar: "(1) On the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of the public safety or tranquillity, the Central Government, or a State Government, or any officer specially authorised in this behalf by the Central or the State Government, may, by order in writing, direct that any postal article or class or description of postal articles in course of transmission by post shall be intercepted or detained or shall be disposed of in such manner as the authority issuing the order may direct.

"(2) If any doubt arises as to the existence of a public emergency or as to whether any act done under sub-section (1) was in the interest of the public safety or tranquility, a certificate of the Central Government or, as the case may be, of the State Government shall be conclusive proof on the point."

Thus, both the statutes leave it to the exclusive and subjective decision of the executive. The matter is placed beyond the scrutiny of courts of law. Whether these sections are compatible with the fundamental rights is doubtful.

There is another aspect. The scope of judicial review of administrative action has increased considerably thanks to the recent case law and it would be necessary for the Government to establish objectively that there was a real threat to "public safety" or that "public emergency" had in fact occured to warrant the exercise of these powers. But how is a citizen to prove in a court of law that his phone is being tapped?

However, the march of science has made telephone-tapping archaic and the statutes irrelevant, in a sense. As Prof. Harry Street points out in his study *Freedom, the Individual and the Law* a superb Pelican, "Electronic devices such as laser beams, closed-circuit television and micro-miniaturised radio transmitters have rendered wire-tapping an old-fashioned method of overhearing conversations. Little is known about the extent to which police eavesdrop by these new methods; for example, by the use of portable radio equipment which can be hidden in a briefcase or even on a person's premises. One thing is clear: such evidence will not be rendered inadmissible merely because the police have to break into private premises in order to conceal the equipment there."

The legal position in India is the same. Evidence is not inadmissible because it has been obtained improperly by bugging or wire-tapping. In the United States it would be inadmissible.

Fifty years ago the legendary Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes characterised phone-tapping as "dirty business". Since then the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that telephones can be tapped only if a court warrant has first been obtained. Mr Justice Powell's remarks are very apt. "The price of lawful public dissent must not be a dread of subjection to an unchecked surveillance power. Nor must the fear of unauthorized official eavesdropping deter vigorous citizen dissent and discussion of Government action in private conversation. For private dissent, no less than open public discourse, is essential to our free society."

The Indian statutes are sorely in need of a comprehensive review. At the very least, the exercise of the Government's power must be made conditional strictly on a judicial warrant.

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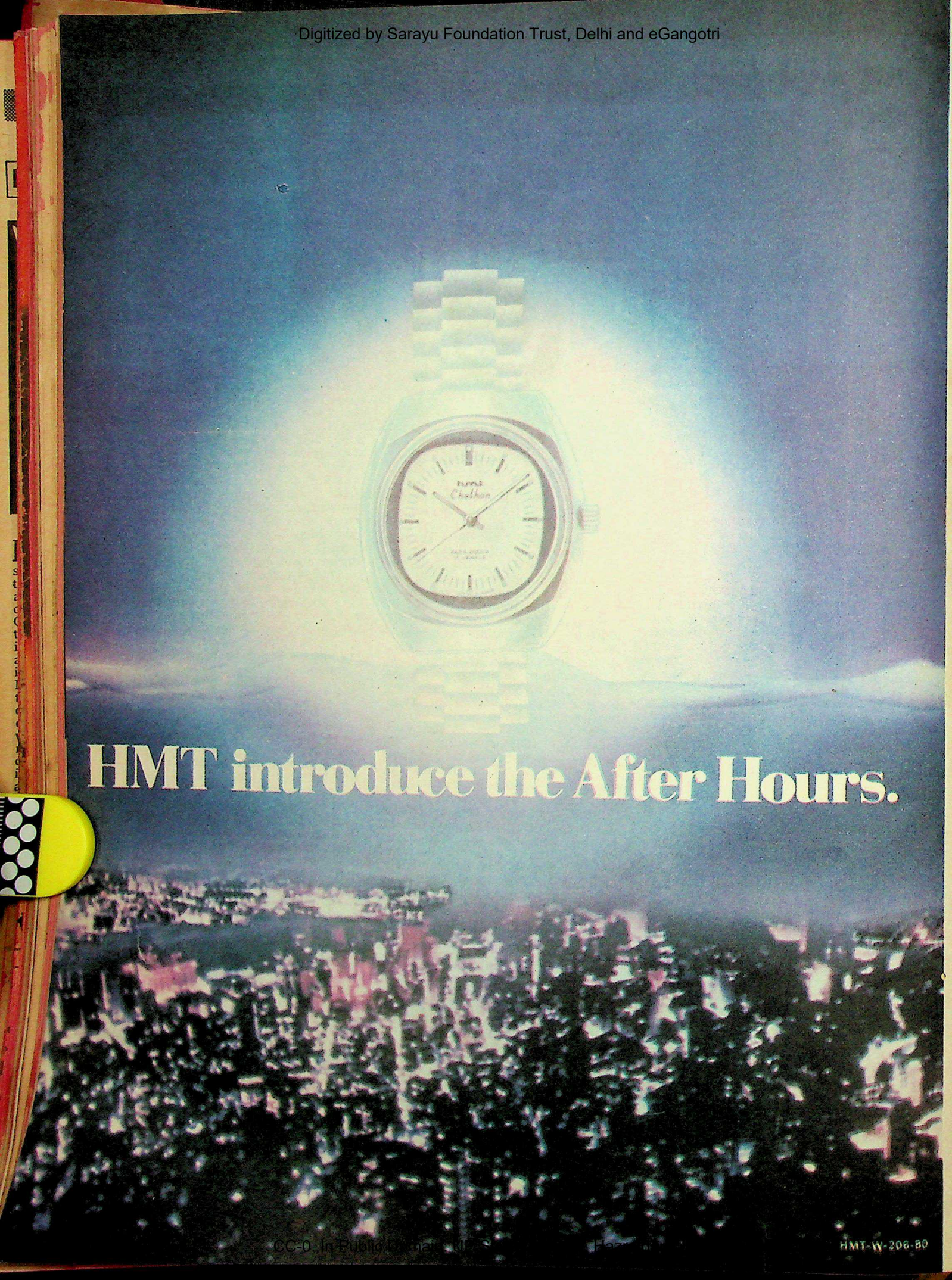

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SPECIAL REPORT

Zimbabwe is bor

An eyewitness report by DAVID CAUTE

BRITISH hopes of a "broad-based" multi-Party, national coalition, in which Mugabe's influence would be stifled, are dead. Speaking after the Governor had invited him to form a Government, Robert Mugabe once again emphasised the extreme moderation and gradualism of his short term plans—on this showing he could well be expelled from the Fabian Society. Private property is not at risk; Rhodesia is a capitalist state "on which it is necessary to build"; one must "start with existing institutions" and in any case Rhodesia already boasts some "socialist" economic organisms such as the Grain Marketing Board. Understandably reluctant to provoke security forces into a coup which now seems increasingly unlikely, Mugabe refuses to be drawn on his future plans for General Walls and the Combined Operations Command, once the General has completed the job the new Prime Minister has given him of integrating the countries' three armies.

The reaction of whites to the election result has been one of shock bordering on trauma. Busloads of cheering militants are driving through the centre of Salisbury while ecstatic crowds parade the streets with a sense of final deliverance from war and oppression. One white lady told me that Mugabe had promised to abolish Christmas and Easter; another doubted that she could now put her mother into an old people's home since such institutions are abolished under communism. "Who will maintain law and order?" demanded a businessman, "Standards will go to pot." A gunsmith snarled "No comment". A schoolgirl in a green uniform asked: "How can they vote for terrorists who burnt down their own schools and houses?" "This country has gone." An insurance clerk wanted to know why "couldn't they have done all this junketing in 1972 and saved us a war?" A good question for Ian Smith.

In Kambazuma township a circle of young men closes ten-deep round your correspondent. They speak of land, liberation and land again. Two officers of the BSAP scatter the circle with the command "break it up" but almost immediately it reforms. The young men complain bitterly of constant police harassment. A shell-shocked official of the UANC pushes through the crowd and urges me to inform the world that he is now switching allegiance to Mugabe. The small knots of supporters dancing and chanting their affection for the Bishop are mainly women. Clearly, emissaries from the movement have not yet reached these sisters.

The security machine responds with a pantomime display of tanks, armoured vehicles and heavy guns at street intersections and shopping precincts. A middle-aged woman stops me in the street: "I take my hat off to these fellows." Housewives and secretaries bring cups of tea to the men of the Rhodesian Light Infantry. "I'm prepared to give these people one chance, but only one", a trooper remarks. "We gave them schools and we gave them medicine. We built up this country and I'm not prepared to hand it over to a bunch of gooks."

Day after day the police empty ZANU PF's headquarters in Manica Road on the pretext of a bomb scare. The police then head for the most obvious place to conceal a bomb, the Party's files. Nathan Shamuyirira of the Central Committee is arrested at two in the morning on the flimsiest of charges. The better to protect Mugabe, the army rumbles an armada past his house, machine guns trained over the wall— in the face of all this ZANU PF has developed an almost oriental patience. Mugabe claims that some 10,000 party workers, officials, agents and candidates have been arrested in the course of the campaign. At Chiredzi, in the South-East, journalists witnessed the arrest of two ZANU PF polling agents, David Mashingidze and Amos Vandirai. A dead cock (the cock is ZANU PF's symbol) had been nailed to a tree outside the polling station, together with a notice, "*Jongwe* (cock) is dead". When they noted this down in writing they were arrested—Superintendent Felix Kuttner later explained—under the Miscellaneous Offences Act. Questioned about this, the British

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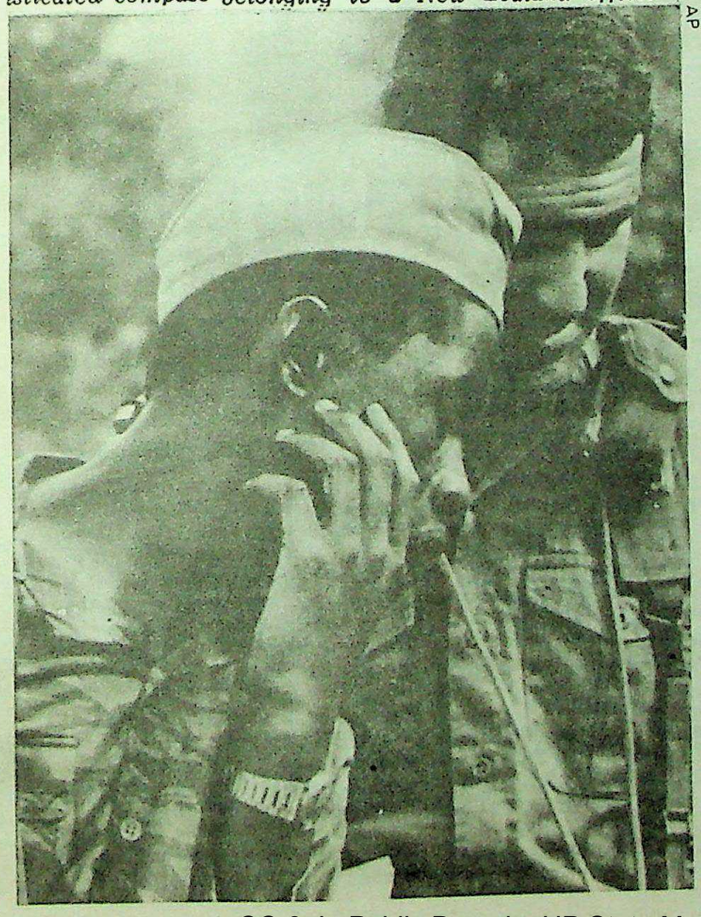
Election Commissioner, Sir John Boynton, confirmed that it is not an electoral offence to use pen and paper within 100 metres of a polling station. Next day he reported, with the weary shrug characteristic of British officials here, that the two ZANU PF agents would stay in jail anyway. Such incidents have been the rule rather than the exception.

In the European (now called "commercial"), farming area of Wedza the farmers bring their labour force to the mobile polling station on tractor-drawn trailers. Such is their hostility to the foreign Press that one feels like a Yankee carpetbagger among Southern plantation owners as the Confederacy falls. How will their farm workers vote—for the Bishop, surely? "No idea, they're keeping it to themselves." But surely they must know that your farms will be collectivised next Tuesday morning if Mugabe wins? Glowering looks. "If you really want to know the position, what we're afraid of is a minimum wage of $100 a month." (At present farm workers are lucky to get $20 a month.) Later an apprehensive farmer just in from police reserve patrol duty in Wedza TTL confides that ZANU PF agitators have been emerging from the reserve at night and poisoning the minds of "Our Africans here."

The farmer leans the barrel of his rifle on his boot. "I believe we've got to forget the past, we can make a great nation here if we all pull together. But if Mugabe stops all the state credit which keeps these farms here afloat, then he's destroying private enterprise. I've been in this war for six years, we didn't start it, I can tell you, I mean I've seen my friends shot and I'm not prepared to take any nonsense, no way. I mean, next time if these external terrorists try anything we won't be so polite about it. We'll sort those gooks out. You've got to keep on top of these guys. I mean, I believe we have a very special type of black man here in Rhodesia, a very decent bloke, but he wants to be left alone to grow his maize and to sleep and have his wives—we should never have imposed our Western ideas on him. I mean, it's the same story in Northern Ireland, isn't it? These people have no excuses at all if we continue to look after them, but they think they can just walk into these farms and take them over."

A Patriotic Front liaison officer gazes in awe at a sophisticated compass belonging to a New Zealand officer

AP



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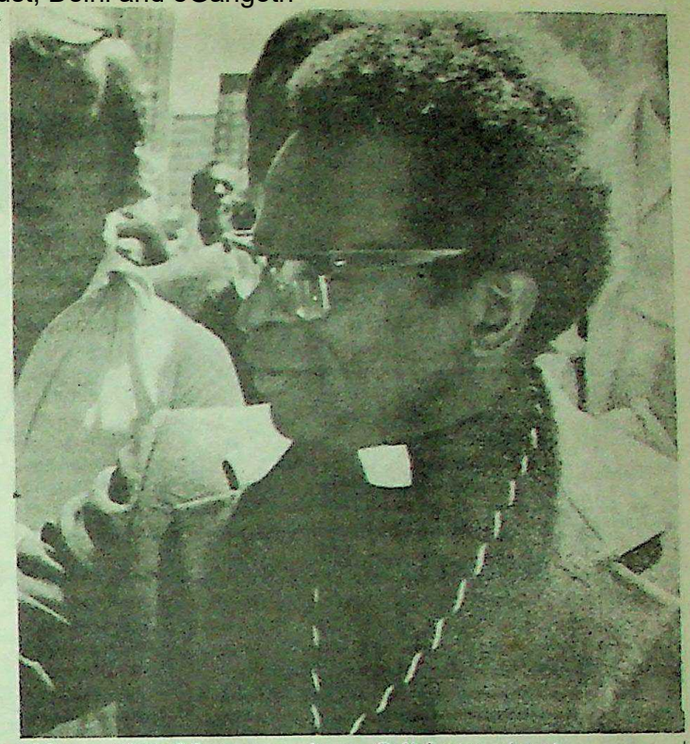

Bishop Abel Muzorewa in a Salisbury street

SOUTH of Salisbury, in the Seki Tribal Trust Land four pleasant members of the police anti-terrorist unit, two of them accountants, one a town planner and the other a trainee jeweller, confess how sick and weary they are of serving 140 days a year in the sticks, living off tinned food. "Yes, we're certainly afraid now. If Mugabe gets in we don't know what will happen. We've been distributing these anti-Marxist pamphlets but we're not allowed to meddle in politics. These simple people have no idea what communism is. I can tell you, if there's any trouble in Salisbury we'll be out of here and back with our families, orders or no orders." Would they support a white military coup? A long, rudderless silence follows: they don't know.

The 270 kilometre drive from Salisbury to the ZANLA assembly point at Delta, close to the Mozambique border, takes one through Mrewa and Mtoko, where the war has been most savage. The blue ribbon of tarmac, kept in perfect repair by the war machine, winds through wild countryside dotted with huge rock kopjies under the vast cloud-flecked African sky. In Delta, a remote camp covering two square kilometres, 2,700 ZANLA guerrillas run up a dirt track in phalanxes of 60 towards the mobile polling station, chanting war cries in unison—*Pamberi Namugabe*—with the aid of phrases learnt not only in Mozambique (*Viva, Imperialismo*) but even in Swahili territory. Their wolf-pack howls and grunts would, one suspects, bring little joy to the white suburbs of Gwelo and Umtali.

A most astonishing metamorphosis then occcurs. Obediently they halt before the commanding hand of a black sergeant of the BSAP—the very man whom, a few weeks ago, they would have shut down as a "sell-out". Dressed in every imaginable garment out of the Portobello Road, and carrying—by law—no weapons to the polling station, they stand silent under the indifferent, neutral scrutiny of white officials: it's as if Peter Pan had appeared with Captain Hook's pirates in Wendy's bedroom. Weeded out as possibly under age by election officials (unlike all other male voters the guerrillas carry no identity papers) the kids sit in a meek knot, as humbly accepting of authority as the young Africans turfed out of buses at police road blocks. For a moment, then, the guerrilla is submerged in the world he rose against.

But not for long. Back in the bandits' camp, with its tattered tents and strips of canvas suspended on rough-hewn poles, every man and woman carries an AK rifle (600 of Delta's contingent are female) and

Continued on page 30

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Asterix and the BANQUET

by GOSCINNY and UDERZO

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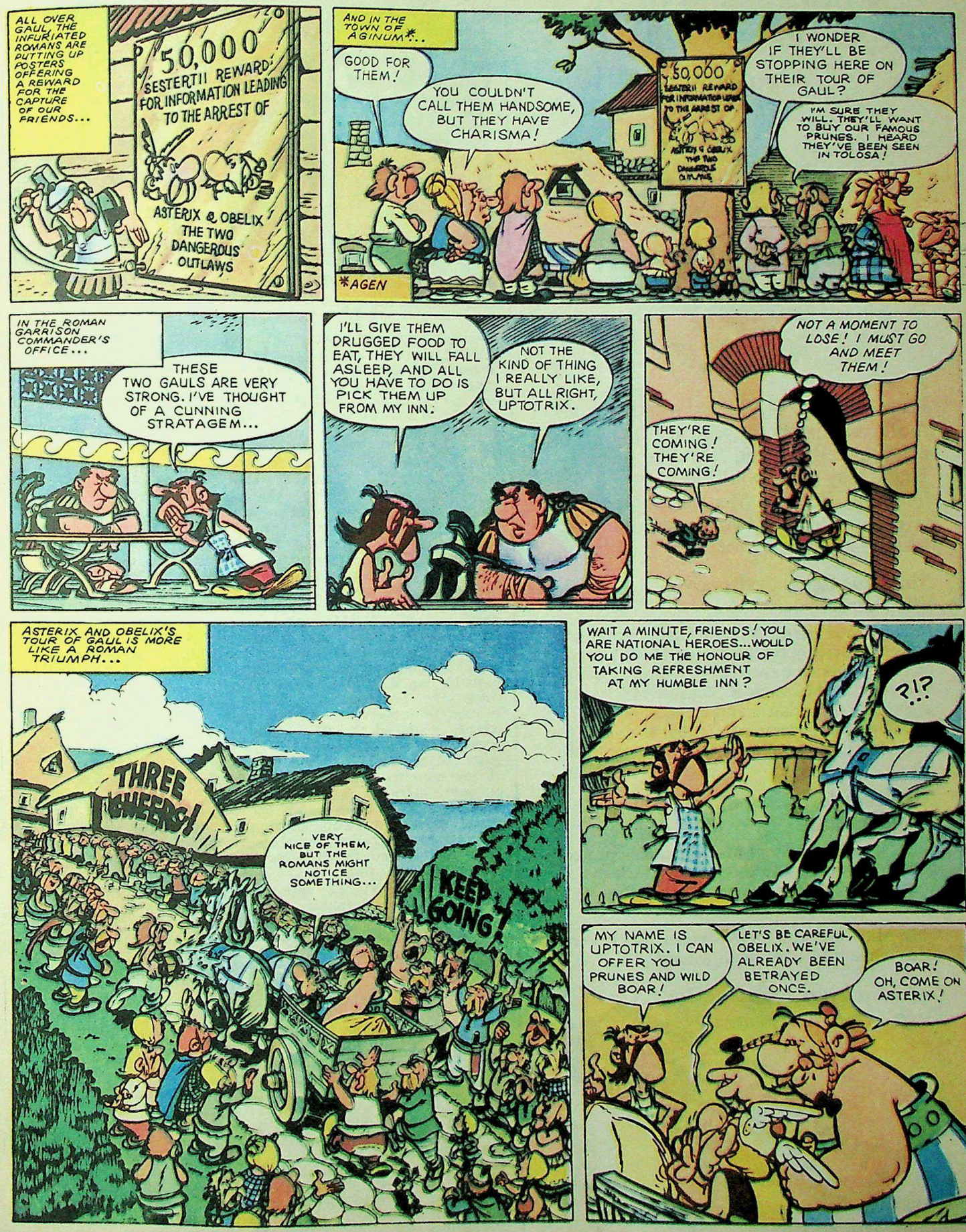

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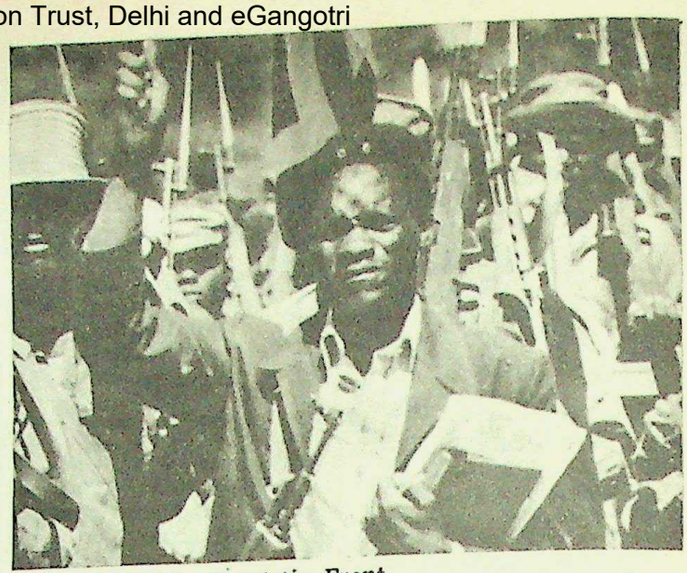

Guerillas of the Patriotic Front

outsiders may enter only with the written authority of ZANLA's high command in Salisbury. The atmosphere is tense — they are all aware that the security forces have ringed Delta at a distance of five kilometres and on one occasion attempted to refurbish a minefield only 1,500 metres away. Do they intend to break out of their camp into the impenetrable countryside they know so well? "We are soldiers," explains comrade Chris. "Political soldiers. We follow the orders of the Party." What does he feel about the more than 10,000 guerrillas killed during the past three years? He laughs : "War is war. In war you are my enemy. I am your enemy. War is war." Asked any mildly taxing question, regarding, for example, the murder of sell-outs and the closing of schools and dip tanks, comrade Chris responds with a disarming guffaw and the words, "we are not Russia."

The fate of these corralled guerrillas could yet be death. As K. N. Maliudi, foreign minister in the interim government and a member of Sithole's rump 'ZANU', remarked in Wedza township : "After next week I expect all the foreigners will have gone and probably we will do a little bit of a bloodbath in this country." Ominous for ZANLA is the lead taken by Nkomo in integrating ZIPRA units with the security forces — indeed the PF leader joined the Rhodesian army commander, General Macintyre in inspecting a guard of honour composed not only of ZIPRA but also of the mounted Grey's Scouts who hunted them down on South African horses across the open plains of Matabeleland. Once again the whites are making the smart moves, shrewdly playing on Nkomo's ambitions in order to neutralise Mugabe's vision of a new national army built round the nucleus of ZANLA and ZIPRA.

As British, Rhodesians and South Africans well understand, ZANU PF represents the closest approximation to a revolutionary Party in Zimbabwe. Despite its Fabian manifesto, the Marxist undercurrent runs strong and deep. Having put the war into cold storage, Mugabe, like Kwame Nkrumah before him, will seek first the political kingdom, hoping in the process to avoid the fate of Patrice Lumumba. But if his followers are denied their inheritance there will be violence. More than once I have heard in the streets and countryside : "ZANU is the people, opposition to ZANU will be treason against the people." This is not a Party dedicated in the long term to electoral democracy, and the constant invocations to the Comrade President, the Central Committee and the High Command sound ominous.

Yet Mugabe himself is a man of exceptional calibre and integrity who may succeed in checking the more intolerant elements within his ranks. It is symptomatic of the imbecility prevailing within the white mental laager that every other white dreams of shooting the man most likely to fashion an African society in which Europeans with badly needed skills can work in peace and prosperity.

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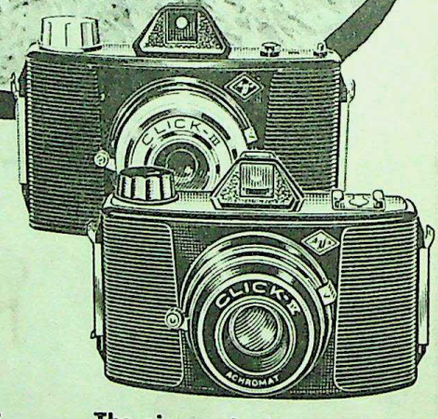

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Death rite for a departed spy

By VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAM

GEORGE Smiley, one-time British Intelligence chief, is back from retirement in pursuit of his Black Grail—Karla—code name for his formidable Russian adversary, the man who engineered the treason of agent Bill Haydon and incidentally also spirited him into Ann Smiley's bed. (Carre's earlier *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*). If you are not a Carre regular, get these facts clear and read on—plot and narrative in the impeccable Carre style; and reflecting the vicious real-life goings-on in the unethical world of agents and double-agents.

Smiley's return begins as a death rite for a departed spy, develops into a relentless chase, to end in a sort of modern-day Holmes-Moriarty climax minus the melodrama. All the Carre elements are there including the peculiar spy jargon, familiarity with which gives the regular thriller reader what can only be described as a sense of 'belonging'—though I'm not sure if that entirely expresses it. It's much the same feeling an Edgar Wallace fan has towards the finer nuances of the London thief's argot of which Wallace was a master.

For the thriller addict, *Smiley's People* is un-put-down-able, in much the same degree as, say a Len Deighton, an Alistair Maclean or a Victor Canning in the sense that it has all the ingredients of a first-class spy story—and one that unfolds so graphically that you can simultaneously visualize each frame of the film it will eventually end up as. The meticulous attention to detail is reminiscent of Brian Garfield's *Hop Scotch*. And one can imagine the copious notes and drafts that must have gone into the writing of *Smiley's People* which is, by thriller standards, on the lengthy side.

If you are looking out for surprises, twists and heroics you'll be disappointed. No special who-dun-it formula here, nor any dramatic denouement. The end is low-key and played down, which is as it would be in real life. The Russians are of course painted black, and if the author is fair enough not to paint the British white, he does colour them a rather light shade of grey.

For the Carre addict I would say that the latest offering, though gripping, will not arouse the brooding horror that *The Spy who Came in from the Cold* must have. The double-dealing, buck-passing and coldblooded opportunism that abound in Smiley's world are all old hat to the inured thriller reader. One is no longer all that sensitive even to sensational real-life revelations about Philby, Blunt and the lot, and more recently the Christina Onassis rigmarole. If fiction is distastefully similar to fact, and sometimes even portends events, it largely leaves the blase reader cold.

I say this not in disparagement of Carre's realism. But the truth is that when a spy story breaks new ground and then is followed by a host of similar equally well-written and suspenseful stories, then it is the first one or the first one which a particular reader reads, that alone remains truly memorable. The others merely belong to the genre. But that is not Carre's fault and does not make *Smiley's People* less readable.

Two things strike me about Carre in this as well as other books. One is that his writing clearly if unselfconsciously reveals his public school upbringing. And while his rejection of the values ingrained by such a tradition also comes across, it does not emerge as irrevocably and forcefully as one can distinctly feel it come through from Len Deighton's nameless hero who belongs to the same professional breed as George Smiley.

The other point that strikes me every time I read Carre is the strong literary quality of his style. And while a highbrow would undoubtedly disagree with me, I rather feel that a thriller which is racily written without any frills is a better thriller than one whose literary overtones slow down the pace and dilute the suspense.

John le Carre

If form must be wholly functional for optimum results I think a thriller that has the essentials of its category, and little else, is more satisfying than a thriller that has too many subtle details of characterization that blend more comfortably into a class of fiction where psychological insight of much greater depth is called for. This is not to imply that Carre's handling of his subject is clumsy. There is no denying his masterly story-telling style but the absence of a more earthy approach, I feel, waters down the impact of the thriller element.

I have a theory, which I am convinced is shared by other lowbrow thriller addicts, that a thriller should be a thriller first and last and preferably nothing else. It can't be a good thriller unless it's well-written and that's literary enough. Even realism is not an absolute must. There is nothing realistic about the James Bond stories or many of the Alistair Macleans and Victor Cannings. I don't think this detracts from their merit as thrillers. Of course, while the constant depiction of the hero-spy as a susperman reads well enough in print, it inevitably comes across on the screen as a spoof. All the James Bond films have this spoof quality. On the other hand, the realism of Carre and Deighton lends itself very effectively to cinema.

One can appreciate the literary quality of Carre only if one has the leisure to savour it. On that score Carre certainly reached a peak with *The Honourable School-boy*. While *Smiley's People* was engrossing it did make me impatient at times. A sort of why-don't-you-get-on-with-the-story feeling tempts one to infulge in a bit of judicious skipping especially if one is the type who simply can't resist peeping into the last page. For every one allusion I may have understood, and only just at that. (Tonlouse-Lantrec faces, for example) there must be umpteen that went over my head. And while that is admittedly no credit to me, it doesn't make *Smiley's People* a better thriller than it could be.

I do not for a minute question Carre's prerogative to apply a thicker literary polish than others of his ilk. But there is a cult by which the thriller writer who appeals to the highbrow receives better critical appreciation than the pure entertainer. This I think is not quite fair. I expect a thriller to have a strong, slick plot and the dialogue preferably witty. If there are other elements that do not bolster this crucial elements of the spy story, then however commendable they may be in themselves they only detract from its value.

Smiley's People by John le Carre ; Hodder and Stoughton ; 327 pages ; Price not stated.

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IN big budget Hindi films like *Lok Parlok*, she provided the glamour. In Malayalam films bordering on porno, she was made to strip. She even played a lesbian once. And then director *K. Viswanath* who made Jayapradha a big star in his musical hit *Siri Siri Muva* decided to transform *Manju Bhargavi* from a sex bomb into an actress of merit. And his success has become a topic of discussion in the film industry in the South. Viswanath's new film *Sankarabharanam* is doing really well at the box office and may be shortly remade in Tamil. From the financial angle, the new venture appears to be an improvement on *Siri Siri Muva*.

Balu Mahendran has handled the camera very well and it disproves the subtle campaign against Balu that he only does good work when his favourite *Shoba* is acting.

RAMESHWARI appeared in an arty-arty Kannada film *Kankana* before she made it big in Hindi films. Her elder sister, a doctor by profession, is also obsessed with acting and has a couple of assignments lined up in Tamil. Unlike Rameshwari she didn't do a stint in Pune but decided to try her luck on her own.

Sridevi in "Kaksha", a Telgu film

WHEN journalists representing English magazines go to studios, some film-makers strain themselves to explain some sequences in English though they aren't really conversant in the language. And they have evolved their own lingo. "Just hold on", a veteran director told me. "You look up there. My heroine is hiding behind the door. And suddenly the villain will try to 'spoil' her." 'Spoil' is the euphemism for rape. The next day the same director told me gleefully: "Today I am shooting a scene showing a housewife being polluted..." Polluted? The director explained: "You see she's married and her husband's best friend pollutes her". Well, if it's the villain, he 'spoils' and if it's the hero, he 'pollutes'.

UP-COMING *Sumalatha* is a bit worried that too much is being made about her (rather her mother's) demand for fabulous remunerations. It's a fact that she's in terrific demand and her mother says that only by raising the price was she was able to keep away some producers. But then, why not be honest and explain that your chubby daughter has enough assignments? As a matter of fact, *Sumalatha* isn't getting half of what *Rathi Agnihotri* and other top heroines are getting. But she does have couple of big films including *Ravi Chandra* opposite Rajkumar. *Lakshmi* too is acting in the film but probably Sumalatha will be much more exciting on the screen.

ACTOR *Muthuraman's* venture *Panam Penn Pasam* isn't doing badly when you compare its profits to some of his recent films but then when he has a co-hero like *Vijayan* most of the credit for the modest run of the film (directed by M. A. Kaja) is hogged by you know whom.

PIOUSJI

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THE alleged secret marriage of *Vinod Mehra* with *Bindiya Goswami* first sounded incredible. Not a nice, steady, respectable boy like our Vinod, everybody said—why he even plays the boy-next-door, gentle in his looks and behaviour! And he got married to that nice, sweet girl last year at a well-publicised ceremony. His mother had selected the girl, and the choice was commendable. Whenever there were rumours about his familiarity with Bindiya, he would fume and flare out his nostrils in a rage. He refused to discuss Bindiya with filmi journalists. But he certainly did nothing to arrest these rumours. It is alleged that he was deeply involved with Bindiya before he married that nice *gharelu* Meena. He didn't want to have an actress for a wife, as all heroes believe, and so married the girl his Ma chose. But his so-called involvement with Bindiya grew right after the marriage, and they are doing a lot of films together. Finally they decided they couldn't live without each other and the bungalow he had bought, to move in to after his marriage and which had been left unoccupied for some mysterious reason, now houses him and Bindiya. He denies that they got married according to the tenets of Sufi religion to which they are rumoured to have converted themselves. He insists that she goes home every night! And yet, his wife stays with her mother-in-law in the old flat! If this is true, are secret marriages a habit with Vinod? Long ago, he was "married" to *Rekha* and now this! In the wake of the *Zeenat-Sanjay* secret alliance, was it a bid to prove that he was the "original"? Of late, Bindiya has been exercising a growing influence on his life. The two love-birds are now in a fix because Meena doesn't agree with the idea of divorce.

AGREED *Shatru* is a real clown and can draw laughter each minute of the day. But is it really necessary to have these comic scenes wherever he goes? There is this fellow who follows on Shatru's heels like a puppy, with an enormous aluminium chair held in front of him for his lord and master. If Shatru happens to be standng, I guess it would be nice to have a valet and a chair handy, but when the valet takes things a bit too far, like bringing the chair on the steps, if Shatru happens to stand there or turning the chair this way and that, trying to keep up with his master's hip-movements, etc it makes you split with laughter! And Shatru himself is very good at telling very funny stories. These go together to make Shatru the funniest man in Bombay's filmdom.

Umesh Vyas

Bindiya : One for the bungalow

Umesh Vyas

Shabana likes Zaheer, bespectacled Pakistani (bat) swinger

WHEN the Pakistanis visited Bombay, it was rumoured that *Shabana Azmi* became very interested in all Zaheer Abbas had to say. In fact she was so interested that she kept listening to him wherever he went—with no eyes for anyone else.

LIKE we said before in SUNDAY, the comeback of *Parveen Babi* didn't create too easy a pace: there was this feeling that once she's done it, she can get up and go away again, leaving producers in the lurch. There was an air of uncertainty about her present plans and her immediate future. When she did report for work on Sippy's prestigious project *Shaan* and when one met her, she seemed okay, but not her cheerful, smiling self. The uncertainty about Parveen's return had lent an air of patience and film-producers are a very patient lot generally. Bang in the middle of her shooting-schedules which she had been honouring since she returned, Parveen just left, once more! And she isn't coming back again—it is as final as that! By the time news spread that she had left, some alarmed people tried to contact her at her place. Before that, she is alleged to have cleaned up traces of her whereabouts—like selling off her flat, car and other assets! To the producers who were clever enough to have dropped her from their half-made films, this has come as a relief—at least she isn't around to give them guilt pangs. ■

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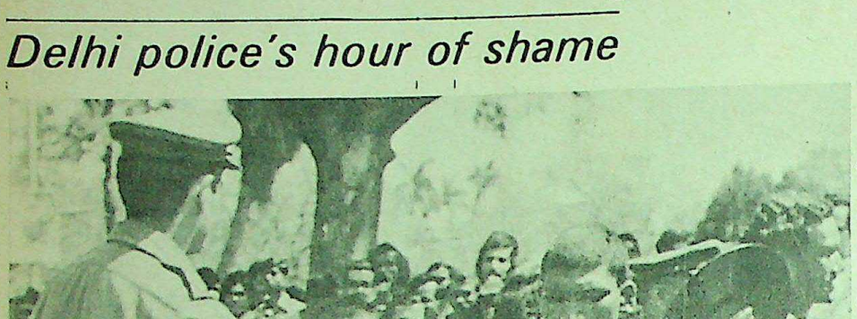
Blind lathi-charge

Delhi police's hour of shame



Courtesy : Hindustan Times

THE first glimpse of the new muscle that the police has acquired after the change of Government was seen on March 16, the World Day of the Disabled. While the Union Education Minister was giving a long speech at a function a few miles away, on the need to help the handicapped, the men of the Delhi Police force were busy lathi-charging a group of blind people whose only fault was that they wanted to meet the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi.

The National Federation of the Blind had organized a march from their office at Paharganj to Mrs Gandhi's Safdarjung Road residence on the occasion of Disabled Day to present her with a memorandum of demands. The Federation had taken permission from the police beforehand and the straggly procession of 225 blind men who groped their way to the Prime Minister's residence had little idea of what was to follow.

The procession which was escorted by ten policemen of the Paharganj police station and two traffic policemen, made their way slowly towards Mrs Gandhi's house without much trouble—till they reached Parliament Street. At his point they were told that they could not proceed any further since Section 144 CRPC was in force there which did not allow an assembly of more than four persons. They were also told that Mrs. Gandhi did not meet anybody on Sunday, and the blind men could meet her on another day.

This was a bitter disappointment to the blind. They protested that they had taken permission well in advance and even if Section 144 had been suddenly declared, why had they not been informed earlier by the policemen who were escorting them? "We have come so far and we will not go away so easily," the Federation secretary Santosh Rungta told the police.

By this time about a hundred policemen had converged on the spot and under the supervision of the Parliament Street Station House Officer, R. L. Behl, started pushing back the procession. This further set the back up of the blind who squatted on the road, refusing to move. They said that the police would have to arrest them if they wanted to remove them. Tension rapidly mounted as the police grew increasingly exasperated at the blind protestors' adamant attitude.

Suddenly, the police men decided it was time to act and pounced upon Santosh Rungta and arrested him. Immediately, the other blind people converged on the spot and the melee that followed soon turned into a grappling match between the police and the blind in which the former used their lathis freely.

Compete chaos prevailed among the blind demonstrators who ran helter skelter, trying to escape the searing lathi blows. At this point some passers-by intervened, pleading with the police not to use their lathis on the helpless blind people. By the time the police relented, three blind persons had already been seriously injured and a number of them bore bruises on their faces and bodies. Not satisfied at this, the police arrested more than a 100 blind persons on charges of rioting.

The arrested men were herded into police vans and taken to the Parliament Street police station, where another strange drama started. According to the blind, one of them, Laxman Das, who was protesting very loudly at the police treatment was taken to another room and beaten up and abused in filthy language. When the other blind men realised that Laxman Das was missing, they created an uproar, asking for him to be produced. Frightened, the police brought him back.

The blind men were made to wait in the Parliament Street police station for about three hours from 1 to 4 pm, when they were again packed into police vans and taken to the Patiala House Courts. Here they were left inside the vans for more than three hours. Throughout this time they were refused water or food. When they asked the constables standing guard oustide to let them out, or at least open the vans' doors so that they could breathe some fresh air, the constables told them "Only our officers have keys for the vans. You have to wait".

Finally, the police took the Federation secretary Rungta to the Patiala House Court Magistrate, Mr K. C. Lohiya. According to Rungta, the magistrate asked him whether he and his colleagues would behave in future. When Rungta said they would again try to reach the Prime Minister's residence if released, the magistrate reportedly told him that the blind men would then have to spend the night in Tihar Jail.

After this brief interview Rungta was brought back and locked up with his companions in the van. Around 8 pm, the van's doors were opened and the blind prisoners were told that they could now get down and drink water. The men breathed sighs of relief. Most of them were without food and water for nearly the whole day. As if this were not enough, a cruel trick was played on them again. As they were lining up for water, the police took off in the vans, leaving them to fend for themselves. To add to their misery, the police men had also taken away their sticks with which they normally felt their way about on the streets.

Meanwhile the three injured persons were first taken to police hospital. Two of them were discharged but one of thm, Ramesh Chandra Soni, who suffered multiple bruises on his back and waist, was admitted to Lady Irwin Hospital. According to Soni, he was not given any food or water the whole day and night in spite of repeated requests.

The incident figured prominently in the next day's newspapers and when the blind went to the Prime Minister's residence the next morning, the police who seemed vastly

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sobered, did not prevent them from meeting her. Mrs Gandhi herself expressed deep regret at the previous day's incident and announced that a judicial enquiry would be started into it. The Parliament Street SHO has been suspended pending the inquiry's findings.

This announcement failed to mollify irate Opposition members in Parliament. The very same day, they rose unitedy in the Lok Sabha and staged an angry walkout after the speaker refused to permit a discussion on the incident. Later both Mrs Gandhi and the Home Minister Zail Singh expressed their regret but the latter insisted on describing the lathicharge as a "minor scuffle".

While the blind as well as eyewitnesses to the incident say that the police had unnecessarily used brute force on the helpless people the police stoically maintain that it was the blind and not they who were at fault. The New Delhi District Commissioner of Police P. R. S. Brar, said, it's an attempt by the Press to sensationalise a minor incident. "We were trying to help the blind and there was just a minor scuffle." He also said that the police had received intelligence reports on March 15 that the blind demonstrators were planning to "court arrest" and "might turn violent".

AJOY BOSE, New Delhi

Another churchman murdered

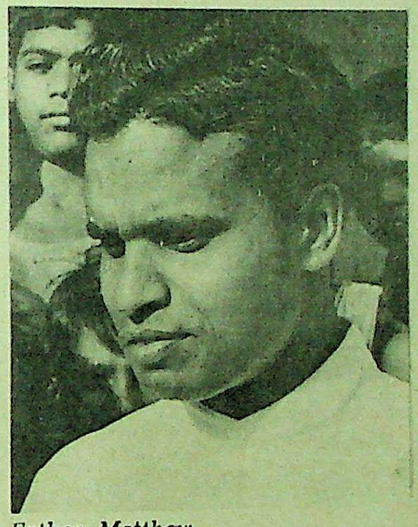
But justice remains elusive

ST. ANNE'S Catholic Church at Sasaram in Bihar nestles among the gently sloping foothills of the region. It is an area of peace and tranquillity, a sylvan setting not far from the tomb of the great Sher Shah. The normal church service was held on the evening of March 7, as it was the first Friday of the month. There was the usual knot of parishoners gathered for the mass which was conducted by Father Matthew, the spiritual head of the mission. The final benediction over, Father Matthew rose and sat on a bench behind the catechists and the village teachers who had participated in the evening service.

Without any warning, the calm was shattered. Four armed men clad in rustic garments burst into the churchyard and as they approached the priest, one of them called out "Here is the man". Immediately another priest, Brother D'Souza, known in the area as Swamy Shilanand, intervened to try and reason with the intruders. The words of the Catholic "Swamy" appeared to have some sort of an effect on the armed men. One of them shouted "Don't touch him," and the others backed away from the bearded monk who was clad in his customary saffron robe.

But there was no mercy for Father Matthew. One of the marauders held a knife at his ribs, while another covered him at gunpoint and dragged him away to his residence which was barely ten yards away. Inside the house was Father Joseph Mann, an American who had founded the church in the Sixties for the spiritual uplift of the local people. But there was nothing he could do to help Father Matthew. The aged American was disabled and too feeble to try and help.

Father Matthew was dragged into his own room by the two men, who



K. M. Kishan

Father Matthew

snatched the keys of the locker from him and went on the rampage. Everything in the room was rummaged through; they pocketed all the cash they found and in addition took away everything else they could lay their eyes on.

The suspense mounted outside till the sound of a single gunshot rent the deadly silence of the night. There were about thirty people, mostly villagers, present inside the church, all of whom had participated in the evening service. Along with two other priests they tried to get out and raise the alarm but in vain. They were kept at bay by one of the remaining gunmen. Outside, the driver of the mission jeep tried to drive out and race to the police station but the odds were against him. The sound of the engine being started brought the fourth gunman in his path and the valiant attempt proved fruitless.

Miraculously, one of the staff members managed to sneak out and break through the boundary of the mission to inform the police. But luck that night was not on the side of the innocent. A police posse had already left to investigate a murder that had taken place earlier that evening.

By the time the police did arrive, it was all over. The intruders had left and the single gunshot had claimed the life of Father Matthew. There were deep injuries on his forehead and left temple, while the right temple was no longer recognisable with the bullet wound. To all intents and purposes, Father Matthew had been shot at point-blank range.

MONNAPARAMBIL Matthew would have been 42 on June 14 this year. The jovial warmhearted priest came from a traditional Catholic family of Arakulam, in Kerala. After completing his early education first at Chemperi district and later at Calicut he joined the Society of Jesus in Patna in 1960. He then studied philosophy and theology in Pune and Kurseong before he was finally ordained as a priest in 1972. After a stint with the Catholic Church, Shahpur, in Bhojpur district, he finally moved to St. Anne's Church at Sasaram in 1975. It was there that he took over the task of looking after the Catholic population of the area—about 200 of them—in addition to organising philanthropic work for the poor.

It is difficult to find a possible reason for the murder, although there had been a certain amount of friction between the dead priest and the local people. On one occasion Father Matthew had taken strong action against some teachers of the area. On another he had requested the parents of students at the local school to donate foodgrain to help the poor, a gesture that had been resented by the students, who had observed a two-day strike. In addition, Father Matthew had been pursuing a case against culprits who had attacked the nearby convent last year, which may have antagonised several people. Even in view of all these theories, it is difficult to pin down personal vendetta as the cause of the murder.

THE Sasaram case cannot be taken in isolation. The Vicar General of the Patna diocese, Father B. J. Osta relates several gory incidents that have taken place in Bihar in the recent past, leaving those connected with the Church "under constant fear of repression and persecution". He can instantly call to mind ten cases relating to harassment, torture, threats, injuries and murder.

On March 29, 1979, the sisters of the convent school adjacent to the mission where Father Matthew was murdered were sitting down to their dinner when seven gunmen entered the premises through the kitchen. The sisters were made to line up and were beaten up by the gunmen who then seized their keys and decamped with all the money on the premises.

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In addition they also took with them a tape recorder, a radio, wristwatches and whatever else they could carry. In the melee, four of the young hostel girls were injured.

There have been other instances as well. Father Goveas was hacked to death in the most brutal manner in January 1966. Father Welzmiller was attacked by thieves in May the same year. The Nazer mission in Monghyr district was attacked by a mob in April 1967 and the house in which Father Francis and some others were sheltering was set on fire. When the occupants stumbled out, Father Francies was manhandled by the mob. The late Father Farrell was attacked in Chanpatia, West Champaran; he was trussed with ropes and relieved of all his valuables. Even Father Mann, the founder of the Sasaram mission, had been shot at on three occasions, the first of which was in 1965. In fact, even today, the ailing priest still has fragments of pellets embedded in his body, an all-too-real reminder of the attacks.

There are endless other cases. The mission church of Basauni in Monghyr district is having its own problems with a sadhu of the locality. The sadhu, who is alleged to have encroached on the mission's land, has involved the priests in endless litigation, one of his accusations being that a priest from the church stole an idol from a temple. In Nawadah district, on October 23, 1979 Father Sequire was handcuffed and paraded in public at the local bazar because an FIR (First Information Report) lodged with the police charges the priest with the attempted murder of a villager. Church authorities, however, point out that the priest had served local harijans for 14 years, and that the claim is sheer nonsense. It is nothing short of "humiliation to a Catholic priest", they insist. Others recall a similar incident when Father Matthew himself was beaten up severely by a mob while conducting a prayer service.

Yet another incident that shook the Catholic world was the murder of Father Martinsek at the Mokameh mission, on February 20 last year. Yet, Church authorities point out, the culprits in most cases have not been brought to book. In only one case has the law taken its course. The culprits behind an attack on priests at Mupra village in Sitamarhi were given life sentences, but such incidents continue to occur and the culprits remain at large.

The Vicar General says "We were very insecure during the Janata rule. Fanaticism was right on top after the Freedom of Religion Bill was mooted". Even though the Bill has only been passed in three states of the country, repression continues. Sometimes, according to the Vicar General, there is general hostility from the religious groups and sometimes from local caste leaders who take umbrage at the Christian work among the harijans. In some areas the air remains charged with tension and all christian teaching about non-violence are in danger of being ignored.

What has the Patna diocese done for the people of Bihar? It furnishes a quick list. It runs 113 primary schools and secondary schools, 17 high schools, one college—the premier women's college in Patna—three training and teaching institutions in addition to three nurses' and midwives' institutions. That is not all. There are also 32 dispensaries, 12 orphanages, three homes for the old and disabled, besides several leper centres.

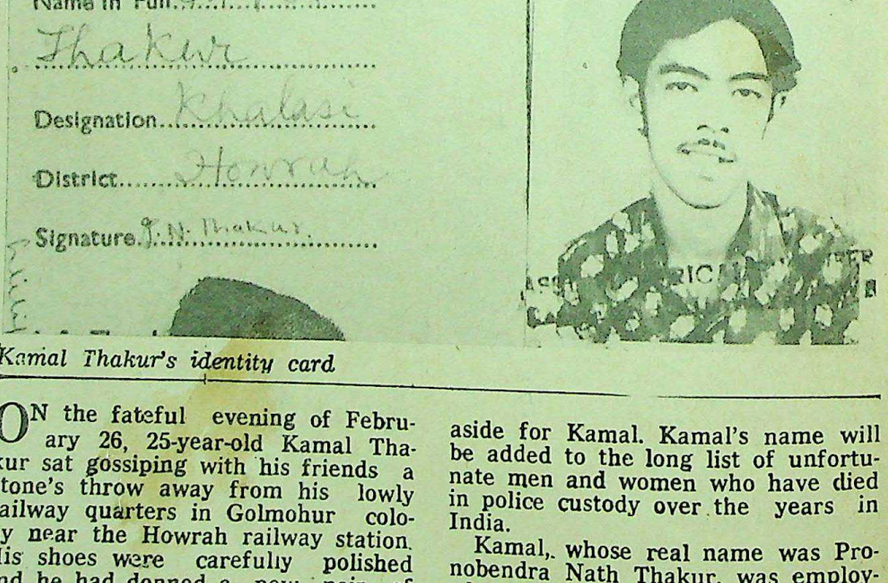
The state of Bihar has a total Catholic population of 6.5 lakhs, so it is no surprise that Christians feel that they have as much right as any others to preach their religion. On March 4, 1979, a year and three days before the murder of Father Matthew, a local Hindi daily had carried an editorial to which a rejoinder was sent by the general secretary of the Christian Welfare Association, Bihar. The matter seemed to be forgotten till the secretary received an anonymous letter which claimed that Jesus Christ had in fact come to India to learn yoga from the Buddhists. The letter added that all religions in the world originated from Hinduism and suggested that the secretary himself convert to Hinduism. The secretary had no knowledge about Indian religions and culture, it emphasised. The most virulent part of the letter is supposed to have said something to the effect that if Christians do not convert to Hinduism, there will be no alternative but to gun them down. Copies of this letter were also sent to the Governor of Bihar and the police.

As if by coincidence, 40 bishops had assmebled at a conference in Patna on the day that Father Matthew was murdered. "We view with anguish and concern all these affronts to human dignity and gross violations of human rights," they said in a joint statement. They went on to voice their concern at the recurrence of atrocities against harijans, minorities and other weaker sections. They feel it is something much worse than the mere breakdown of law and order, and have asked for a CBI probe into the incident. "The time has come," the statement said, to "take a united stand against all such cases of flagrant injustice". Six persons have since been arrested.

S. P. SAGAR, Sasaram

Death in police custody

Neither the first nor last



Kamal Thakur's identity card

ON the fateful evening of February 26, 25-year-old Kamal Thakur sat gossiping with his friends a stone's throw away from his lowly railway quarters in Golmohur colony near the Howrah railway station. His shoes were carefully polished and he had donned a new pair of trousers. Kamal was all set to go to a colleague's wedding that night. His colleague waited in vain. At about 7.30 pm, a posse of policemen from the adjoining Golabari police station took Kamal away and put him in the thana lock-up room for the night. The next morning while still in police custody, Kamal Thakur died and his friend who had in the mean time become a married man threw away the wedding sweets he had kept aside for Kamal. Kamal's name will be added to the long list of unfortunate men and women who have died in police custody over the years in India.

Kamal, whose real name was Pronobendra Nath Thakur, was employed as a khalasi with Eastern Railways in Howrah. Third among five brothers, Kamal's retired father was also with the railways. According to the statement prepared by the police after Kamal's death, he was arrested in connection with case number 15 dated 4.2.80 under sections 326 and 307 of the Indian Penal Code and sections 6 (3) of the Indian Explosives Act. The police case alleged that Kamal, along with a "local rowdy", Nemai Roy, and a few others

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had attacked Manik Chand Singh's hotel located in the vicinity. The "miscreants" allegedly used bombs and Singh had to be hospitalised with grave injuries. Soon after the incident, Nemai Roy surrendered in the court of the subdivisional judicial magistrate, Howrah and eventually on February 26, Kamal was arrested in the railway colony. Police spokesmen alleged that Kamal Thakur was a local rough with a criminal background and, between 1974 and 1980, he was involved in six cases for offences under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Explosive Substances Act and the Maintenance of Public Order Act. Of these, three cases were for attempted murder.

After his arrest on the evening of February 26, Kamal spent the night in the police lock-up along with other detainees. Next morning, the police decided to take him to the emergency ward of the Howrah General Hospital. At 11.30 am, the hospital informed the Howrah police station that Kamal had been brought to the hospital in "dead condition". The autopsy later revealed that Kamal's death was caused by injuries which were ante mortem and homicidal in nature. A high-ranking police officer who met me, said : "Obviously, Kamal was alive when he was arrested. He may have died in the police lock-up, on the way to the hospital or after reaching the hospital. But one thing is very clear: he died in police custody".

It was thus an "unnatural death case" and because the death took place while Kamal was in police custody, according to the statutory rules, a magisterial enquiry was conducted by the executive magistrate, Howrah. On the basis of his findings, a murder case (number 63/80) under 302 of the IPC was registered at Golabari police station on February 28 and the investigation into Kamal's death has been handed over to the CID. Kamal's father has also filed a criminal suit against the inspector-in-charge, Golabari thana, and other officers attached to the police station. Since there were apprehensions that the Golabari policemen may obstruct the process of investigation into Kamal's death, the inspector-in-charge, a sub-inspector and two constables of the thana who had arrested Kamal on February 26, were transferred. Mr Swarup Mukherjee, SP, Howrah was given special instructions to leave no stone unturned in bringing the culprits to book.

SOON after Kamal's death, the inevitable occurred. Congress (I) MLAs raised a hue and cry in the State Assembly. The Party's spokesmen described Kamal as a Congress (I) worker who was killed by the police at the behest of the State's ruling coalition, the Left Front. Various speakers from the opposition benches said that Kamal's death in police custody reflected the deteriorationg law and order situation in West Bengal and demanded the Government's resignation on this issue. When this correspondent visited Golmohur colony, some people said that Kamal was a Congress (I) worker while a large number of people thought otherwise.

A Bihari shopkeeper who owns a shop near the railway colony said: "The poor youth died in police custody. For their own selfish reasons some people are now saying that he was a Congress (I) worker. I don't know whether he was one during his life or he has been made one posthumously. But Saheb, the police's zoolum is well known. They should have thought about Kamal's old parents before doing what they did when he was in their custody". In the State Assembly, Jyoti Basu declared that "Kamal was not known to have affiliation to any political Party. No political Party except in the present instance claimed him as a supporter on earlier occasions". He also promised that the Government "is firm in its resolve to take appropriate action against persons whose complicity in the tragic and regrettable affair may come to light in the course of the investigation".

Eventually, it's for the courts to decide whether Kamal was killed by the policemen or he succumbed to the injuries which the police claim Kamal had on his person at the time of arrest. Kamal's case has not set any precedents because the practice of torture by the police are both widespread and have been investigagated by several commissions of inquiry. Thana officials confess in private conversation that beating up an accused is the most common thing at police stations. Sometimes the thrashing is meted out with the sole intention of extracting a statement and on other occasions to teach the accused a lesson. The police baton is the instrument normally used for punishment and applied freely on the accused's palms or soles. Such punishment, apart from causing searing pain does not leave behind any evidence of torture for the courts to detect. Often, a blanket is wrapped around the person before the beating so that no external injuries are inflicted. A police officer who is now engaged in writing a thesis on police behaviour said that in many thanas there are sub-inspectors who love beating people in the lock-up, sometimes for sadistic pleasure alone. And once in a while, someone is beaten up more than others and may sustain injuries which may prove fatal. A policeman usually takes a detainee to an adjoining room in the thana and uses the lathi.

Police brutality does not end within the confines of a thana though it is here that teenage girls have been raped and detainees done to death. Several commissions have been instituted in the past to look into "police encounters" and "jail firings" too. Wrongful detention and misuse of power entrusted in the hands of policemen has been proved on umpteen occasions. And police brutality and inefficiency has generally no direct connection with ruling Parties; the practice is too deep rooted to be erased within the short period of any Party's regime. The Left Front, after it came to power in mid-77, made an attempt to reorganise the police force and weed out corruption and high-handed methods which had become as good as Police Manual regulations. Chief Minister Jyoti Basu was not however over-optimistic. He said : "The mentality of the police cannot be changed overnight. It will take some time".

S.N.M.ABDI, Calcutta

Hard times

THE tempestuous daughter of the late Pakistani President Bhutto, is in trouble with her Partymen according to George Fernandes. Benazir, 26, who donned the mantle of her father as Party leader, after he was hanged, is committed to anti-imperialism, socialism and secularism. She talks about this to her Partymen in the way her father did. But with one difference—she is genuine while Bhutto was what is called "pragmatic". "This," says Fernandes, "is not liked by bigwigs of the Pakistan People's Party, who have used anti-imperialist and pro-socialist slogans only to rally round the poor. Bhutto's commitment to the poor was qualitatively the same as Mrs Gandhi's commitment to *Garibi Hatao*. It was a convenient, unfailing vote-gathering exercise". As for the General Secretary of the People's Party, General Tikka Khan, says Fernandes, he is as paralysed as our Chandra Shekhar was on the night of January 6 when the Parliamentary election results were coming in and he said dazedly, "What will happen now? What are we going to do?" This in short is the opposition in Pakistan to the dictatorship of Zia-ul Haq, under whose inhuman martial law a person gets seven years' imprisonment and lashes if he or she dares to make a political statement even to the foreign Press.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

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A village in turmoil

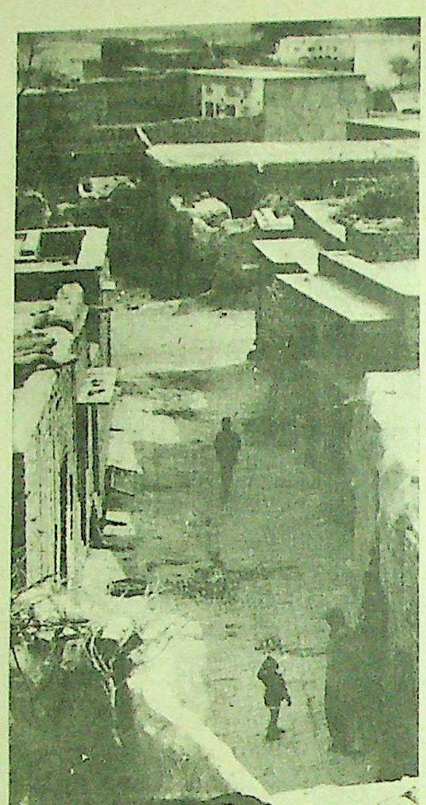
Caste friction thwarts a relief scheme

THE fate of the food-for-work (FFW) programme at Dhanana, a dusty, sprawling, Jat-dominated village 17 km from Bhiwani, hangs precariously in the balance. An ugly Jat-Harijan caste war threatens to stop all work, deprive hundreds of innocent villagers of their daily quotas of wheat, and destroy the whole foundation of the scheme — a sense of community. Working together now seems almost impossible for the Jat and the Harijan: both see themselves divided by caste and fate, born to live and work apart.

The caste conflict, though still subdued, is an outcome of the FFW scheme itself. The Jats, grudging the manner in which Harijans were toiling on the sites in large numbers and being handsomely paid for it, felt cheated and manoeuvred to push them out. The Harijans protested and complained, but to no avail. The Jats meanwhile got more bitter. Their jealousy grew into hatred. The result was a cruel social boycott: the landless Harijans were ordered to stay away, not only from the FFW sites but also other agricultural plots. Most Harijans now remain confined to their own quarters, left with no other means of livelihood.

Dhanana, a rough, bumpy, 20-minute bus ride from Bhiwani, is a rugged, scattered hamlet with remarkably city-like collections of houses in some parts. The buildings, which rise amidst crowds of thatched roofs stand as symbols of the Harijans' growing prosperity. Many of them belong to men who have found jobs in sundry Government departments, from the state transport service to the Army, thanks to the preference they get in recruitment procedures. Economic independence was followed by a new consciousness of their rights. Some of the employed Harijans are active trade unionists who have introduced their village brethren to unfamiliar ideas of revolt. Soon, the Harijans saw themselves at par with the Jats, who, in turn, found their feudal relationship with landless Harijans threatened. Even as the Jats owned most of the land, the Harijans do not look to them, but to cities and towns for work. Of course, a large number of Harijans who survive on odd chores like cleaning houses and streets, still lead a hand-to-mouth existence. The ban on Harijan labour has deprived them of a vital means of livelihood—agricultural wages.

The caste war is a sequel to the FFW scheme's slow but sure progress over the previous year. Work on the scheme started on March 27, 1979, between which date and the end of January a total of 4,800 man-days of employment was generated. A number of impressive projects were completed. Several roads and



G. Sharma

The Harijan basti

lanes were paved with mud, wells dug in Harijan localities, walls erected around a girls' primary school and public lavatories for men and women built. The total number of beneficiaries for the period is estimated at 600, about half of whom are women. Six kg of wheat was given everyday for digging a trench ten feet by ten feet, to a lead of eight feet. For those owning camels and bullocks, the work allotted was much more, for 18 kg of wheat per day.

All work on the projects is planned and conducted by the ten-member village panchayat. Only two of the members are Harijans, Krishan Chand, a valmiki, and Gopi Ram, a chamar. There are two brahmins in the body, another person named Krishan Chand and Munni Ram, while the rest, Chandan Singh, Gandi, Daleep, Dop Singh, the wife of Megh Raj and the headman, Rameshwar, are Jats.

Work had been going on for some time on a large water tank in the village. On January 8, the headman Rameshwar declared that only those who owned animals should turn up at the site. The work was too heavy for men, and since the digging was making slow progress, he said it would be done faster with camels and bullocks. The fiat eliminated Harijans, most of whom do not own camels or bullocks. Frustrated and angry, the Harijans went in a delegation to Bhiwani and reported the matter to the Deputy Commissioner, Mr Chander Singh. Mr Singh assured them of all help and referred the matter to the sub-divisional magistrate, Mr Prahlad Singh. The SDM in turn contacted the village headman, Rameshwar. But the worst was yet to come. Instead of redressing the Harijans' grievances, the headman issued another fiat, forbidding any encroachment on agricultural plots. Anyone found guilty of doing so would be fined Rs 25, he warned. The Harijans saw in this an act of vengeance. Though outwardly meant to prevent unauthorised encroachment on land, the order was actually aimed against Harijans, since most of them depend solely on agricultural wages from work on others' — especially the Jats' — plots.

The effect of the order was to keep the Harijans confined to their own localities. Tiara Panna, Kalan and Milan. It was forcible internment. There was no way they could go to, or even find work. Many of them were forced to depend on each others' charity. The few who had animals gave them away to relatives far and near, because fodder could not be brought from the fields. Even at the time of writing, most of them were living in intense fear. "*Hamare koi nahi sundi,*" (No one listens to us) groaned an old Harijan. "They do not let us go to the fields, even go out of the village. We cannot do anything. We are weak, and poor", he went on pitiably.

Many Harijans, the poorest among them, could hardly even have a square meal a day. Unable to bear the hardship, a few of them, Nihala, Arbaroo, Balla and Sher Singh, sold off their belongings and fled the village to find work elsewhere. Work on the FFW projects had completely stopped for about a month. News of unrest in the village spread, and the "bandh" created a stir. But surprisingly, none of the authorities seemed concerned. All along, the police in the village remained silent spectators to the intimidation of Harijans.

The "bandh" was still on when this reporter visited the village. In spite of its fairly large population of about 3,000 the whole landscape seemed deserted, and most of the worksites were abandoned. Harijan women walked in groups on their way to collect dung cakes and fill water pots. Children played quietly outside their homes. Only the adults stayed indoors. A tacit understanding between the Jats and Harijans ensured that women and children would not be touched in the caste war. There was, however, an exception: Harijan children were not being allowed to enter one of the village's primary schools.

On February 24, a team of valmikis led by their representative in the panchayat went to the headman and "apologised". They assured him

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of their cooperation and requested to be allowed to work. The headman agreed, but laid down three conditions: one, they would be given wages of Rs 8 per day for the work (as against Rs 10 given earlier), they should bring the animals to the plots at ten in the morning and leave at five in the evening and thirdly, all disputes or complaints should be taken to the headman, and not any district official. Following the assurance, a few valmikis were allowed to join work on the FFW sites.

The tension in the village is obvious. The Harijans complain that the Jats pass unfriendly remarks about their caste when they walk past them on a street. The hostility is sharpening with the attitude of a few wealthy Jats in the village who seem intent on hurting the Harijans. One of them, Arnani, who owns 300 bighas, is planning to start a college exclusively for the Jats, that will not admit Harijans, or so the latter say. "The danger is that we don't have weapons, or strength. We have no choice but to submit to the Jats. We do what the sarpanch tells us. We are 500 against their 1,500", said an angry youth, when this reporter met a group of Harijan leaders in the upper storey room of a dingy mud house. "They have all the land" another said. "They can do what they like with it. But we survive on their land, what happens to us?" he asked.

Most of the Harijans were ready to work with the Jats and others on the FFW programme, purely out of self-interest, but were being prevented from doing so. The Harijans have another explanation for Jat hostility. Since most of them voted for the Janata candidate Balwant Rai Tayal in the recent midterm poll, and the Jats supported the Lok Dal candidate Chandrawati, and both lost, the Jats are taking it out on the Harijans for not having supported their candidate. Bansi Lal was elected, they think, on Harijan support.

According to a "Quick evaluation study of the Food for Work Programme" (August — October, 1979) by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission, "it is found that only in five districts (in the country) namely Guntur (Andhra Pradesh), Bhojpur (Bihar), Bhandara and Nasik (Maharashtra) and Burdwan (West Bengal), there is some system of registration of labourers. In the rest of the districts, it is learnt that those who offer work are employed on the various programmes. It was also reported that the Panchayat Samitis at the village level do not find any significant difficulty in getting labourers. There is also no system under which any preference is given to the poorer sections like the landless labourers, small farmers, marginal farmers, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes." The report itself pinpoints Bhiwani district for difficulties in implementing the project, though it does not mention the precise nature of these difficulties. The fact is, they are essentially social, not administrative.

Figures on the FFW scheme relating to the whole of Bhiwani indicate that it is benefiting the wrong people. Of 40 beneficiaries interviewed in the district, six persons were cultivators, six agricultural labourers (the neediest section) and 24 non-agricultural labourers.

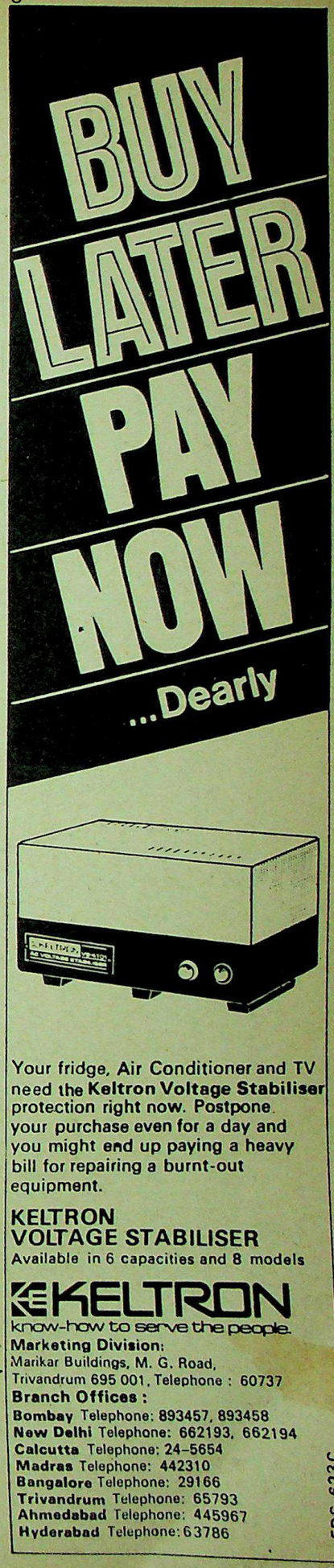
Asked to comment on the report's findings about his district, the DC, Bhiwani, Mr Chander Singh took the PEO report in his hands and read it closely. "They have not specified what exactly the difficulties are," he said slowly. "As far as my district is concerned. I think the major problem is that we have less overseers, that is section officers or junior engineers. We have already requested the State Government to help us in this regard. More section officers and engineers are now to be recruited through the PCS examination, the Government has assured us. Since this is a drought affected district the demand for the FFW programme is high—about 6,500 metric tonnes of wheat. The programme has had a good effect on prices. The issue price of wheat has stabilised at Rs 137 per quintal, whereas it used to be as high as 140 to 150 before." Asked about the caste friction, he said: "As soon as we heard about it, we took action. I do not think there is any trouble now. The camels and bullocks have been withdrawn, and so has the fine of Rs 25."

When told that the situation in the village continued to be tense, and could only improve if a senior officer were posted there for some time, Mr Singh disagreed. "That will not help. If caste feelings exist, they cannot be removed by posting officers. In any case, the trouble is over." The fact is, most Harijans were still not working because they were being threatened, overtly and covertly.

Even when the Harijans worked under the scheme, their daily needs were hardly met, they complain. They would be employed only for five or six days in a month, and spend the rest of the time working on the Jats' plots. The quantity of wheat they obtained from a day's work—six kg—was never enough to stock them for the whole month: a Harijan family of four needs roughly four maunds of wheat per month. Even with this, a Harijan family survives on two meals of onion, rotis and pickle every day.

"None of us knows how much wheat is brought from Bawani Khera, the block headquarters. It comes to the sarpanch, and he keeps it where he wants. Now only the Jats are working on the sites. They get all the wheat, while we starve," said an angry Harijan. "Even the moneylenders do not give us any money," he added loudly. The resentment continues, but few of them expect the district officials to take any action. Most of the Harijans have given up the FFW programme for a Jat showpiece and resigned themselves to what they call "our fate".

NIRMAL MITRA, Bhiwani



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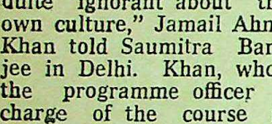
The seven-day solution

Going abroad? If you're not too sure about where the Sun Temple is, or who Sher Shah was, or when the Carnatic Wars were fought, don't lose any sleep over it. All is not yet lost. If you feel that you will not be able to answer queries on India from your foreign hosts, just take a walk down to the Indian Council of Cultural Research and enrol yourself in the week-long courses it runs for people intending to take a trip across India's borders. "Indians going abroad are quite ignorant about their own culture," Jamail Ahmed Khan told Saumitra Banerjee in Delhi. Khan, who is the programme officer in charge of the course for Indians going abroad, added, "You'd be surprised, but even technocrats, Government servants and academicians are included".

The idea behind the course originated from complaints from various Indian embassies abroad that Indians who travelled outside the country had a remarkably scant knowledge about their own culture. The embassy officials added that this was a constant source of embarrassment in view of the number of queries made by foreigners wanting to know about India. The course being run by the ICCR is expected to give Indians going abroad a basic idea of the fundamentals of Indian culture. The course will touch on classical music, dance and even India's foreign policy, to clear away all the cobwebs. "Some people know that Kathakali is a dance form, but you ask them to elaborate on that and they are lost," said Khan. The course will be conducted by experts in various fields and will include demonstrations, especially of dance forms. In addition, the course will be free of cost. Any takers?

Eye spy



Phone : 440194

M. VIJAY RAJ

14, GOPE HOUSE, DR. BATLIWALA ROAD, PAREL, BOMBAY 400 012.

Ref. PC-4/156/80

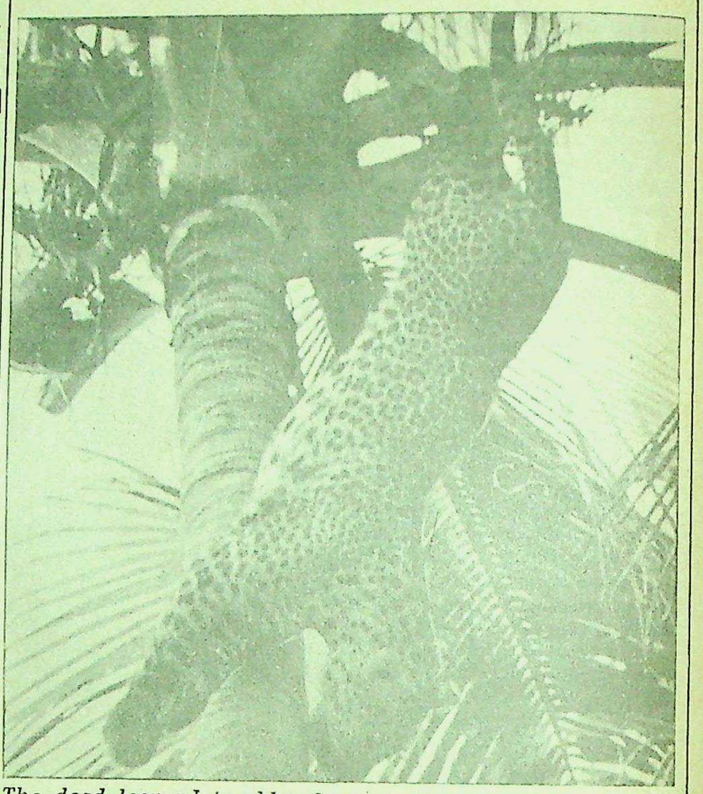
(Private Eye For Social Justice & Security) Date 22nd FEB.80

Vijay Raj is perhaps the only "private eye for social justice" in Bombay. You wouldn't think so, though. His chamber consists of a tiny room in a chawl outside Bombay's KEM Hospital and two-thirds of the room is cordoned off as his living quarters.

Raj began his career as a self-appointed protector of people's rights with Acharya Atre's "anti-goonda squad". At the time he shared the number two spot with none less than Datta Samant. "We struck terror in the hearts of every goonda in Bombay. You know, all we had to do was put an advertisement in Atre's *Maratha*, saying that we were protecting a certain festival and there would not even be even a breath of goondaism".

All injustice is grist to his mill. "I have a simple modus operandi. I write letters to the Press and get as much coverage in the local Press as I can. Then I send every letter published to the authorities concerned. It has worked, believe me," He has operated outside the Maharashtra border only once, when he cracked a large textiles racket in Bihar. When he eventually cornered the kingpin and took him to the police, he says, "They offered him a chair while I kept standing : they were so scared of him. But I didn't let them release him, and insisted that they report his arrest in writing. That's the secret of getting these people". One sure indication that his influence is growing steadily is the number of people who come to seek his help.

Cat-22



T. Narayanan

The dead leopard tumbles from the tree

He had grown weary of the forest, so on Sunday, March 2 he decided to go and inspect the world around him. He was a fully-grown leopard whose wandering brought him to the city of Calicut, where he climbed a tall coconut tree to get a better view of his new surroundings. Even while he sat atop the tree a knot of armed policemen and curious bystanders formed below. Forest officials appeared as well, and tried to bring him down to trap him, but gave up after ten hours of trying in vain. The police then took over and shot down the big cat. T. Narayanan, the chief photographer of the *Malayalam Manorama* captured the moment as the leopard tumbled out of the tree, dead below.

Gill's will be done

Russian schools do not boast of cricket fields like those at Eton and the English believe, for some strange reason, that all Marxist "failings" spring from this alone. Well, cricket is a game for gentlemen and recently in picturesque Goa, the Press and the Administration agreed to play a friendly cricket match to sort out a mutual problem. Goan newsmen asserted that they had a right to information and could approach anybody connected with the Government, be it a clerk or a gazetted officer. The Lt. Governor, Pratap Singh Gill disagreed; he said that only the Chief Secretary could be approached for official information. A minor misunderstanding thus cropped up and Gill hit upon the idea of playing a cricket match to sort out the issue. So the two teams, the reporters' eleven and the Lt. Governor's eleven met on the cricket green. The journalists lost but sportingly accepted the Lt. Governor's stand on access to official information. Though they lost the match, the newsmen, we presume, must have gathered sufficient "prohibited" information.

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Gold shoulder

It was an ordinary run-of-the-mill day at the construction site. Labourers went about their excavation in the Chiengmeirong Hills, Imphal, as they normally did. Suddenly the pickaxe of one of them struck something hard with a clang and some of the others looked curiously in his direction. The pick swung again and the sound was repeated. Convinced that there was something under the earth, the labourers started digging for whatever it was with their hands lest they damage it. Slowly it became visible. There was no glint of precious stones; it was no ordinary metal image of a god. The labourers looked a little disappointed, but there was more in store for them. In addition to some more metal images there appeared a beautiful golden image weighing about a kilogram. The news spread rapidly and the site was instantly surrounded by crowds from the villages nearby, who claimed collective ownership of the statuette. It was their old village deity, they insisted, which had somehow been misplaced.

Cooking Captain Cook's goose

Was Captain Cook really the first man to wade through the surf that washed the shores of Australia? According to Captain U. Shankar Rao, it is quite likely that he was not. Though it is generally accepted that Cook's men discovered the land that we know today as Down Under, Captain Rao feels that he might really have been beaten to it. The Captain, who is the honorary curator of the National Maritime museum in Bombay, has a theory that Australia was discovered by Tamilians long before 1770, the year when Cook and his men planted the Union Jack on the soil of the new land. The reason? An Indian wreck was discovered off the coast of New Zealand in 1836. The vessel was the *Mahadinbaksh*, while the ship's bell had Tamil inscriptions on it. This bell is currently on display at the Dominican Museum in New Zealand, and a photograph of the bell was displayed at an exhibition which opened in Bombay on March 14. Captain Rao feels that in view of the early maritime activities of the Tamils, it is on the cards that Cook, in fact, was second in line.

Time of his Life

What does Dom Moraes feel about the furore over his book *Bombay*, produced by Time-Life Publications? "I'm frankly surprised at the amount of publicity this book seems to be getting. It's really quite out of proportion to the sort of book it is and the kind of function it is supposed to fulfil." The first copies of the book, the latest in the Time-Life series on great cities, had hardly landed on Indian shores when they were impounded by Indian Customs. The reasons were threefold: firstly there was a photograph of a corpse being taken to a Parsee Tower of Silence; secondly, there was a nude photograph of the deity Parvati; thirdly, Kamalipura—Bombay's largest red light area—had been written about.

To the charge that, these days it seems to have become traditional for Indians to turn into self-styled expatriates and deliver hysterical tirades against their homeland, Moraes has a very matter-of-fact answer. "You can hardly call many of us Indians in the true sense. Nirad Chaudhry is thoroughly Edwardian in both his writing style and thoughts. Vidya (Naipaul) and I are something like historical accidents."

What does he feel about his book? "*Bombay* is easily the most unsatisfying book I have ever written. There were two editors, who were nice people. But behind them there were ten other editors and ten probe researchers, out of whom only two had ever been to India. They have rewritten almost half the book; this is the first time I have experienced having written a book that wasn't mine. But that is their house style, so one cannot complain." No wonder the title page carries the legend "*Bombay*—by Dom Moraes and the editors of Time-Life books".

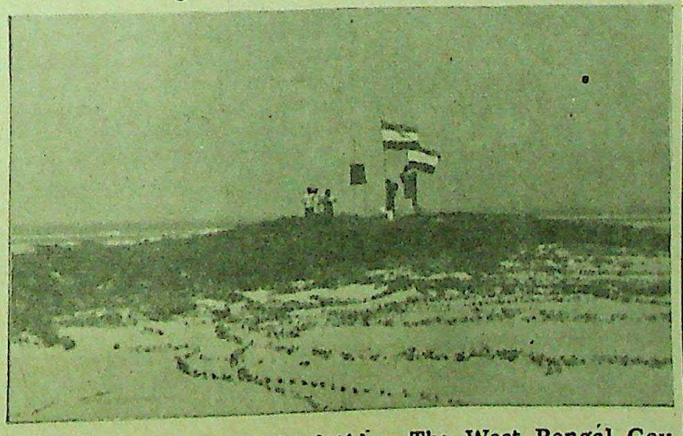
The anopheles lives

For those who cannot sleep at night because of the irritating hum of an errant mosquito, there is hope yet. Provided you live in Calcutta, though. The Health Ministry has purchased a Rs 5 lakh "fogging" machine in order to eradicate the mosquito menace in the city. But don't start celebrating yet. That's only the good news. The bad news is that the machine is diesel-powered. And you know what that means: no diesel, no eradication. And plenty of mosquitoes.

Island in the bay—but whose?

There were no eurekas for this island, but there should have been. There was quite a flutter in West Bengal when the *Anandabazar Patrika* published a photograph of the island with the Indian tricolour waving in the breeze. The island, called Purbasha, was first noticed by the Naval Hydrographic Survey in 1975 and the Central Government promptly requested the West Bengal Government to claim it, which was done on September 16, 1975. The island, which is situated off the Sunderbans in the Bay of Bengal, is a 17-hour launch journey from Canning.

Border Security Force personnel visited the island in 1977 and erected a plaque on which there was an Indian flag and a map of India showing the island. And there, apparently, lies the rub, since Bangladesh has also claimed the island as its own. Purbasha, which has a total area of 264 square kilometres is mostly submerged and only about 2 square kilometres are visible. The West Bengal Government, however, has already gone about planting casuarina trees. As a matter of fact, when State Government officials visited the island recently, the only inhabitant they saw was a crocodile basking in the sun.



Everything in a name

One moment no one had even heard of them, the next they were signing autographs. A new generation of Tamil film directors and stars had arisen, as if overnight. And it seems as if they have it in them, reports Arthur Pais, to make the bigtime. Notwithstanding some of their names, that is. One of them, the son of the late Bhim Singh, is called Lenin. Despite the fact that his maiden film flopped, he wants to continue as a director. There's even someone else called—believe it or not—Socrates, and as if that's not enough, we also have someone who answers to the name of Sai Baba. How long is it going to be before we have a Jesus and a Muhammad Ali?

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THE WORLD

Cruel sea

Who would dream of killing a dolphin, the friendliest of sea animals? Not man, surely when history is replete with instances of how dolphins have saved human lives. The dolphin also is an unusual animal in that it has a very large brain and is very intelligent. Science has not found out all it can about this creature whose playful somersaults breaking the sun-kissed expanses of seas around ships bring happiness to the hearts of lonely seamen. A British scientist has given up his job and along with his wife, is tracing a particular dolphin around the world. They easily recognise each other on chance meetings after hundreds of miles. But fishermen in Japan's Iki Island view the dolphins differently. They say that dolphins eat the fish and deprive them of their livelihood. An American naturalist, Dexter Cate, has fallen foul of Japanese law by releasing 300 dolphins trapped for killing. The World Wildlife Fund has protested. The dolphin is not an endangered species but it is so unusual. And Japan isn't poor India. Its Government surely can do something for the fishermen instead of looking the other way.

Hell-pad

Big businessmen in Dallas, USA are fighting each other, not over big business but a fancy helipad. A millionaire electronics magnate, Mr H. Ross Perot of the Electronic Data Systems Incorporated wants to build a helipad outside his palatial Dallas mansion. His desire : to be flown to office everyday by helicopter. The reasons are purely for personal security, a matter of grave concern.

The trouble about his personal safety started about a year ago. Mr Perot, an ex-Marine had sent his own private commando to rescue two of his senior executives from Iran. After the successful rescue the Governor of Texas, inspired by his resourcefulness, appointed him head of a citizens' task force on drug abuse. The job is dangerous and Mr Perot's friends believe his life is in danger. The narcotics underworld would surely avenge any action by Perot's task force. Perhaps in deference to his friends' wishes, the millionaire applied to the City Plan Commission for permission to build a helipad outside his house. His neighbours, also rich and influential, fear that a single bullet from a gunman might bring Perot and his helicopter down on their beautiful and expensive gardens. So that protested. Perot continues to travel to work by car everyday. The most the millionaire's neighbours can do is offer a word of advice : Travel by an armoured car.

Windfall

On January 24, 1978 Cosmos 954, a Russian nuclear-powered satellite used for maritime surveillance, burnt its way through the earth's atmosphere over Canada's North West Territories. The Canadian authorities started searching for the debris over an area 500 miles by 35 miles and found six beryllium cylinders, 41 beryllium rods and more than 4,000 radioactive particles. Now the Canadian authorities have claimed an astronomical $ 6,026,083.56 from the Russians to cover the cost incurred by Government departments. Though Canadian officials were pleased with the progress of their talks with the Russians, it is not known if they will pay up. Discussions will resume in June failing which the Canadians still have nothing to worry about. Under a 1972 convention there is a provision to take the claim to the United Nations arbitration commission.

Balance of trade

Yelena Bonner

Russian dissident Nobel laureate, Andrei Sakharov, languishes in exile. His wife, Yelena Bonner, continues to raise her voice against continuing oppression by the Soviet Government. And the Western States, who uphold human rights, keep on playing their games. The non-aligned nations wanted Western States in the UN Human Rights body drop a resolution expressing official concern at the treatment of the Soviet scientist. The Russians in turn withdrew a draft resolution which accused Britain of violating human rights by the "killing of peaceful citizens by British soldiers" in Northern Ireland. When the delegate from Peru said that the goings-on in the UNHRC headquarters in Geneva were "a trade-off between the two super powers" the chief US delegate, Jerome Shestack said : "There was no such trade-off. That is just nonsense. We did not trade-off an Irish resolution for the Sakharov resolution".

Booze won't lose

Prohibition in Scotland ? Impossible, yet true. The Scottish village of Findochty had closed down its last pub sometime in the 1920s. The fishermen's wives protested against their husbands imbibing liquor. David Mackenzie, a grocer, revived the controversy when he applied for permission to open a liquor shop. The district council decided to end the controversy and conducted a postal referendum in which over 85 per cent of the electorate voted. The result 463 people wanted their village to be wet, 283—most of them furious housewives — did not

Q.E.D.

The Chinese firmly believe in catching'em young. As soon as a child starts going to school, when he is six-and-a-half years old, arithmetic is one of the subjects taught to them with utmost care. Sums like (720 × 22) plus (720 x 34) are Q. E. D. Children are not made into prodigies in primary schools but the teachers put in a lot of hard work, following old-fashioned teaching methods : "chalk, talk and chanting of tables" are pupils' way of learning. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that a large number of kids easily answer complex arithmetical problems in China.

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Dying to win

Seen the film Coma? If you have, don't be surprised that a hospital in the American gambling city Las Vegas has a nurse who faces charges of actually subtly murdering patients. The reason, aptly enough in Las Vegas, is an astonishing racket in betting over when the patients would die. A nurse alleged to have been involved was being questioned on suspicion that she may have hastened the patients' deaths to win her bets. Several members of the staff of the private Sunrise Hospital have been suspended following the allegations, the hospital's administrator David Brandness said. The inquiry is being jointly conducted by the hospital authorities, police and members of the local prosecutor's staff. The *Las Vegas Review* in a copyrighted story quoted reliable sources to say that six people had died in the process, including a nursing supervisor in the hospital's Intensive Care Unit. The allegations are that life-supporting equipment in the unit which has ten beds were tampered with. The money for the bets was contained in an envelope kept for the winner.

Mishing Misha

Stanford Blum and Misha

Stanford Blum was a great friend of Misha, the mascot for the 1980 Moscow Games. He was a happy man till only a few days ago when his Image Factories Sports Incorporated, Los Angeles, USA owned the production and selling rights on all products including Misha to promote the Games. Now Misha is in limbo following the Olympic dispute. Prior to the "boycott or not to boycott" crisis, Misha was one of the hottest selling items. Now the boom is over. Thanks to President Jimmy Carter who asked American companies on March 13 to stop exporting items for the Games which include souvenirs, drinks, etc. US companies will thereby lose 15 to 20 million dollars. Prior to this, the ban on the export of goods was voluntary. Now Mr. Carter has asked his Commerce Department secretary, Philip Kultznick, to encourage American companies to honour the voluntary product ban.

Check-foes

AP

This chess grandmaster story reeks of hate. Tigran Petrosian and Victor Korchnoi grew up hating each other and they still cannot hide it. On March 7, a day before the candidates tournament opened in Velden, Austria, Korchnoi, who defected from the Soviet Union, said he was meeting Petrosia "with great displeasure". He confessed he liked to play chess "but not against Petrosian". And the organisers have been adding fuel to the fire. Said organiser Franz Hoelzl: "We have done everything to avoid problems". In their overenthusiasm a wooden board was put under the chess table so that the toes of the two Grandmasters did not touch. Identical rooms were also built to avoid discrimination.

Loophole in the law

Hijacking trains is a favourite sport in Yugoslavia. The men behind it are, of all people, shepherds. In the northern parts of the country there are no pastures for sheep to graze on. Every winter sheep are driven down from the mountains to the plains The shepherds carry rifles Recently, a group of shepherds held up a goods train and forced the engine driver at gunpoint to take their sheep to some place near Zagreb. Such nomadic pasturing is against Yugoslavian law. A Government officer stopped a group of errant shepherds to explain the law against such pasturing. And lo! The shepherds took the paper they were shown, stuck it on a tree trunk, fired a bullet through it, and told the officer: "Your law is hollow. There is a hole right through it". This should dispel myths that shepherds are harmless.

Striking lessons

"How to disrupt your school in six easy lessons" was the name of a course which nearly 100 students aged between 12 and 18 underwent. The two-day course started on March 8 in a Polytechnic in central London. It imparted the rudiments of revolution, socialism and the efficacy of terrorism. The course was organised by the youth body of the left-wing Socialist Workers Party, Red Rebel, as part of a programme of the National Union of School Students. (NUSU). NUSU chairman, Hardy Desai is advising students on how to organise strikes and undermine teachers' authority.

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Beginning March 30

This week the Sun is in Pisces, Venus is in Taurus, Jupiter, Rahu and Mars are conjoined in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo, Uranus and Neptune are in Scorpio, Mercury and Kethu are in Aquarius and the Moon will be moving through Virgo, Libra and Scorpio from Leo.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Your financial position will improve rapidly. There is a chance of a promotion. A secret matter will progress. Adopt novel and original ideas in business : such schemes will bear fruit. But document and correspondence need minute perusal. Give importance to domestic issues which will bring you happiness. A week for merry-making. **Good dates:** 31, 1, 2, 3 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 8 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) This week will be marked by unexpected events that will benefit you. Financial expansion is predicted. Attend to business, peruse correspondence carefully and avoid litigation.. You are moving success. Your relatives and friends will praise your efforts. Medical expenditure is likely. Somebody in your family may fall sick. You will undertake a short journey. **Good dates:** 30, 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.

Gemini (May 22 — June 21) Despite some trouble, perhaps involving property, inheritance or legal matters, a successful and happy week is forecast for you. Intense activity and sound health are predicted. Family problems will be difficult to solve. An elderly relative may give you cause for worry. Think before you act. **Good dates:** 2, 3 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 10 and 3. **Favourable direction:** North.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Minor gains through an elderly female relative is likely. Nevertheless, some anxiety and even loss through misplaced documents or wrong statements involving litigation is indicated. Pleasure in the domestic world is indicated. Learn to keep your your temper under control. Meet high officials if necessary. You are very close to your goal. **Good dates:** 31, 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 4 and 9. **Favourable directions:** East and South.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) This week is a most auspicious one. Take reasonable risks and forge ahead on all fronts. A happy romance or "event" is indicated. Some people will win lotteries. Speculation will surely pay. Do not displease those in authority. Your business and financial affairs will prosper and a promotion is far from improbable. Travel and push business to the utmost. Watch your health. **Good dates:** 30, 31, 1 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) A very lucky week is predicted for you. Your business affairs will prosper and you will make huge profits on old stocks. A timely hunch will lead to immense gains. Some people will win prizes. A promotion is probable, especially for those in services. A splendid opportunity will come your way. Exploit it. Watch the health of womenfolk in the family. **Good dates:** 1, 2, 3 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 5 and 8. **Favourable direction:** West.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Apart from some opposition by an elderly business partner or associate, your prospects are excellent. After a minor setback your professional and financial affairs will continue their prosperous run against a background of domestic bliss. Change of place and travel are probable for the professioned people. Love and marriage are predicted **Good dates:** 2, 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 9, 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Your prospects are reasonably good, but take care not to endanger your position by antagonising your employer or those in authority. Co-operation of a relative will prove very useful. Attempts to deceive you are probable. Nevertheless, your courage and enterprise will bring you a fair measure of success. Do not depend on family friends. **Good dates:** 31, 1 and 2. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 5. **Favourable directions:** West and South.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You are advised to conserve your resources and consolidate your recent gains. This week your outlook is pretty good, mainly for business and financial affairs. Partners and spouses will play an exceptionally big part in your career — some will bring gain, others loss. Apart from the possibility of a sharp reversal of fortune, your outlook is most auspicious. **Good dates:** 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 6. **Favourable direction:** North.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) A sudden turn of fortune's wheel will remove past gloom. rospects excellent. Women in general will advance your interests and befriend There may be opposition on the part of an old person from among your family. Keep away from gambling. Promotion is on the cards for many people. Take steps to settle all your problems. **Good dates:** 30, 1, 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) On the business front things will move smoothly. Social activities will keep you busy. You are advised to conserve your resources and maintain good relations with your employer. You will make large profits. Attempts to deceive you are probable. Nevertheless, your courage and enterprise will bring you a fair measure of success. Court matters should be postponed. **Good dates:** 31, **Lucky numbers:** 1. **Favourable direction:** West.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Exercise care in vocational affairs See to it that you do not displease your employer or superior in office. After a minor setback, your ventures and financial affairs will continue to prosper. Many will win promotions through timely hunches. **Good dates:** 1, 2 and 3. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** East and South.

M. B. RAMAN

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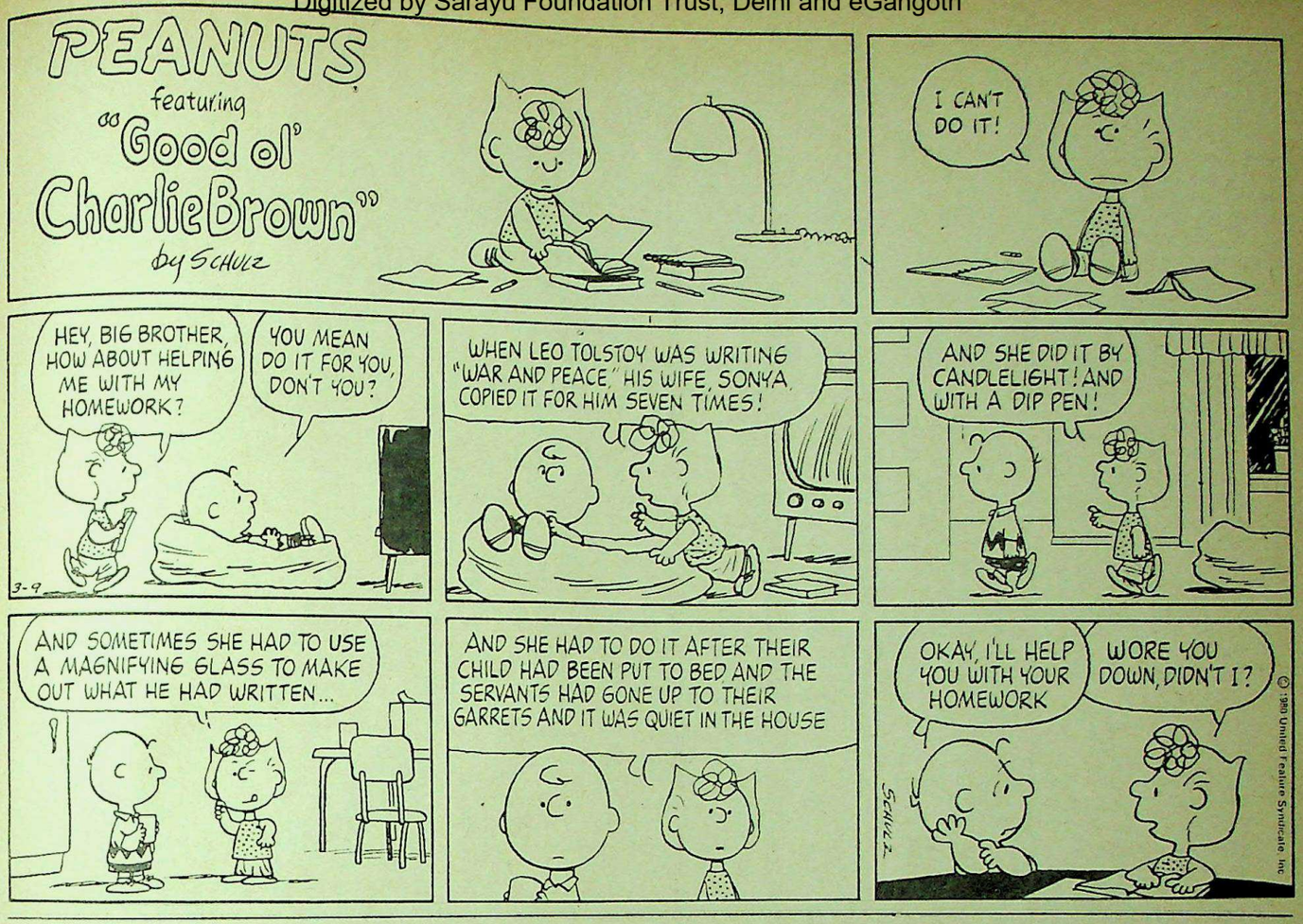

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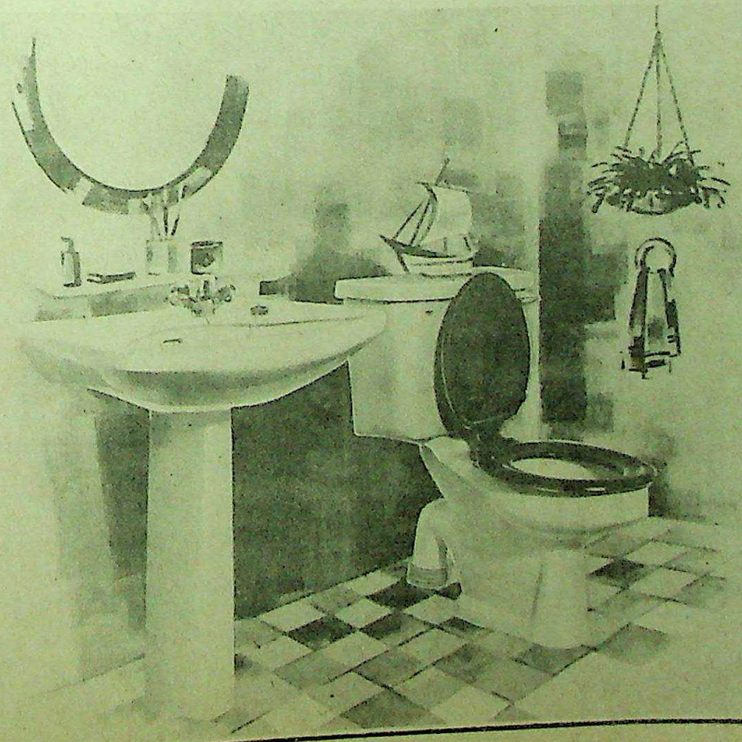

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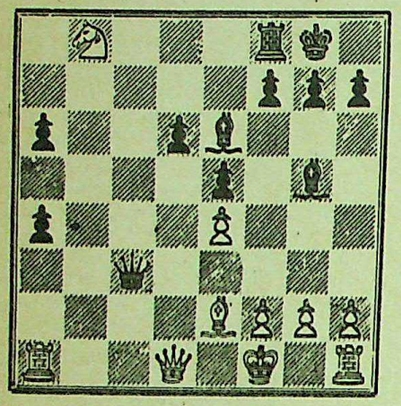
chess

Borik (Black)



Nunn (White) to move

Position after Black's 19th move

Accurate calculation

THE INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT held in Dortmund last spring proved to be yet another success for our most recent grandmaster John Nunn. John took third place with a score of 7½ out of 11, a point behind Georgadze (Soviet Union), the tournament winner, but one and a half points clear of the rest of the field which included Tony Miles. Admittedly, Dortmund was not one of Tony's better tournaments, but this can in no way detract from the merit of John's performance which, in conjunction with his consistently good play throughout the past year, must firmly establish him among the top three players in the country.

John's strength lies undoubtedly in his ability to calculate concrete variations with both depth and accuracy, and this makes him a very dangerous opponent when on the attack. But, as the following game shows, his accurate calculation can also be of great help to him in defence. Faced with a speculative but very dangerous rook sacrifice, John finds the right move at every turn and finally consolidates with his extra material.

White: Nunn. Black: Borik (W. Germany). Dortmund 1979. Sicilian Defence, Sveshnikov Variation.

1. P—K4, P—QB4; 2. N—KB3, N—QB3; 3. P—Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, N—B3; 5. N—QB3, P—K4; 6. N(4)—N5, P—Q3; 7. B—N5, P—QR3; 8. N—R3, P—N4; 9. N—Q5. John has been playing the piece sacrifice. **9. B x N, P x B; 10. N—Q5, P—B4; 11. B x P!?, P x B; 12. N x P** with success recently, but no doubt his opponent knew this and was well prepared to meet it.

9. . . B—K2; 10. B x N, B x B; 11. P—QB3, B—N4; 12. N—B2, R—QN1; Anticipating the thrust P—QR4, but still I prefer the simple 12. . . O—O.

13. P—QR4, P x P; 14. N(2)—N4! An important finesse. Now White has prospects of winning back both QRP's.

14. . . N x N; 15. N x N, O—O!? Black is virtually committed to this sacrifice, as he would otherwise lose his queenside pawns without compensation, eg, 15. . . Q—N3; 16. Q x RP+ B—Q2; 17. Q x P.

16. N—B6, Q—N3; 17. N x R, Q x NP! The only consistent follow-up. Now White must be careful.

18. B—K2! Not 18. B—Q3? Q x P+ 19. K—K2, B—N5+ 20. P—B3, R x N; 21. P x B, R—N7+ 22. K—B1, R—Q7; and Black has a winning attack.

18. . . Q x P+ 19. K—B1, B—K3; (DIAGRAM)

20. P—KR4! A winning move. On 20. . N x P Black still has excellent counterplay with 20. . . B—N6; 21. Q—N1, B—B7; 22. Q—R2, B—N6; and if 23. Q—R3, R—QB1; threatening . . B—B8!

20. . . B—R3; Now 20. . . B—N6 would be met by 21. R—KR3!

21. N x RP, P—R6; Still 21. . . B—N6 is met by 22. R—KR3!

22. P—N3, P—R7; 23. K—N2 With his king now secure White can easily exploit his extra rook.

23. . . B—Q7; 24. Q—R4, Q—N7; 25. N—B7, B—N6; 26. Q—N5, B—B6; 27. B—B4! B—Q5; 28. KR—KB1; Resigns. Black has run out of ammunition. If 28. . . B x B; 29. Q x B, B x BP then simply 30. R x RP.

Removal of the linchpin

White: Adorjan. Black: Portisch.
Hungarian Championship, 1976.
Sicilian Defence.

1. P—K4, P—QB4; 2. N—KB3, P—Q3; 3. P—Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, N—KB3; 5. N—QB3, P—QR3; 6. B—K2, P—K4; 7. N—N3, B—K2; 8. O—O, B—K3; 9. P—B4, Q—B2; 10. P—QR4, QN—Q2; 11. K—R1, O—O; 12. B—K3, P x P; 13. R x P, N—K4; 14. N—Q4, QR—Q1; 15. N—B5, B x N; 16. R x B, Q—B1; 17. Q—KB1, Q—K3; 18. R—Q1, R—B1; 19. B—Q4, B—Q1; 20. P—R3, R—B3; 21. B x N, P x B; 22. R—Q5, N x P; White resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THIS DEAL from the match between Israel and France in Lausanne was a worthy candidate for the Bois Brilliancy Prize.

Dealer, West. Game all.

	♠ Q J 5 ♥ A K 2 ♦ A 8 5 ♣ A K 10 5	
♠ K 8 7 6 4 ♥ 9 5 4 3 ♦ 10 9 ♣ Q 6	N W E S	♠ 10 9 3 2 ♥ J 8 7 6 ♦ K J ♣ 9 8 7
	♠ A ♥ Q 10 ♦ Q 7 6 4 3 2 ♣ J 4 3 2	

The French played in 3NT, but the Israeli pair bid to Six Diamonds as follows:

SOUTH	NORTH
	Fryd-
Shofel	rich
—	2NT
3♦	3NT
4NT	5♣
5♦	5NT
6♦	No

So far as I know, 4NT was Blackwood and the response indicated three Aces. West led ♦ 10.

The obvious play is to let the opponents win their trump trick, then try to drop the Queen of clubs in two rounds, with the ruffing finesse in spades as a second chance. If this comes off, one club can be discarded on the third heart and one on ♠ 2.

Shofel followed a stronger line. He went up with ♦ A, cashed ♠ A and took three rounds of hearts, discarding a club. He ruffed a spade, crossed to ♣ A, and ruffed dummy's last spade. Then he led a low diamond from hand, trusting the trumps to be 2-2. When East won the trick with ♦ K he had no good return.

The inference concerning the trump suit was reasonably safe, because West was unlikely to have led a bare 10 of diamonds. Such a lead is too likely to solve a problem for a declarer who may hold, for example, K J x x x x opposite A x x.

The declarer was unlucky, I feel, in the sense that any straightforward line of play – even the simple finesse in clubs – also wins the contract. Had the cards been differently divided, East holding ♣ Q x x, South's play might have made a bigger impression on the jury.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

THE ATTRACTIVE portrait of the Baoulé girl on this 10-centimes stamp from the Ivory Coast is typical of the designs chosen for French colonial issues during the 1930s. There were well over a thousand different stamps for the 24 colonies and because their face value was so low (a French centime was then worth only about one-fiftieth of a penny), the stamps could easily be included in cheap packets, so that they must have tempted many youngsters into becoming philatelists. The Ivory Coast series comprised 41 stamps, ranging from 1-centime to 20-francs, in four designs.

A PIECE of drill-weave tapestry similar to British sampler-work is featured on 4-kronor stamps recently added to the Swedish definitive series. Popular during the 18th and early 19th centuries, particularly as wall-hangings in Swedish farmhouses, the tapestries were large and elaborate, so that they were often included in the trousseaux of well-to-do farmers' daughters. The example on the stamp is from a tapestry woven in the southern province of Scania about 1860 and measuring about 9 metres by 2. Like most modern Swedish issues, the new stamps are intended for sale from rolls, not sheets, and so are perforate only on two edges.

C. W. HILL

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this india

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

MORADABAD: A Rampur citizen applied for two litres of kerosene to set his house ablaze and got the permit to do so. Mr Gian Singh narrated his story while talking to reporters on the malfunctioning of District Supply office, Rampur. He said he applied for the permit and the DSO, without reading the application, sanctioned it and the clerk prepared the permit. He said he had done so when the DSO had told him that he could get the kerosene not as fuel but for setting his house ablaze — *Northern India Patrika* (Ajai Mehrotra, Allahabad)

DELHI: The moderation committee of the department of commerce of Delhi university "moderated" the marks of candidates with the result that the daughter of a member of the committee became the topper. This case generated much heat when it was discussed for over two hours at a meeting of the academic council. What surprised and angered the council members was the fact that the topper in the M.Phil course of the commerce department, daughter of a reader of the department and member of the moderation committee, ended with more than 100 per cent marks. Apparently the marks were given in terms of points and the highest number which could be given was seven, but the moderation committee in its over-zealousness gave her more than seven points — *The Sunday Statesman* (A. Balaram, New Delhi)

HALEM: A man named Sasanka Sekhar Chakravarty, a vendor without licence of Biswanath Charali, was found selling so-called "Oxygen tablets" in a local market here at Rs 1.50 each prior to the day of solar eclipse. This was detected by Dr R. Das of Kauripathar state dispensary. He was handed over to the local police. The man was arrested and sent for trial according to police — *Assam Tribune* (Bubul Kumar Mahanta, Jorhat)

JAIPUR: A 62-year-old Rajput woman, Mrs Sona Kanwar, performed "Sati" on the funeral pyre of her husband on February 29 last at village Neemdi Kotharia in Nagpur district, according to a report. Mother of seven, the woman sat on the pyre taking the dead body of her husband Sugan Singh on her lap and lit the fire herself, repeating the age old Rajput tradition of "Sati" in presence of hundreds of villagers. Police got the information only after everything was over. According to the report, people from distant villages are pouring in at the place, where she performed "Sati"—*Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Kajal Kumar Chakrabarty, Calcutta)

BANGALORE: A 15-year-old boy has been arrested by the city police for allegedly attempting to rape a 29-year-old housewife, his next door neighbour. Police said the boy, a high school drop-out entered the woman's house on March 5 disguising himself with a false beard, goggles and hand gloves. When the woman opened the door the boy allegedly told her that her husband had been admitted to a city hospital following an accident and he had gone there to escort her to the hospital. When the suspecting housewife closely questioned him the boy asked for a glass of water and then followed her to the kitchen and attempted to rape her, police added. Her scream brought in a neighbour who overpowered the boy. The boy had allegedly threatened the man with a kitchen knife. During the scuffle the false beard gave away and the woman was shocked to find he was none other than the next door boy, police said — *Indian Express* (Chandra Manoharan, Ootacamund)

india abroad

NEW DELHI: Soviet troops have brought their drinking habits to Afghanistan but found that the Muslim country has few liquor shops and fewer bars. Six burly Russian soldiers found a solution by knocking on the door of an Indian businessman's Kabul apartment and demanding refreshment with the help of their weapons, reported a foreign resident on his arrival at Delhi airport on February 29. Mr A. C. Rikhie, local finance manager of a West German drug firm, was so shaken he had no choice but to invite them in. The soldiers put down their assault rifles and quaffed beer, whiskey and cheese until 6.30 the next morning. A senior Indian diplomat, Mr H. K. Malhotra, was informed of Mr Rikhie's predicament during the night. Mr Malhotra called the Afghan police for help but was told no one was available to deal with the Russians—*The Times of India*

Illustration/Ahi Bhusan Malik

without comment

WHY should not Mr Charan Singh resign for the sake of unity. I am in no way less important than Charan Singh—Raj Narain

SO WHAT ? What difference has Mr Ram's exit made to the Party ? —Krishan Kant when asked if the Janata would split again.

THERE is no indication in the interim budget of reversing the policies which were followed by earlier Congress, Janata and Lok Dal Governments and which made the rich richer and poor poorer—Chitta Basu, Forward Block MP in the Lok Sabha

WE believe in spelling out what we mean; we don't hesitate in telling the people the facts—C. M. Stephen on the interim budget

THE average age for a politician to stay near Mrs Gandhi varies from one to two years while bureaucrats have lasted for more than ten years—*Onlooker*

THE ruling Party has no occupation at all except to hover around the Prime Minister...If Assam cannot be won over, can West Bengal be toppled or Keral tamed ? —Nikhil Chakravarty in *Mainstream*

BAHUGUNA did his bit the way many other Congress (I) leaders did to harness the Indira Gandhi wave—Mohammad Yunus

WE don't care if they like us or not. We intend to be respected throughout the world — Ronald Reagan

I DON'T know how to interpret India's reaction to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. All I can say is that you have a very long spoon to eat pooridge with the devil—John Myrdal quoted in *Debonair*

KISSING on the screen, even if projected naturally, cannot be taken as natural by Indian audiences, particularly Bengali ones —Sumitra Mukherjee, upcoming Bengali actress

IF I don't go to watch the matches, I will never get to see him —Kavita about her husband, Gundappa Vishwanath

FOR the first time, this supposedly left-wing magazine had an editor who had never been to a public school, who did not have a university degree and who actually trained as an editor—Bruce Page, quoted in *Newsweek*, on his appointment in 1978 as editor of *New Statesman*

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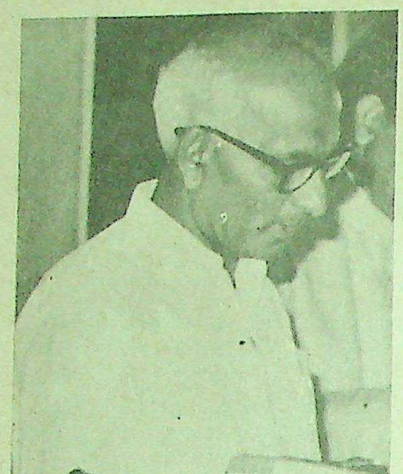
WHEREVER CAN BABUJI GO?

BABU Jagjivan Ram has kept everyone guessing ever since he quit the Janata Party. Will he join the Congress (I)? Or will he work for a broad-based forum of Congressmen opposed to Mrs Gandhi? It is learnt that Mrs Gandhi, without giving any positive commitments to Babuji, has indicated by certain actions that there is room for reconciliation between the two leaders. The Prime Minister's stand on the Jaguar deal (she said in the Lok Sabha that there was no question of an enquiry) is being taken by many as a concession to Babuji in a bid to win him over. After all, one of the most scathing attacks on the Jagur deal was mounted by Maneka Gandhi's *Surya*, apart from, of course, the irrepressible and highly innovative Mr Raj Narain.

But sources close to Babuji doubt whether he would join the ruling Party. Differences between him and Mrs Gandhi may be sorted out, but younger elements in the Party are unlikely to forget the past, they point out. According to some sources, Babuji may not at all join the Congress (I). He may instead try to bring his former CFD followers closer to the Congress (U) and wait for possible dissensions in the ruling Party to strengthen his forum of Congressmen. But such a plan appears impractical. Observers in Delhi however feel that when there is smoke, the possibilities of a fire cannot be immediately ruled out. For all we know, the ruling Party may be toying with the idea of offering the deputy-chairmanship of the Planning Commission to Babuji. This post is of Cabinet-rank. And the added advantage, from Mrs Gandhi's point of view, could be that Babuji would have to resign his Parliamentary seat. But there is a snag; it is said that Babuji may not be happy with deputy-chairmanship and may like to hold the post of chairman, which is normally held by the PM. Observers recall that before the elections Babuji had missed the Congress(I) bus by demanding much more than what the Party could offer.

Babuji had reportedly wanted the Party to ensure that he would be made the PM and that Mrs Gandhi would not contest the polls. Now too, observers feel, he is aiming too high.



Madhu Dandavate

UNPERSONED

HAS the Railway Board forgotten its Janata Minister? It seems so. Pressmen were astonished to find during a meeting with the Railway Minister, Kamalapati Tripathi, that while portraits of all Railway Ministers since 1947 were displayed on the wals of the conference room, Madhu Dandavate's portrait was conspicuously missing. When this was pointed out to the officials, they promised to make amends. But the question is whether it was a mistake or a deliberate omission.

SCOOT!

HOW should the Union Ministers set an example before the nation on saving petrol? By travelling in buses and scooters of course. This suggestion was made by one Cabinet Minister, who is known for his passion for police escorts, at the pre-budget meeting of the Union Cabinet. Needless to say, this suggestion was greeted by frowns rather than amusement.

SOMETIME IN DELHI

HOW has the Congress (U) leadership reacted to the reported move of bringing Babuji into the Party, in case he does not join th Congress (I)? The reaction is mixed. There is a big question mark about the possibility of Babuji carrying on his anti-Mrs Gandhi line for too long. One move is to make him the president of AICC(U) in place of Devaraj Urs. Another is to create a post of chairman of the Congress (U) Parliamentary Party, thereby ensuring that Urs's presidentship and Y. B. Chavan's post as the leader of the CPP (U) are not affected. But the move to make him the Party president has irked some leaders. Karan Singh was heard telling some leaders of the Congress (U) at the Congress (U) Party headquarters at 3, Raisina Road the other day: "Why should we keep on borrowing presidents? Are there no dynamic leaders within the Party?" The reference was obviously to Devaraj Urs having become the Party chief after he crossed over from the Congress (I). Meanwhile, the functioning of the AICC(U) office has become such that a lot of Partymen are in agreement with Dr Karan Singh's letter to Urs that either the AICC(U) office be shifted to Bangalore or the president should shift his moorings to Delhi.

PRESS IGNORED

A TYPICAL example of the couldn't care-less attitude of the Government towards the Press was witnessed recently. The budgets of 10 state Governments were presented to Parliament but no copies were made available to the Press. The Press Information Bureau which usually distributes such documents to reporters jocularly remarked that journalists could go to each "embassy or high commission" of the state Governments in Delhi and collect the copies themselves. The problem could have been easily resolved by giving the reporters a bunch of only 10 sheets of paper. The budget division of the Union Finance Ministry had beautifully summed up the main features of each state's budget on one sheet. But then nobody wanted to do this simple job.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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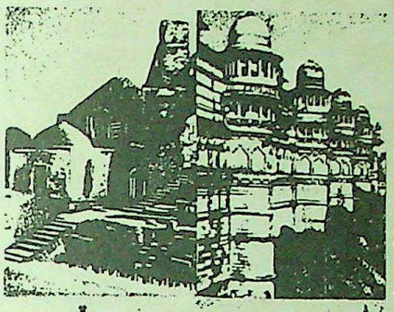
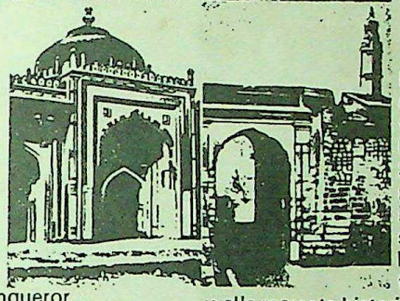
The crumbled walls sing ballads of glory.

The past is rich with legends of chivalry. The loves and lives of a colourful page of history beckon from a multitude of monuments. The pomp and pageantry of a bygone era comes alive.





An echo in the mountains

Kangra Fort. Surrounded on three sides by steep cliffs, overlooking two rivers. A stronghold of the Katoch Rajas from prehistoric times, this fort lured many a conqueror. From Mahmud Gazni, Hindu Rajas, Jehangir, the British and finally the Sikhs. From Kangra, Pathankot and the Kashmir Valley are easily accessible.

Citadels of valour

Chittorgarh. The citadel of Rajput valour resounds with legends of bravery and sacrifice. Tales of Suttee and Jwahar. The palace of heroic Padmini. The shrine of the poetess Mirabai.

Lohagarh. North-west of Bharatpur stands this impregnable fortress with unique defences.

Seventy-six bastions of victory

Golconda. Built by the Raja of Warangal, it passed on to the Bahmani kings and on to the Qutab Sahi regime. It finally fell to Aurangzeb after a 10 year siege. The fort is on the outskirts of the city of Hyderabad.

A sultan's pride

Srirangapatna. Built in the 13th century, this fort was scene for the last battle of Tipu Sultan. Built on a river island, the fort is washed on both sides, by the river Kaveri. Colourful frescoes on battered walls, recreate historic battle scenes.

In the time of Buddha

Rajgir. This fort built by Ajatasatru, a contemporary of Buddha, is the country's oldest extant fort. The ruined fortifications of the ancient capital of Magadh can be seen here.

Heir to the sun

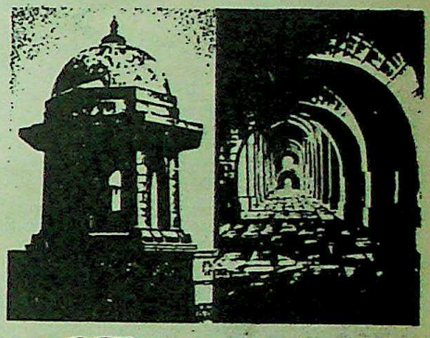
Rohtasgarh. Built by the son of the legendary Raja Harish Chandra, who is reputed to have descended from the sun. In 1857, it was a rallying base for freedom fighters.

Silent songs of splendour

Mandu. Stronghold of the 10th century Raja Bhoj. Scene for the eternal love story of Baz Bahadur and the Hindu singer Roopmati.

Pratapgarh. Shivaji's stronghold for many years, it was the scene of his fateful encounter with the Bijapur general Afzal Khan.

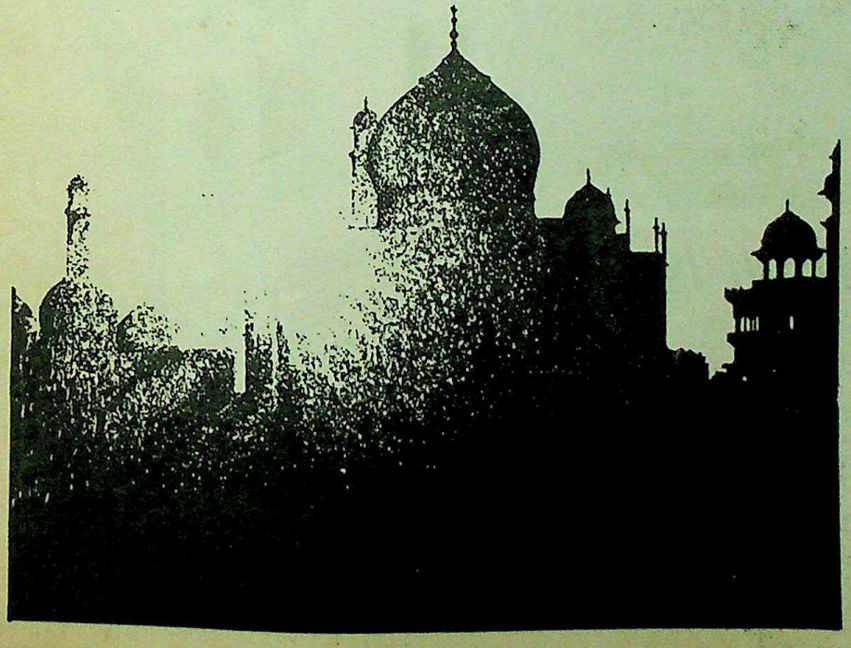
Come to a holiday with history. You'll find a lot more to extend your stay.



Indian Airlines has a network of 62 destinations in India plus 7 in the six neighbouring countries. Convenient connections wing you on your way in a matter of hours.

Indian Airlines

Contact your travel agent and plan your holiday today.



The Lure of the Past

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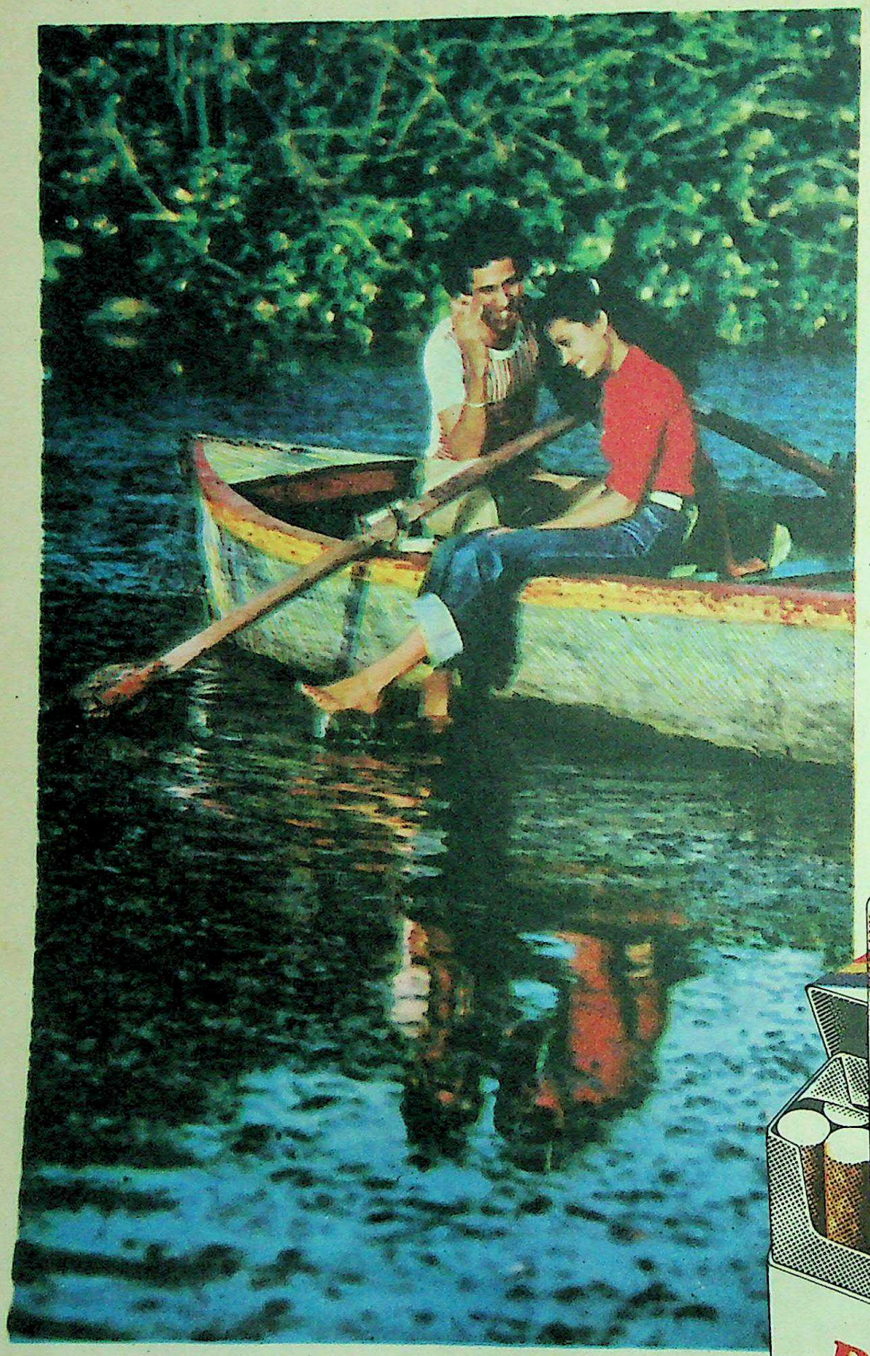
Moments of happiness...



Make your happy moments happier with Regent King. An exclusive blend of choice Virginia tobaccos especially selected for rich flavour, smoothness and subtle taste. Brought to you in an exclusive pack.

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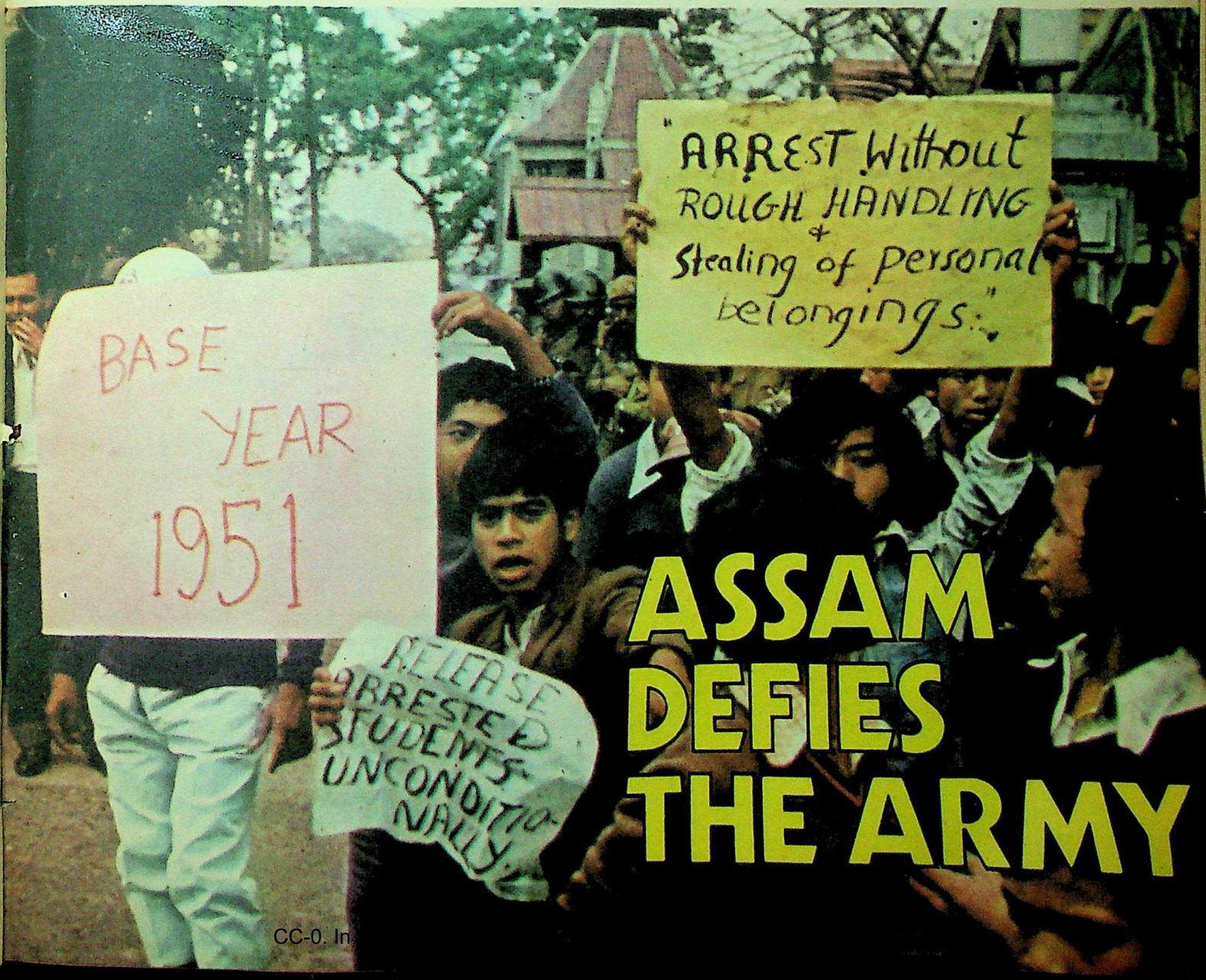
SUNDAY

THE FULL STORY OF MOSHE DAYAN'S SECRET TRIP TO INDIA



ASSAM DEFIES THE ARMY

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Sue Daley of New York sipped Maaza Mango...

Her spontaneous response: "Thums Up"

That's right! Your favourite Limca; Maaza Mango and soon, Thums Up, are hot export items. These brands are produced and marketed by franchises in Kuwait, the U.A.E., Tanzania, Mauritius, Nigeria, Singapore and New York. Ten more plants are at the final stages of negotiations.

Thums Up makes India another country to export soft drink franchises – after the U.S.A.

If New York said 'Thums Up' to Maaza, what will it say to Thums Up?

The Vice-President of India, Shri M. Hidayatullah, confers an Award for Excellence in Export on the makers of Thums Up.

TRIKAYA PE 7190

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Dyanora TV. It shows how far you've progressed...

Programmed to your lifestyle with unmatched sophisticated features—the result of Dyanora's advanced research.

Take a look at a Dyanora TV. It is indeed a picture of sophistication that's reflected in its impeccable performance.

You'll see a picture that is demonstrably superior: clearer, sharper, more precise.

You'll also hear sound that far exceeds your expectation. Pure sound that's reproduced through true hi-fi speakers and amplifiers.

Research that has led to sophistication

This heavenly marriage of picture and sound has resulted from Dyanora's rich experience in solid state TV technology.

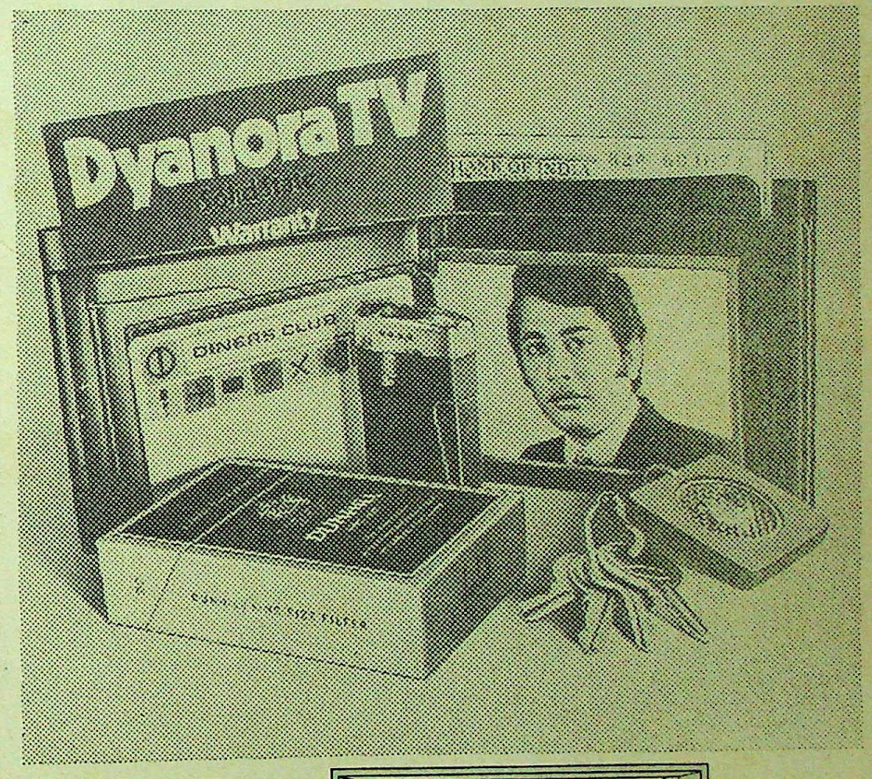
Dyanora today possesses India's most advanced TV research laboratory—where you'll find some of the top talents of the country at work.

This combination is what has made Dyanora so successful in bringing forth virtually every single significant TV innovation in the country in recent years.

Like India's first solid state TV with ICs. The first multi-channel solid state TV. The first TV with a true hi-fi sound. The first TV with facilities for playing a tape-recorder or a record player through it. The first TV-cum-stereo system. The list goes on.

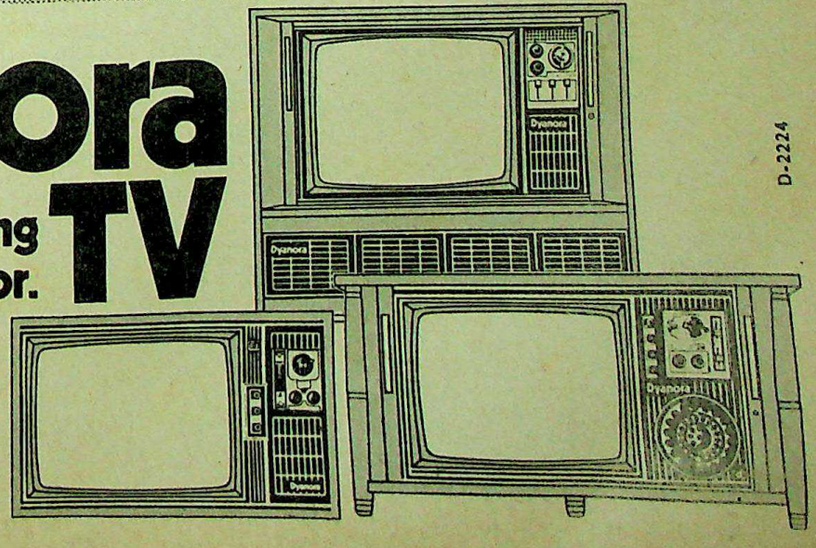
Today in the Dyanora range, you'll find such advanced features as push button input selection, separate Bass and Treble tone controls, lockable shutters, neon light indicator, 90 mm dual cone speakers, moulded plastic rear cover, to mention only a few. What's more, all the models have 12-channel tuners.

That's Dyanora for you, matched to your progress, tuned to your lifestyle...Dyanora, the other name for your progress.



Dyanora TV

Yes, it's got everything you're looking for.



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Open a tin Pour out a world of taste

Rich & Creamy

makes the tasty difference

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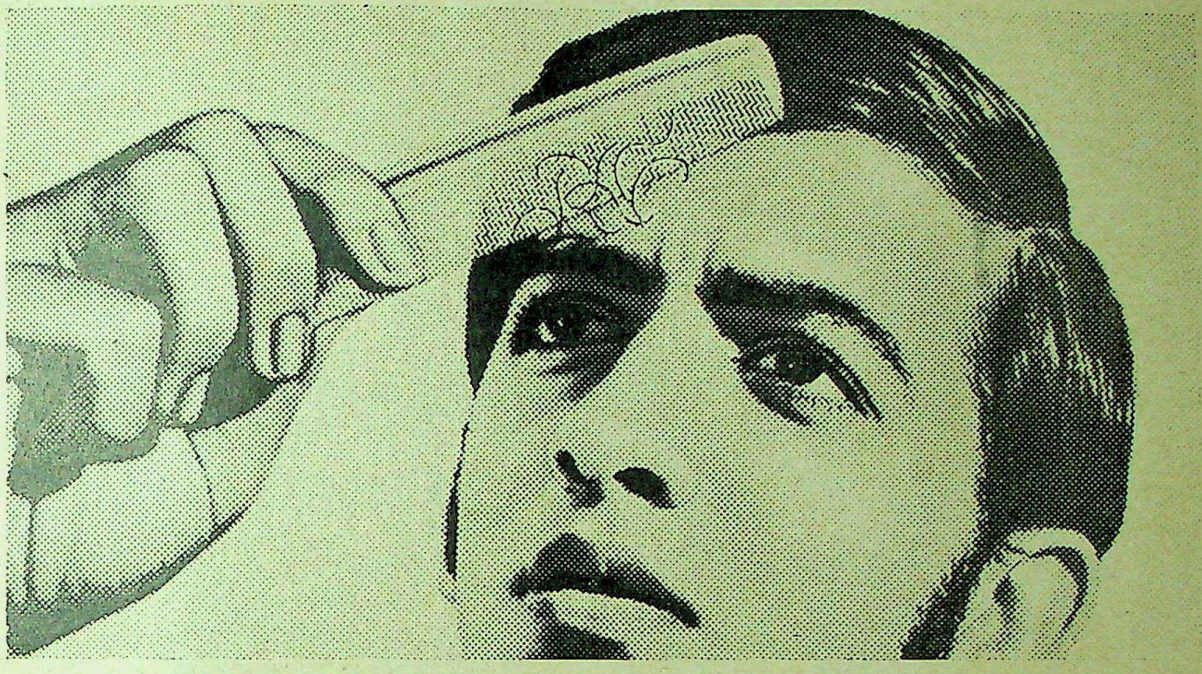
If you were born before 1949 read this advertisement fully



9 out of 10 people over the age of 30 have falling hair ...and don't know it!

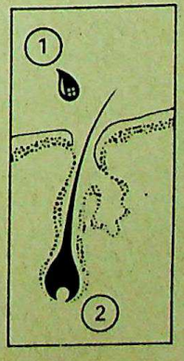
If you are one of the 9, start today with Pure Silvikrin

Run your comb vigorously through your hair. If any tell-tale hair comes off on your comb, you suffer from falling hair. The time to act is now, before thinning hair shows up in your mirror. Lack of vital amino-acids, the hair's natural food, leads to thinning, unhealthy, hair. Unless this deficiency is corrected, hair will continue to fall. That is why you need to start using Pure Silvikrin today.

What Pure Silvikrin contains.

1. A drop of Pure Silvikrin magnified.

Pure Silvikrin is a unique combination of 17 amino-acids that make up the body's supply of natural hair requirements.



How Pure Silvikrin works.

2. Penetrating action.

Thoroughly massage Pure Silvikrin into the scalp, to help it reach hair roots. Pure Silvikrin's scientifically researched formula now goes into action, bringing hair growth back to its healthy condition. Use Pure Silvikrin every day, twice a day, until your hair returns to normal.

Pure Silvikrin

OBM/4351/A

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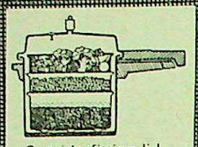
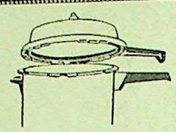
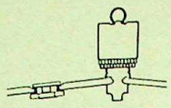
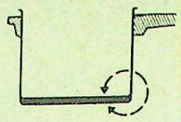
8 reasons why...

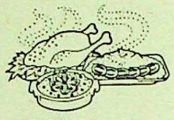

Outside-fitting lid for maximum cooking space.


Designed for easy use and safety.

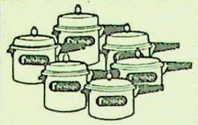

Unique safety-device ensures total safety.


Sturdy body and extra thick base for durability.

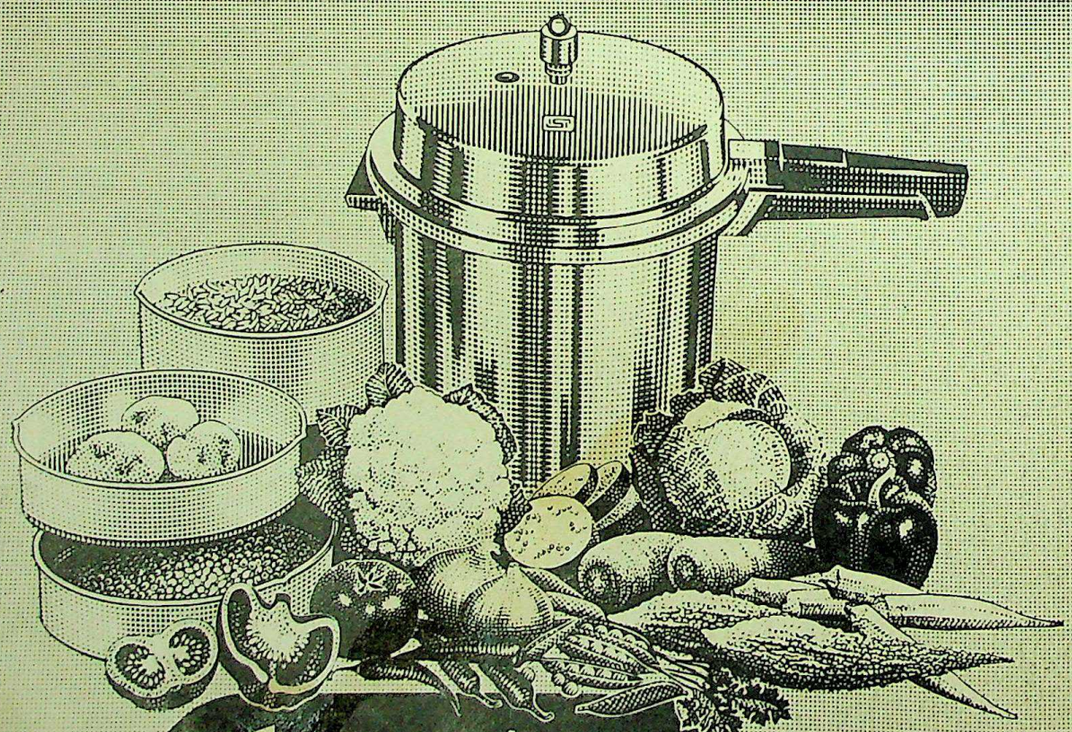
ISI Prestige
Quality guaranteed by I.S.I. Mark.


Retains flavour and nutritive value of food.

Service centres all over the country.


A range of sizes from 4 to 12 litres.

India's first pressure cooker is still India's most widely used pressure cooker



Prestige

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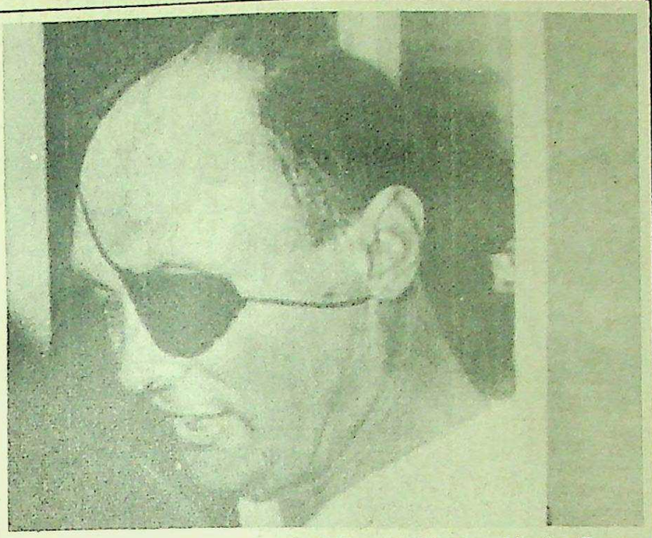
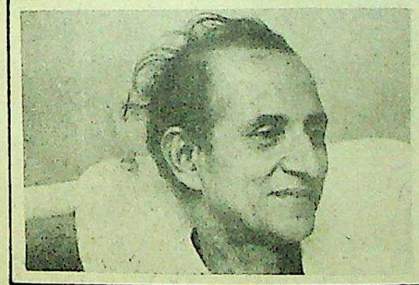
SUNDAY VOLUME 7
ISSUE 43
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

April 27, 1980



Why did the former Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Dayan come on a secret visit to India and meet Morarji Desai? Was he on a mysterious Mossad mission? If so, what role is the Israeli intelligence agency playing in international affairs?

With the talks between student leaders and the Centre on the issue of 'foreigners' having failed again, Assam entered a phase of widespread protests and disturbances. Although curfew was enforced and the state declared a "disturbed area", authority seemed to be non-existent; both the army and police seemed helpless in dealing with the picketers and demonstrators. Work in government offices came to a complete standstill. On-the-spot report on the developments.



Nepal's first-ever referendum will decide a vital and relevant political issue — the choice between multi-Party democracy and the present Partyless panchayat system. An exclusive analysis of the country's political options.

On April 7, three villages were brutally destroyed as a result of police violence in the subdivisional town of Islampur in West Dinajpur. Two people died, several were injured, and property worth an estimated Rs two million was damaged. Now, only charred huts remain along with the rubble and ashes while the people live on whatever they can salvage.

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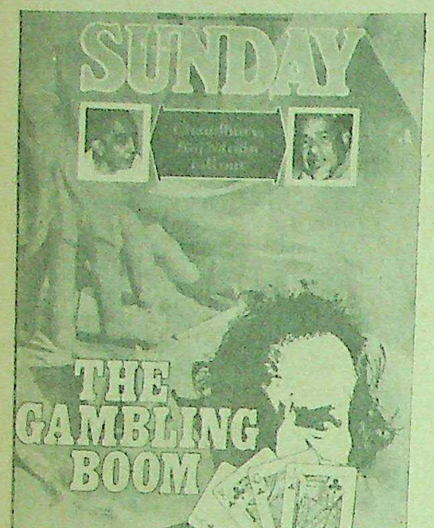

Gambling with fate

THE report on "The gambling boom" (March 30) was excellent. Even some political leaders are known to be matka-lovers. The game flourishes in and around Ranchi, where it is the cause of starvation in many families. The government should forthwith stop all games of fortune, including state lotteries.
Kameshwar Prasad Singh, Ranchi.

IT IS a pity that gambling has become the pet profession all over the country. Surprisingly, even games and sports have been converted into a form of gambling.
B. B. Chhetri, Siliguri.

YOUR correspondents have reported only on unlicensed gambling. There is another form of gambling which is licensed, namely, horse racing which attracts a large number of people. Races are held in a few centres throughout the year. "Intervenue betting", makes it possible to register out-station bets.
B. V. Jayaram, Madras.

Laying men bare

I WAS disappointed to find an Indian magazine mimicking the more barbarous ways of American magazines by featuring photographs of nude women (February 17). It is the great emphasis placed on women as sex objects which is partially responsible for their treatment as second-class citizens and lack of development in many spheres of human endeavour. If you insist on treating women as objects, please do the same for men.
Harriet Orcutt, Washington D. C., USA.

Criticising 'weakly'

KHUSHWANT SINGH has given his version of what he did to *The Illustrated Weekly of India* during his stewardship ("How the Illustrated became a weekly habit", March 30), not realising that he hurts others very badly while praising himself. I would have ignored his self-flattery, if he had not made mean, malicious and malodorous allegations against me. Before I reply in detail to his criticisms, I wish to remind him that a great 100-year-old national institution such as the *Weekly* does not depend on any individual for its prestige, popularity and even profitability. It has immense resources, inexhaustible goodwill throughout the country and solid infrastructure which can keep it going. Any number of Khushwant Singhs can't demolish it. In fact, his departure has made no difference at all to its increasing influence and circulation. If anything, it has regained its lost relevance and respectability.

Khushwant Singh is known to be allergic to facts and figures. Naturally he tells lies clumsily. Also he has never enjoyed a reputation for restraint, mellowness and sweet reasonableness. Like his political mentors he seems to believe that one is either for or against him. No wonder that often his statements are as inelegant and intemperate as his assessments are immature and ungenerous.

He says that J. C. Jain wanted him to succeed C. R. Mandy as editor and he was gracious enough to let me continue as assistant editor. I don't know. But I do know that Mandy had earlier rejected him as assistant editor. Perhaps Khushwant Singh tried to grab the editorship by the back-door. Anyway, even if Jain had okayed Khushwant's appointment, Mandy would have vetoed it. Mandy never had a high opinion of Khushwant Singh's ability or integrity.

Khushwant says that I "was young and totally inexperienced", the implication being that I didn't deserve to be elevated to editorship. On April 16, 1969. I received a letter from him bearing the Swarthmore (USA) postmark, in which he says: "I have always thought and said you did a damn good job Indianising the *Weekly*. I wish I had the confidence to match your ability. I will try—and seek your guidance all the time." No comment.

He refers to the bad shape in which I left the *Weekly*. Actually it was in my time that the magazine first crossed the 100,000 mark early in 1964. Again in October-November 1964 it reached the peak figure of 130,000. Even Khushwant can't challenge these figures which form part of the *Weekly* record.

I had to eschew politics because it had been the policy of the management to let the *Weekly* remain strictly non-political. I don't know why Khushwant indecently refers to my art collection which is no collection at all! Just four paintings and two drawings, purchased at various exhibitions though at reduced prices. By the way marked prices in nine out of 10 cases, being highly inflated, are negotiable. Anyway, as Khushwant did, I didn't receive crates of Scotch whiskey from diplomats, hoteliers, filmstars and affluent contributors. One evening he kept his guests waiting till a West German diplomat arrived with a few bottles of Scotch! Khushwant also projected painters, sculptors, musicians, dancers and godmen. Only his assessments were all wrong: That's why, most of his proteges, unlike mine, have faded out.

Khushwant refers to the photographs of myself and my family. Here also he has slipped. The pictures in question were published with my article on the Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakotipeetham—and and not on Sai Baba. These pictures were relevant because they related to my various personal discussions with His Holiness. After all I photograph better than the Sardarji!

He refers to the circumstances of my relinquishment of the editorship of the *Weekly*. I didn't go as he did and having gone I didn't resort to the sort of sob stuff in the bazar he did just to evoke public sympathy. Khushwant Singh's hostility to me dates from his *Delhi Letter* days. When his copy became exasperatingly substandard I decided to sack him. Amita Malik took over from him. Later Chanchal Sarkar replaced her. The trouble with Khushwant is that he fancies himself to be a journalist. He is not: He can't tell 8 pt from 10 pt. He is not even a writer. In my opinion he is just a hack, but a very noisy one.
A. S. Raman, Madras.

Advertising images

I READ with increasing distaste the article "Do our ads tell lies?" (March 9). I say 'distaste' not because Mr Ashish Rajadhyaksha has given free rein to such patently irresponsible criticism of Indian advertising but distaste at the manner in which his superficial sock-it-to-the-gallery piece has tried to assume the pretentions of an investigative feature on the advertising business. It is fairly obvious that the writer had a very definite intention to project a deleterious image of advertising and with the well-known mixture of innuendoes, quotes out of context and blatant half-truths (lies?) he has suc-

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ceeded in putting out a story which is not only irritating but also very, very mischievous.

However, even if we ignore the saucy and the banal, it beats me why a magazine from the well-known Ananda Bazar group should be party to such a grossly lopsided assessment.

For example, is Indian advertising restricted to the mere promotion of textiles, cosmetics and other personality products? Look at a newspaper today and even the most addleheaded or myopic among us would not fail to see the enormous shift in advertising emphasis from commodity and personality products to consumer durables, industrial and intermediate products, assorted services and corporate image promotions. These have not even received passing mention even though they probably account for at least 40 to 50 per cent of Indian advertising appropriations today.

You will concede that it is impossible to answer the issues raised in your article unless each one is taken up chapter and verse and I think you owe it to your readers and to the advertising profession to publish a rejoinder from someone who has a fuller understanding of the business and is less obsessed with the propagation of a sensational and much too superficial point of view.

Neville Gomes, Adroit Advertising & Marketing Pvt Ltd, Bombay

OF COURSE, our advertising tells lies, some of it. A lot of advertising is badly conceived; it is dishonest, it is unproductive, it is in bad taste. A lot is also artistically excellent, well crafted, productive, socially aware. But when a person picks out a few bad ads and builds a thesis round them, I really must protest.

The Regent price reduction ad and Csango deserve condemnation and have received it. But to pick on the Simplex and Piramal textile ads, and the Poise deodorant illustration and the reference to pure virgin wool to suggest that Indian advertisers are obsessed with sexual innuendo really begs the question.

Totally laughable is the citation of Britannia's 'Delite' and 'Snax' advertisements as sexually overt (*Promotion*, the advertising journal, had blandly and without comment reproduced the article from *Manushi*. It was clear to the reader that the two young women who authored the article had gone into desperate postures in their search for the sexist element in the ads they surveyed.)

In fact, one could extend Mr Rajadhyaksha's arguments to their ridiculous logical conclusion and state that Indian journalists lie. And as a corollary, our journalists are sex maniacs because they smoke cigarettes.

Manohar Benegal, Bombay.

Indian Anglo Indians

THE articles "Anglo-Indians: The forgotten community" and "Torn between two Worlds" (March 16) are not only misleading and irrevelant but also factually incorrect.

I have been making an in-depth study for the past ten years of the origin, habits and movements of my community to complete a short history of the Anglo-Indians since Indian independence. I find that the community is very much alive and about, having entered with its customary vigour into the mainstream of Indian life.

Essentially a city-bred and urban-oriented minority, it is now not unusual to see us spread right out, trying our capable hands at anything and living happily alongside other communities. In the course of my travels I met an Anglo-Indian family settled in a village called Bluff near Mysore. Typical of the community's penchant for innovation, they had built a huge ranch-type house themselves surrounded by fields of lush sugarcane. In another village called Aripalayam in Kerala I was but recently the guest of an old doctor friend, who, besides his practice in the nearby town, spends his weekends as a gentleman farmer on sprawling acres of paddy and coconut groves. Along with him about half a dozen Anglo-Indian families have also settled down to a life of agricultural affluence and contentment.

Why then this sudden pessimism, characteristic of the so-called Domiciled European fringe of the community whom we were certain had withered away in the first decade of independence unable to survive as Anglo-Indians because of its racial schizophrenia? Why then was the better soldier, General Noronha, not mentioned or the Fernandezs in the Indian Olympic teams? Was it not significant and clear that even after the 1935 G.O.I. Act defining the community and giving it its first official name, the Association of the community called itself 'Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European...' as though keeping two separate identities, one of European (which the Act stated) and the other of British descent? We are grateful to Frank Anthony who stopped this utter nonsense so far as the All India Association was concerned.

That Bengal does consider itself to be India is a well-known fallacy. But I just cannot imagine that the Anglo-Indians of Calcutta could mistake themselves for India. Not long ago the community crossed the two-lakh mark. (Let me assure your readers this excludes the Feringhees of Kerala.) In Tamil Nadu alone over 6 000 Anglo-Indian boys and girls are studying in nearly 45 Anglo-Indian schools. The Constitutional guarantees of nominations to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies continue for another ten years till 1990 (not 1981 as reported).

Sigbert Rozario, Madras.

A shame

THE article "Women against rape" (March 30) by Olga Tellis and Saumitra Banerjee is an eye-opener. It is a shame that even after 33 years of freedom, Indian women do not enjoy proper security. Daily incidents of rape at metropolitan centres like Delhi and Bombay are evidence of this. The very fact that the incidence of rape should provoke a mass movement is shocking. The I.P.C. should be amended to make rape punishable by death.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Howrah.

Staged before

I WENT through the article "Advocate of a poor theatre" (March 30) by Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, on the celebrated Polish theatre figure, Jerzy Grotowski. I would like to add that poor theatre is not new to India, and that a student of Grotowski Mallek Douk had two years ago staged a play at Madras. The play, which was held at the museum theatre featured local actors, except for the female artiste, Denise Jeanmonad, who is a Swiss. Mallek Douk is teaching yoga in Switzerland, and is due to arrive in India sometime in June this year.

Arni Narendran, Bombay.

Plane trouble

MISS Arati Mukherjee's "Ordeal by Aeroflot" (March 30) narrated by Tooshar Pandit made sorry reading. I have a similar story to narrate. Back in January 1978 my newlywed daughter was flying by Aeroflot to London to join her husband there. Her plane stopped at Moscow and left her stranded there on the pretext that there was no seat available on the flight to London. It was a very cold night, and the temperature plummeted to freezing point. Yet my daughter was herded into a waiting plane, parked on the runway.

J. Bhattacharjee, Gauhati.

Save Christianity

THANK you for highlighting the injustice and cruelty perpetrated on the Church ("Another Churchman murdered", March 23). Christianity, which came to India nearly 2,000 years ago is as intrinsic a part of our society as Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism are. Christianity has also played a useful role in the uplift of the downtrodden and social integration. The killing of anyone not willing to be converted to Hinduism is communal fanaticism, precisely what Gandhiji sacrificed his life to eradicate.

Joy Joseph, Nagaland.

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COVER STORY

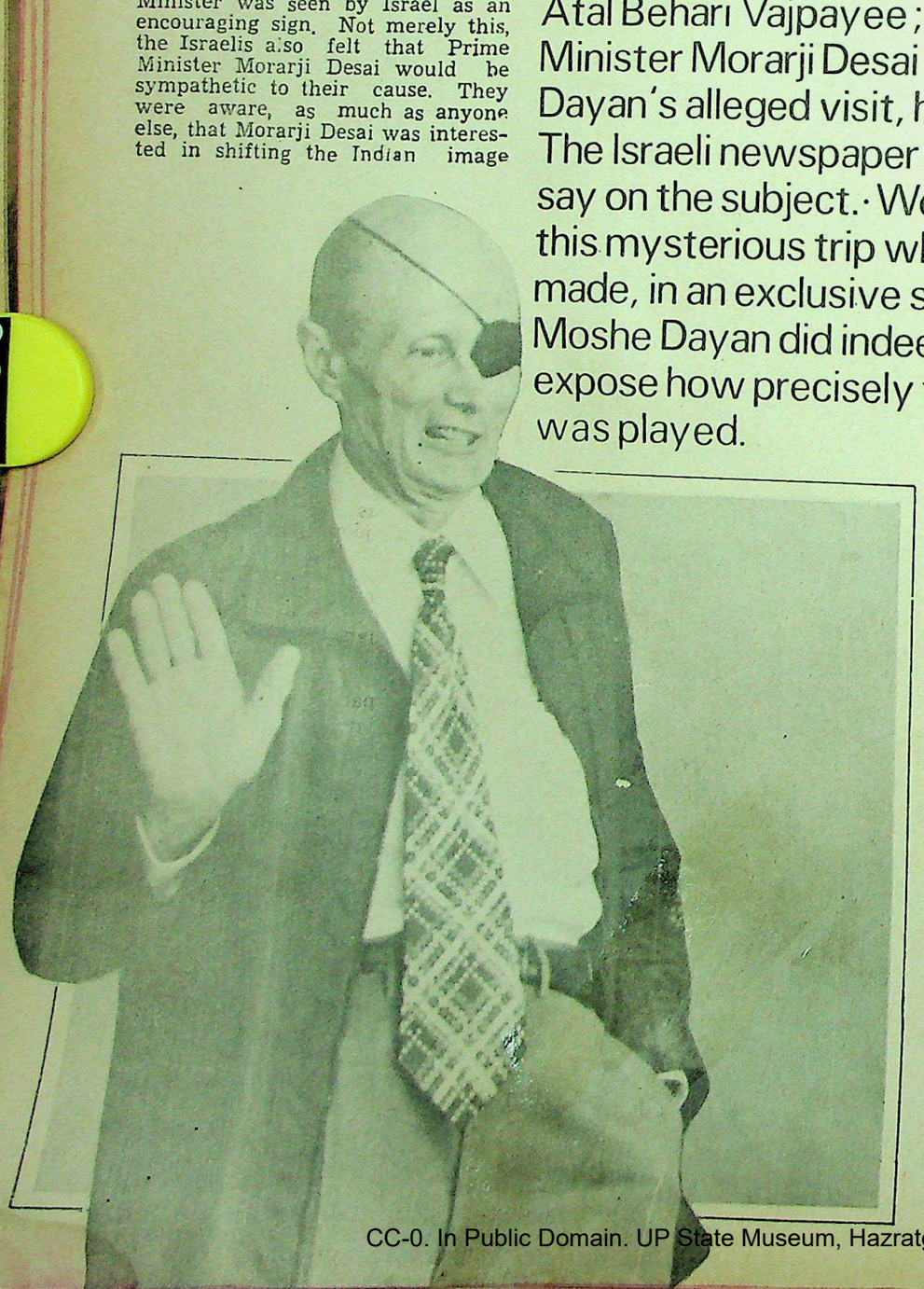
THE FULL STORY OF MOSHE DAYAN'S SECRET TRIP TO INDIA

By M. J. AKBAR

An Israeli newspaper first published the news that Moshe Dayan had visited India secretly during the Janata rule. This was denied in India by the ex-Foreign Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee; when former Prime Minister Morarji Desai was asked about Dayan's alleged visit, he refused to comment. The Israeli newspaper had nothing more to say on the subject. We publish details about this mysterious trip which Moshe Dayan made, in an exclusive story. We confirm that Moshe Dayan did indeed make the trip, and we expose how precisely the whole game was played.

THE coming of the Janata Party to power in 1977 meant many things to many people. Israel saw it as an opportunity to fulfil a long-awaited dream : full recognition by India. This would be an important and dramatic diplomatic coup by Israel if it was ever achieved. India had been in the forefront, in various international bodies, of promoting the Arab, and particularly the Palestinian, cause. And India's voice, despite the efforts to muffle it, still carried weight at the United Nations, and more so in the non-aligned movement.

The appointment of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee as the Foreign Minister was seen by Israel as an encouraging sign. Not merely this, the Israelis also felt that Prime Minister Morarji Desai would be sympathetic to their cause. They were aware, as much as anyone else, that Morarji Desai was interested in shifting the Indian image away from the strong pro-Russian colour it had acquired after 1971. The fact that the former Jana Sangh formed such an important power group in the new framework also pleased the Israelis. The Jana Sangh's active championship of Israel against the Arabs had been music to Israeli ears all through these years when Israel has been an outcast in India.



Though we do not have full diplomatic relations with Israel, Israel has been allowed by the Government of India to maintain a presence in our country, mainly to facilitate the transfer of such Jews as may want to migrate to Israel. The Israelis maintain a consulate in Bombay. The Israeli consul general began active lobbying to obtain full recognition for his country, and in this he was helped a great deal by the Americans, who, quite expectedly, showed special interest in this Israeli effort. Anything which took India away from the non-aligned bloc, and brought the nation closer to the American sphere of influence, naturally would find favour with Washington.

The Israeli consul general actually met both Morarji Desai and

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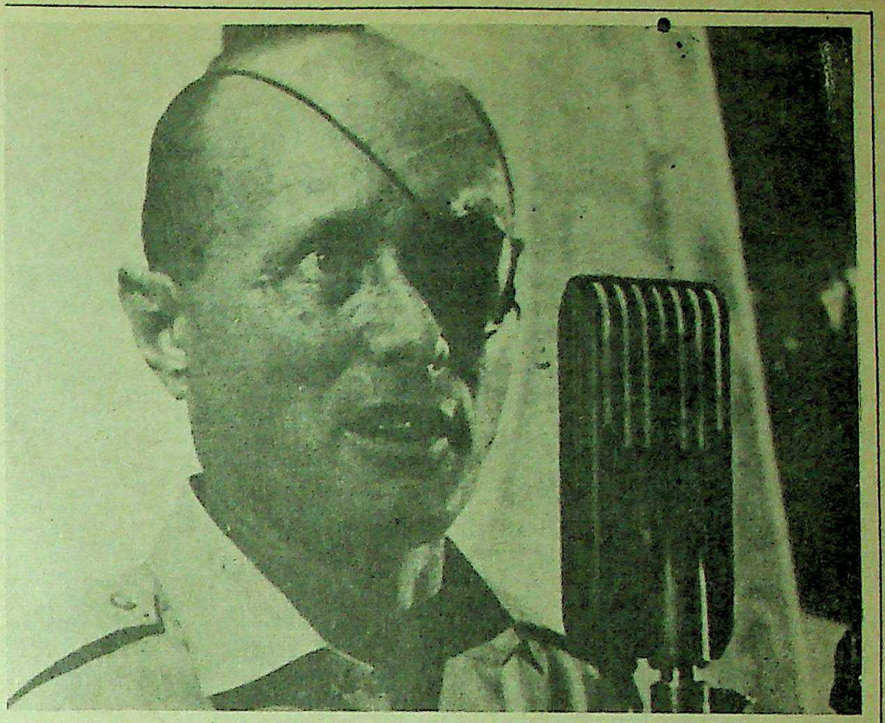
Foreign Minister Vajpayee to persuade them to give Israel full recognition. But both told him that this was not possible, for both practical and policy reasons. To begin with, the Government of India could not change its Arab policy overnight. And the risk of alienating the oil-producing Arab nations was simply not yet worth taking. But the Israeli consul general did not give up. He then played a high card. He sent word that General Moshe Dayan, then Israel's Foreign Minister, would like to pay a visit to India.

The initial reaction of both Prime Minister Desai and Foreign Minister Vajpayee was negative. They said this was impossible. But the Israelis went on making this request, through their friends and directly. At last, Morarji Desai and Atal Behari Vajpayee gave in. The formula worked out was this : Moshe Dayan would come as a private citizen, using a different name, and he should be disguised well enough to avoid being recognised. The Israeli consulate in Bombay and two top Indian security officials made all the arrangements for Moshe Dayan's secret and dramatic trip to India.

AND so Moshe Dayan came to India. He arrived by a regular carrier, with a false passport. He was wearing some make-up and he had taken off his famous and identifiable eye-patch; instead, to hide his blind eye, he was wearing dark glasses. He was accompanied by two Israeli security personnel. They landed in Bombay and were put up in a hotel. An air force plane came from Delhi to pick them up; the air force people had no idea who their distinguished looking passengers going to Delhi were.

They stayed for four days in Delhi at a private residence. Prime Minister Morarji Desai and Foreign Minister Vajpayee both went to see him, but separately. They went without fuss, as if they were dropping in to visit the person at whose house Dayan was staying. Desai went twice to see Dayan; Vajpayee also went twice. Other than Desai, Vajpayee and the two Indians from security, no other Indian was aware of Dayan's secret visit. Normal security personnel had, of course, been posted around the house in which Moshe Dayan was staying, but they had no idea whom they were guarding. Not even Vajpayee's deputy, Samarendra Kundu, who was the Minister of State for External Affairs, nor the Foreign Secretary Jagat Mehta, were aware of the visit.

Both Desai and Vajpayee made India's position vis a vis Israel clear. They said that their Government had some sympathy for Israel's position, but it had greater sympathy for the Palestinians and the Arabs. They told Dayan that durable peace in West Asia could only come about if a peaceful and amicable settlement of the Palestinian question could be reached between the Arabs and the Israelis. They assured Dayan that India would try and impress upon the nations of West Asia that if Israel agreed to settle the Palestinian question through talks, they should give up their slogans of war and allow Israel to coexist peacefully. India would welcome any effort at a peaceful settlement of the complicated problem. Desai and Vajpayee disappointed Dayan by saying that India could not allow an Israeli embassy to start functioning in Delhi at the moment.



Moshe Dayan on the west bank of the Suez Canal, with Major General Ariel Sharon who has his head bandaged.

General Moshe Dayan did not use all his time in Delhi only in discussions. He went out sightseeing and shopping too. He shopped in Connaught Place, and saw some of the historic landmarks of old and new Delhi. He even took a trip to some villages in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. And then, after four days in Delhi under the Prime Ministership of Morarji Desai and the Foreign Ministership of Atal Behari Vajpayee, General Moshe Dayan went away, as quietly as he came. Leaving behind another chapter in the kind of secret diplomacy which Henry Kissinger made so famous. And leaving behind many questions in the minds of India's traditional friends. ■

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ASSAM DEFIES THE ARMY

By SUBIR ROY

WHEN at 3.30 p.m. on April 18, the Gauhati High Court partially lifted its earlier stay order on the Assam Government notification declaring the state a disturbed area, a new and more dramatic phase of the nine-month-old movement in the state against "foreign nationals" began. Almost immediately at the state's administrative headquarters in Dishpur near Gauhati, the Governor, the chief secretary and army and police officials went into a huddle which lasted several hours. What they were putting the finishing touches to would become known the next day, but what they were hoping for was a conciliatory move on the part of the Gana Sangram Parishad which was leading the agitation. The Parishad leaders were simultaneously meeting in Gauhati to determine its future course of action after Mrs Gandhi's futile visit to Assam on April 12 in search of a solution. The news from the meeting was bad: No, the oil blockade would not be lifted. Instead, a new phase of the agitation would begin on April 22. The die was cast.

At midnight, April 18-19, the Governor, Mr L. P. Singh, issued the Assam Preventive Detention Ordinance under which 48 leaders of the Movement were immediately arrested, prominent among them being Mr Bhrigu Phukan, General Secretary of the All-Assam Students' Union (AASU), Mr Nibaran Bora of the Purbanchaliya Lok Parishad and Mr Atul Bora, Convenor of the Gana Sangram Parishad. An equally prominent leader who evaded arrest and went underground was Mr Prafulla Mahanta, President of AASU.

Devi Prasad Sinha

"We will give our blood, not our oil"—these were the words on a Chandmari street that a student, Dulal Sharma, had actually written with his blood: he had slashed his chest with a blade

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Even as the arrests were proceeding from door to door, another crucial drama unfolded at the pipeline headquarters of Oil India Limited in Narengi near Gauhati. Narengi had become a symbol of Assam's protest. Round-the-clock pickets from December 27 last year had stopped the flow of crude from Narengi to the Barauni refinery. The 2,000-odd picketers who had almost completed that night's vigil there suddenly found that the crunch had finally come. The Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup arrived with a formidable force and asked them to disperse. They saw that this time the Government meant business and the fact that most of the picketers that night were from outlying villages clinched the issue for the Sangram Parishad volunteers. The picketers gave themselves up, Narengi was "cleared" and the army posted at the township.

The first indication that residents of Gauhati got of the impending curfew was when at around 4 a.m. vehicles with loudspeakers went round parts of the city announcing the imposition of an indefinite curfew in the city from 5 a.m. It was not as if everyone was in the dark. The people taking part in the movement knew all about it and so did junior magistrates who were preparing themselves for all manner of curfew duty. Even the more knowledgeable shopkeepers told some of their important patrons the previous evening: "Buy up today, tomorrow we will be closed." As the day broke on the city, cooled and washed by overnight monsoon rain, some areas witnessed a flag-march by the army. As for the police posses posted at important intersections, there was not much evidence of patrolling or Shops were closed in most areas, except Sillpukhuri, Chandmari and Ujanbazar. The police would ask a shopkeeper to pull down his shutters and immediately after they left the boys would ask them to pull them up. People began to come out of their houses and form little clusters. Those first few trickles would finally become a torrent.

The nine o'clock news over AIR announced that the blockade at Narengi was over. So symbolic and emotive had the blockade become that soon the mood began to grow sullen. People could be heard saying: "If the curfew could be broken (earlier in December) in Nowgong and Nalbari then why can't we do same here?" In less than an hour a veritable groundswell had developed. The cry was, "Let us go to Narengi" —which was where all roads led to, eventually. The processions started in little groups and, on approaching their destination, became massive. Everyone was being exhorted to come out of his house.

By 11.30 a.m. two lakh people had poured into the Bamuni Maidan area and were proceeding towards the industrial estate. In the industrial estate there was a police picket of about 30, midway between the two gates. Processions poured in through both and soon the logistics of the situation became clear. The police picket was beseiged. And what was more significant was that with the police were the DC, Additional DC and SP of Kamrup. Only the personal car of the Additional District Commissioner was in sight, not even a wireless van. Thirty scared policemen and the top brass of the city administration were surrounded by a sea of humanity. It would have been impossible to rescue them. Slogans rent the air and soon a verbal battle began between the Sangram Parishad leaders deputed to control the crowds and the officers. They demanded the lifting of the curfew and the withdrawal of the "black" ordinance. "Arrest all of us", the leaders said, pointing to the masses. The DC, Mr Kamaleswar Bora, a benign, balding, middle-aged man, was at his wit's end. Withdrawing the Preventive Detention Ordinance was beyond his powers. But he would lift the curfew if the people behaved in a disciplined manner and did not try to break the cordon and go on to Narengi. At 12.30 p.m. with the aid of a public address system, the DC told the crowds around him that the curfew had been lifted. The movement leaders present with the DC went along to his office where the formal order lifting the curfew was passed.

The news was greeted with resounding cheers in the streets. Gana Sangram Parishad volunteers commandeered an auto-rickshaw and went around announcing over a loudspeaker that the curfew had been lifted and, more important, no crude was flowing out of Narengi. Shops slowly reopened. As evening descended, groups at street corners discussed the day's happenings exactly as they do after a soccer match. Even after clearing the pumping station at Narengi, crude could not be sent out because right up the line to the wellhead Oil India employees refused to work. A combination of incredible administrative ineptitude, a spontaneous resentment and the ability to keep the movement peaceful gave the indigenous Assamese a victory and boosted their morale. The administration's nose was bloodied and someone would have to pay a price.

That very night the Sangram Parishad announced a fresh agitation from April 22 which was wider in its scope than previous phases. After oil it was now the turn of bamboos, jute, timber and plywood. These would not be allowed to leave Assam. Other than the routine picketing of state and Central Government offices, there would be a "cycle march" in the villages on April 29 to popularise the movement. A "martial sound" would be given on April 30 by rickshaws, cars and anything that came in handy. May 1st would be "peace and harmony" day when everyone would wear white badges and hoist white flags. A call was also given to surrender all government awards by the recipients in Assam. A beginning has already been made in this with the return of a *tamrapatra*.

After the previous day's victory, April 20, Sunday saw Gauhati city in a relaxed mood. The mood in the state secretariat, Janata Bhavan's control room was different. There was intense preparation which found expression in a massive police mobilisation at the Chandmari crossing on the way to Narengi. The day's agitation programme set the pace for the next few days' activity. From around 10 am groups would begin to emerge from neighbourhoods and slowly coalesce into a procession as the Chandmari crossing approached. At the crossing the procession would be stopped by a strong police cordon. There the people would squat on the road about 200 yards from the cordon and shout slogans intermittently. A good kilometre before the crossing, the road would be lined every few yards by little tables with jugs of water and plastic glasses for the thirsty. Crowds would gather on the roads. The atmosphere would vary between one of festivity and confusion, with an undercurrent of tension.

On Sunday about 30,000 joined the procession. At around 2.30 pm people in small groups went right up to the police cordon and squatted before it. Since this constituted a violation of section 144 Cr PC, which was in force, they courted arrest. The voluntary arrests were conducted in a manner characteristic of the agitation: Walk in through a notional barrier, put your name down to record your arrest and walk out the other way. It was all very peaceful, and organised.

But the peace and the calm was not in evidence the next day, April 21. For some reason people that day refused to end the squatting or court arrest. The tension grew. People, mostly young men and women, sat on the road and shouted slogans, refusing to budge. The Deputy Commissioner pleaded with them for over an hour, but to no effect. The battle lines were clearly drawn. There were three cordons of policemen at distances of a few yards from each other. Most of them were CRP and junior Assam Police officials. Between the second and the last cordons a big thick coil of barbed wire lay stretched out. The helmeted policemen, with cane shields, lathis and leg guards were backed up by teargas squads.

First came the arrest of those sitting right in front, mostly women, but many more remained in the first few rows. Those arrested were put in buses which were parked behind the police cordons. From the bus windows the agitators flayed arms and shouted slogans, creating the false impression that the police had their tormenters right behind them. A harassed DC went up and down the cordons trying to argue but was met with a volley of slogans and abuses. A young man who had been arrested while talking to two of us and had managed to sneak behind the police lines, literally broke down with emotion and cried. His friends took him away.

The police finally went on the offensive at 2.45 pm. First there were the teargas shells. People had come well prepared with gunny-bags and drums of water. They tried to grab

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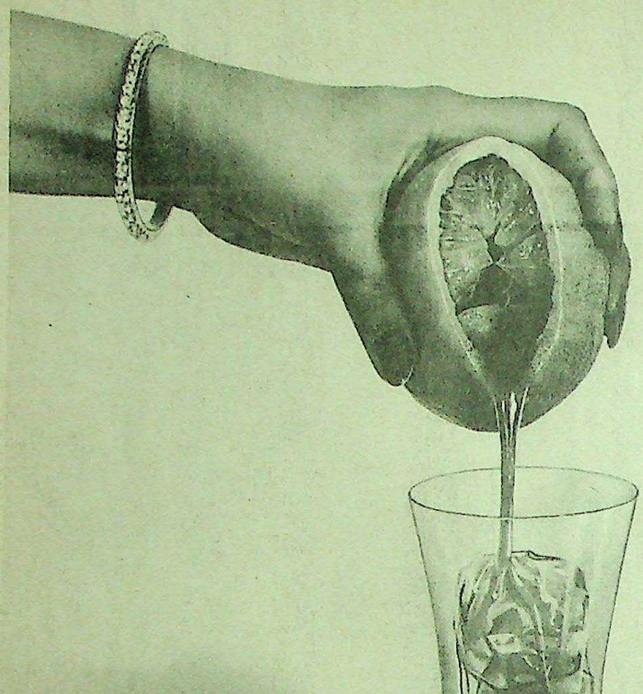
Kissan's fruity freshness



Kissan squashes & crushes

Kissan Orange Squash
Le Monde Selection
Gold Medallist

Nature's most refreshing fruits give their juice to Kissan squashes & crushes. Automatically processed and blended to make a balanced concentrate, Kissan squashes & crushes need no further sweeteners and dissolve instantly in soda or water to make a delicious drink at the ring of a doorbell. Drink all the year round, pick of-the-season freshness of plump oranges, tangy limes and lemons, pineapples, grapes. Kissan squashes & crushes are now available in bigger bottles which give you 20 ml. more at the very same price.

THE KISSAN RANGE

Squashes: Lemon, Orange, Mango, Lime Juice Cordial, Lemon Barley Water.

Crushes: Grape, Pineapple, Orange.

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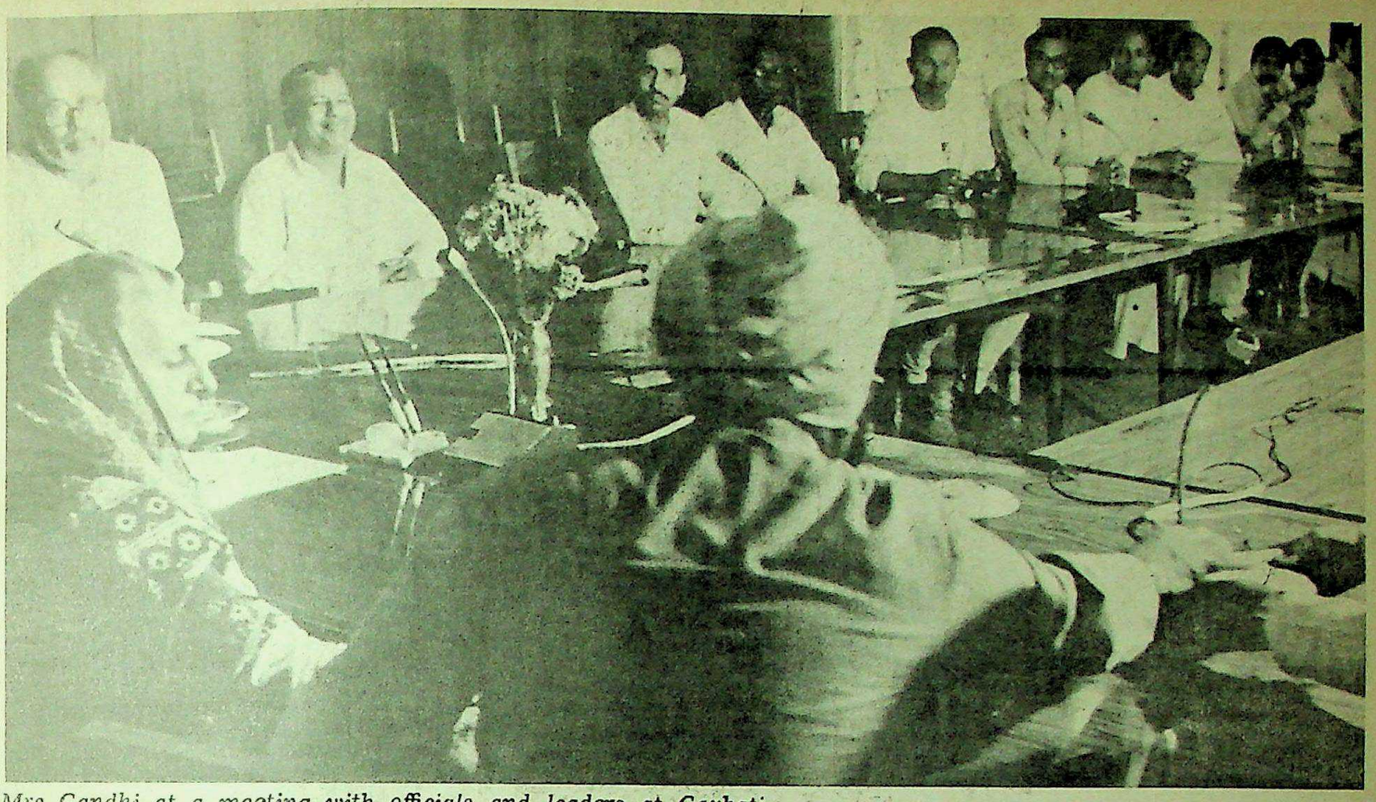
Raghu Rai



Mrs Gandhi at a meeting with officials and leaders at Gauhati

the flying shells with their gunny-bags and throw them in the water. In a scene reminiscent of the disturbances on Calcutta's College Street in 1966-67, some students threw a couple of shells back at the police, breaking the ranks of one of the cordons. The policemen ran to the streetside houses for water to splash on their eyes. The lathi charge was quite severe. People stumbled over each other and ran for cover. Some tripped and fell.

Those who got the worst of the blows were women. Stones were pelted back at the police. Some ran into the wayside AIR compound with the police hot on their heels. Later a home guard at the AIR gate said that the lathis fell on him also. In minutes the area was turned into a battlefield with the police making forays into side streets from which small groups tried to creep up behind them. It was almost over in 15 minutes. Chappals and crumpled *durees* on which people had squatted lay in the dust on the road. A thorny bush by the roadside had acquired the look of an unique collage. Little bits of women's shawls of different weave and design, had stuck to it. Then came the wail of ambulances to carry the wounded away. Two boys who were badly injured and unable to get up from the road were carried back to a police jeep and administered first aid by policemen. A sub-inspector of the Assam Police showed me a hand bruised by a brick-bat and said: "We took the lead in chasing the boys to save them from the CRP lathis and they abused us". The day's tally was 150 injured, 27 hospitalised, and three seriously injured. Many of the injured were women. No police official could say how many teargas shells were fired.

As we made a detour and emerged on the other side we saw a remarkable phalanx of lawyers in immaculate black and white, proceed stiffly in a row to join the demonstration. We came back at 8.30 pm to find people walking up in single file, "courting arrest", turning back and some rejoining the queue in an endless roundabout. A weary additional DC whom I had seen there in the afternoon, kept mumbling, "Let's stop it here", as government officials took down names of those arrested by candlelight at a table in the middle of the road.

April 22 was the first day of the renewed agitation with picketing before Government and public sector offices. The monsoon was in full swing. At the Chandmari crossing people squatted peacefully on both sides of the road. And in the afternoon they quietly courted arrest. The Government headquarters at Dishpur were deserted and in the rain they wore a sepulchral look. At 10.30 the office of the Press Information Bureau (PIB) had a lock hanging from it. Only the top brass had arrived. There were no pickets before these offices. A dry wit said there was no need for the picketing here, "for it was going on right in the homes": The women wouldn't let the men go to work.

In fact, a notable feature of the Assam agitation has been the active role women are playing in it. The percentage of women in demonstrations ranges between 60 and 30. Middle-aged householders in private conversation appear perplexed while they agree with the basic aims of the movement. They are nevertheless mystined by the zeall with which their womenfolk have plunged into a public agitation as never before. Various explanations are offered. In any peaceful agitation a large number of women reduces the chances of violence on either side. Another theory is that in a very strongly male-dominated society, women have seized a chance to come into their own and work shoulder to shoulder with men.

While the public agitation has been peaceful after the Nalbari riots, there is always an undercurrent of tension. A state Congress (I) leader and MLA, Mr Hiteswar Saikia, was allegedly the target of a grenade attack in which a man died. One version says that the grenade exploded in his hand, another that he died of a bullet wound. The car in which he was travelling to his hometown Nazira, in Sibsagar district has been seized for forensic examination. In another incident a CPI (M) MLA was attacked with lathis in Goalpara district. He had been organising resistance to the movement. Minority leaders have a hounded look about them. The threatening phone calls keep coming, they say.

The hardening of stands on both sides and the intensification of the agitation has its real genesis in the unsuccessful meeting Mrs Gandhi had with the Gana Sangram Parishad and AASU leaders in Gauhati on April 12. Her meeting with them was very short and lasted not more than 20 minutes. Not much of negotiation could have gone on, anyway. At the Press conference in Gauhati she gave the impression of being very firm on 1971. In a subsequent clarification she said that she did not discuss any cut-off year. A possible fall-out of the fiasco of April 19 may be the quick arrival of Mr H. C. Sarin as the principal adviser to the Governor. Will he repeat in Assam what he achieved in Telengana? ■

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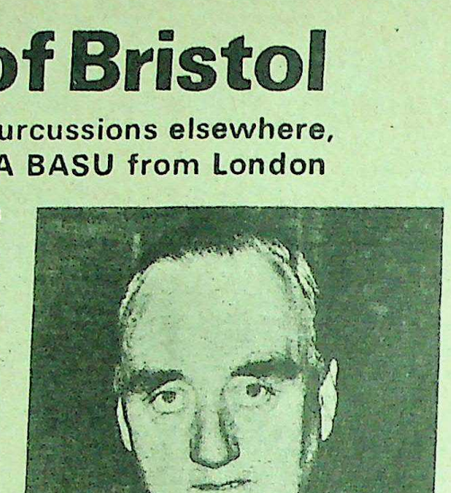
Battle of Bristol

There could be repurcussions elsewhere, reports TARAPADA BASU from London

THE battle of Bristol was fought on April 2, three weeks before the first anniversary of Blair Peach's death, allegedly caused by police brutality at Southall during an anti-racial demonstration on April 23 last year. The flare-up occurred after a police raid on the Black and White cafe located on Bristol's Grosvenor Road at 3.20 pm. The violent reaction of youngsters, mostly born in Britain of West Indian or mixed parentage, to the raiding policemen ignited the battle and within minutes the situation was out of control. The police abandoned the scene at 7 pm. An orgy of rioting and looting in the area followed : 19 policemen and policewomen were injured, police patrol cars were overturned and burned and buildings including a bank set on fire. It was not until 11 p.m. the first policeman entered the area and reinforcements could reach only at about midnight. Twenty-one people, including whites, were arrested and accused of looting. Home Secretary William Whitelaw immediately demanded a report from the police chief. In his emergency statement in the House of Commons on April 3 before MPs left for the Easter break, he said "all the evidence suggests that this was not in any sense a race-riot.

In the orgy of violence, a mob of about 200 pelted policemen with stones, bricks and bottles. Then the looters moved in. Twenty-one people were arrested for offences involving stolen property and public disorder. Losses are estimated at more than one million pounds. Eyewitness reports confirmed what the chief constable or chief of Bristol Police, Brian Weigh, has said: the majority of those arrested were whites. These reports also confirmed that police provocation was apparent. At the cafe 14 policemen entered to question only four persons. Soon after, hundreds of blacks gathered outside the cafe. By then the police force had swelled to 80 men with police dogs and another 400 policemen were on standby call. The proprietor of the cafe had not been charged with any offence and had been remanded on bail. Yet the police force went in to deal with alleged offences under the Drugs Act and Licensing Act, according to police chief Weigh. He added : "We do these operations from time to time. They are routine. There were not too many policemen in the raid but local people objected to the presence of police there."

Rightwing Conservative MPs including members of the Home Affairs committee have urged the Home Secretary to sack Weigh as they believe he was "seriously at fault in allowing the creation in effect of a temporary 'no-go area' at the height of the disturbances". Polls conducted for a television programme revealed on April 10 that a deep distrust of the police exists among the people in some parts of the country, particularly south London. Hostility towards the police was clearly reflected from replies to questions put to 220 people of West Indian origin in Brixton of Greater London after the Bristol episode. In its coverpage picture captioned "Bristol—latest" London's satirical weekly *Private Eye* dated April 11 published a picture of a line of policemen with one of them purportedly saying "Eeny Meeny," the second, "Mino Mo", the third "Catch a nigger by his toe" and the fourth "If he hollers, run like hell !" Labour MP Arthur Palmer who went to Bristol to see the extent of damage in the area within his constituency said, "I have always been aware of the tension under the surface in this area. This was a confrontation between black youths and the authority rather than a fight between black and whites. I think the police are in a cleft stick. They may be criticised for raiding this cafe but if they had ignored it, they would have come under attack from the white population. Much of the rundown character of the area is due to the policies of local authorities. Council flats house a large number of black families who find themselves next door to other black families who pay less for their accommodation in the old terraces."



William Whitelaw, Home Secretary

BUT the area has no race problems. The violence on April 2 was directed against the police," said one old resident of the area who has been here since the Thirties. Reverend Keith Kinler, an Anglican priest in the area said : "It was clear the needs of a significant minority in the community had been too long neglected". He added "there is acute unemployment and poverty. People here feel the pressure of frustration, despair, anger and hassles". Mr Weigh defended his decision to pull his men out for four hours because : "The situation could have caused serious injury to police and innocent bystanders after it became so ugly and violent". He further added : "If the local people think we let them down, well, I understand their feelings. But we had to take this decision in the best interests of everyone."

In the absence of the police the area was virtually turned into "no-go area" and the looters from within the area and outside did their devastating jobs thoroughly for four hours. But the police claimed that it was not made into "a no-go area" as a policy. Racial Equality Commission chairman David Lane who visited the area said : "We are extremely sad this has happened. An inquiry might be helpful. I want to get more action. There has been too much apathy on the part of the nation. What happened in Bristol could happen elsewhere in the country".

In London, police, social workers, and community relations specialists believe that widespread disorder could occur. Person or persons responsible for the death of Blair Peach in Southall have not yet been brought to book though the incident occurred over a year ago. A walk is being organised on April 27 to help the cause of anti-racialism for which Blair Peach gave his life in Southall. The report of the unofficial committee of enquiry established by the National Council for Civil Liberties to investigate Peach's death on April 23, 1979 was published on April 22.

A community liaison police officer said: "We are keeping our fingers crossed that the Bristol riots won't be repeated in London. We know from past experience that one incident can trigger off fairly major trouble". Since April 5, there is reported to be a growing rift between the Conservative Government and some leading members of the Asian and black communities over the Home Secretary's decision to drop five

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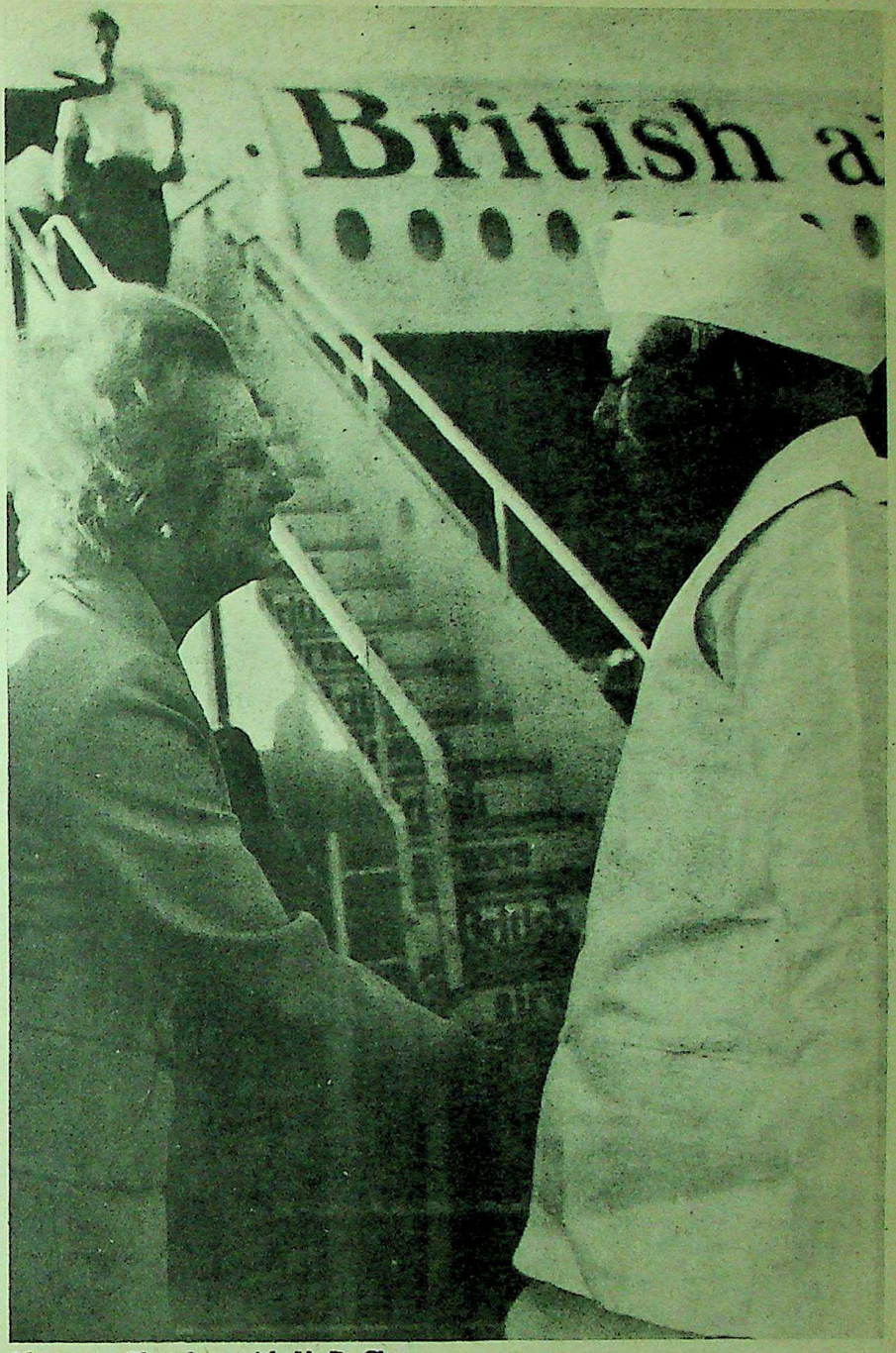
members of the Commission for Racial Equality. Four of them are coloured and the fifth is Miss Gwen Rickus, who has not been as critical of the Government's immigration policies as her four nonwhite colleagues. Some of the immigrant leaders have openly declared, "We have decided no other Asian or black will sit on the Commission. Anyone who does so will be treated like a leper in our community".

But there are others who are hoping to be nominated by the Home Secretary, Commission's chairman David Lane thought some of the reactions of the immigrant leaders were premature and overplayed. He hoped that Home Secretary Whitelaw would appoint "an equivalent number of black and Asian commissioners who will be just as committed to the cause of racial justice as my five retiring colleagues to whose work I wish to pay tribute." Mr Lane, a former Conservative MP from Cambridge who was appointed chairman of the Commission by a past Labour Government has been as critical of Conservative policies on some issues as his dropped colleagues have been. Those dropped did not ask for their 'retirement'. Mr Lane is therefore having difficulties in explaining the action of the Home Secretary and to justify his own position as he was appointed before them.

On April 8 Pakistan-born barrister Kadri accused a High Court judge of racial bias and asked him to step down as chairman of a tribunal hearing charges against another coloured barrister. But after conferring in private with other tribunal members. Mr Justice Parker said he would continue and denied that he was racially prejudiced. The disciplinary tribunal was held by the senate of the Inns of court and the bar against 42-year-old Mr Rahasya Rudra Narayan who practises in Birmingham. He denied four charges of conduct unbecoming of a barrister and two of professional misconduct. Guyana-born Narayan had insisted on a public hearing and this is believed to be the first open trial of a barrister in 200 years. The hearing was frequently interrupted by about 100 demonstrators in the Grays Inn quadrangle who shouted "We object to Parker" and "Racist Parker out, out", Mr Kadri who is Narayan's counsel, said the charges arose out of a letter he wrote to the president of the Birmingham Law Society. This alleged that black prisoners were being denied their right to select barristers of their choice and that the attitude of some Birmingham solicitors sprang from "a racist philosophy."

The Easter holidays — from Friday April 4 to Monday April 7—ended with scores of arrests at seaside resorts and football matches. All police leave was cancelled and reinforcements were brought from nearby areas to seaside areas. Those who created disturbances and smashed shop windows and public property were described by the police as "traditional holiday mob" mostly from London. In one seaside resort alone, damage to shop windows and other properties totalled thousands of pounds and fines of about ten thousand pounds were imposed by a special court set up to deal with those arrested. Shopkeepers blamed the gangs who blamed the police who blamed the Civil Rights supporters. All these, however, did not get even a remotely racial interpretation, but Bristol stood out as an example of racial confrontation even though the Home Secretary and others maintained that it was not really "race riots."



Margaret Thatcher with Y. B. Chavan

Some Conservatives and Labourites may argue that a section of West Indian youth — estranged from their families—rejected approaches by the police in Bristol where it had been authoritatively claimed that good relations existed between the blacks and the police because these youths have "subculture with a substantial criminal fringe". So the police were not dealing with the black immigrants but "the irreconcilable worst group of those immigrants".

But the racist fringe of the British people and the police—several of them returned from Britain's former colonies—do not treat the coloured humanly or as equal to the white. But all these elements are a fair minority in contrast with the large majority of law-abiding fair-minded and liberal Britons. This contrasting picture of race relations in Britain is before the authorities, but those in vantage positions who hold differing attitudes should change notes and get together if they do not want to see a repetition of the battle of Bristol elsewhere. ■

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A colourless scheme

SAUMITRA BANERJEE reports from Delhi on the colour TV controversy

FOUR years ago, V. C. Shukla's proposal for the introduction of colour TV was turned down by Mrs Gandhi's Government. But the controversy started anew when in the beginning of March, the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Mr Vasant Sathe, declared while releasing a colour TV set developed by Weston, that : "Colour television is no luxury". Though people in the electronics industry argue in favour of the introduction of colour TV, its role in the overall development of the electronics industry, as it exists in India today, has to be assessed.

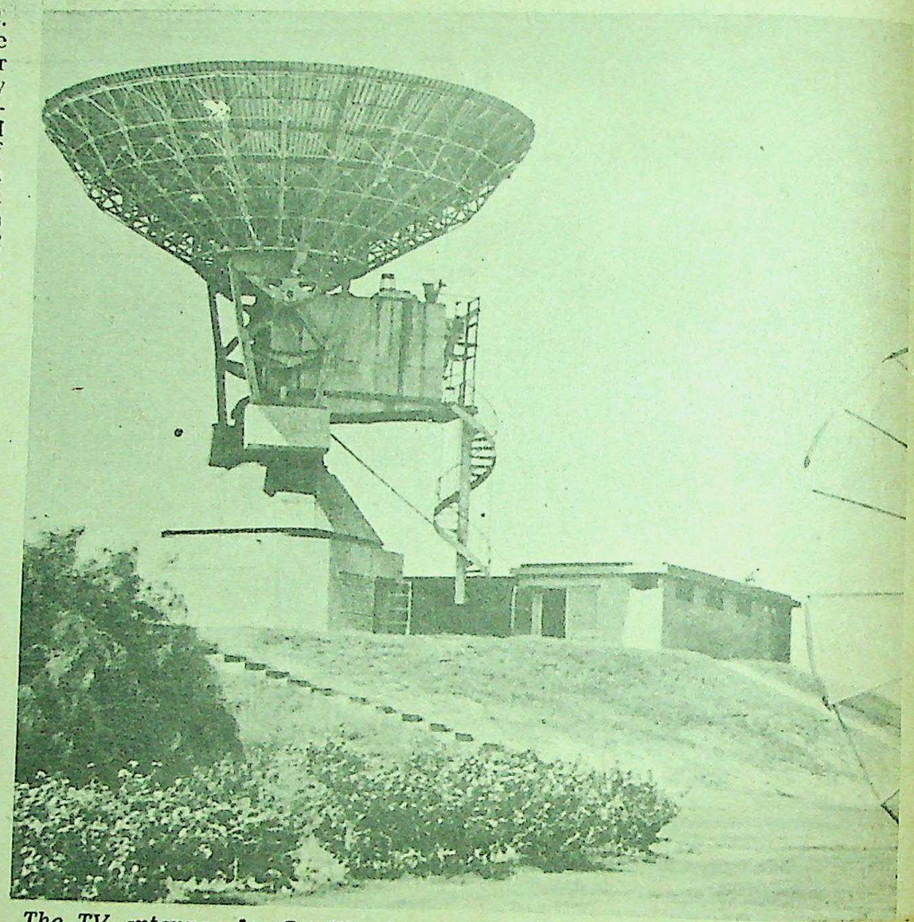
According to the recommendations of a Planning Commission sub group, "As a further advancement of television technology, colour television has been playing a prominent part in recent years. As is well known, adding colour has a great impact; it reproduces nature as it exists. Psychologically, when colour is added to a visual scene, it adds a new dimension to perception. This has been recognised in almost all countries of the world where television has already established itself in a big way. Even in developing countries where television is being introduced, the emphasis is going straight on colour television. This technological marvel has to be taken note of for gradual introduction of colour television in our national TV system.....Colour television is one significant segment of consumer electronics area which is experiencing exponential growth in the world market. Also in view of the prospect of obsolescence of black and white technology and the inherent impact of colour TV over black and white, the sub-committee recommends that at least an experimental programme on colour TV transmission and reception may be envisaged."

At present, the cheapest black and white television set which costs about Rs 2,500 has about Rs 200 worth of imported components. Roughly, one out of every three TV sets has imported picture tubes. Those who are arguing in favour of colour TV say that with the increase in the production of colour TV all over the world, the demand for black and white components has shrunk. Its production has gone down and its price up. Besides, most countries have stopped manufacturing black and white components. And since the demand for television in India is not much, it would become uneconomical for India to manufacture these components. Besides, some of the components we have to buy for the black and white television, like video tape recorders (VTR), are colour compatible. Again, India has agreements with at least 25 countries for the exchange of TV programmes. But since India cannot offer any colour programmes in exchange, it has not been able to avail of this opportunity. Therefore the argument put forward is that India should advance technologically, and this could possibly be achieved with the introduction of colour TV. The export markets would widen—the market for black and white TV is virtually non-existent now with the proliferation of colour TV. And India could compete in the world market. Said S. T. Vachani, Managing Director of Weston Electronics, the manufacturers of Weston TV : "Television is basically a labour-oriented product. In India labour is very cheap. Nearly one-twentieth of a country like Japan.

"There is therefore a lot of potential for the manufacture and growth of colour TV in India. And if we turn to colour TV, then we can go in for large-scale exports. Colour television can also serve educational purposes more competently than black and white. It is more appealing and therefore more retentive, and for science and medicine it is much more helpful when you can see the colour of the chemical."

But this is only one side of the picture. It is essential to assess the costs involved in the production of a colour TV set. A colour TV set when produced would cost about Rs 10,000 and initially at least, all specific colour components would have to be imported. Even when colour components are manufactured in India, it is estimated that a colour TV set would cost no less than Rs. 7,000. Again, in India a black and white TV set costs thrice as much as a television set sold in other south-east Asian countries.

The chances, therefore, of selling colour TV sets at relatively low prices to capture the export market are



The TV antennae for Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), which introduced television to rural areas, for agricultural education. A Planning Commission sub-group said in a report : "...adding colour has a great impact; it reproduces nature as it exists..."

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dim. Besides, a question which arises is : When other Indian electronic products like cassette recorders, radios and transistors cannot compete in the international market and there is a need to improve the quality of the products, what guarantee is there that colour television receivers would have an international market?

As far as the domestic market is concerned, no survey so far has been conducted on the number of people who would go in for colour television. The number, in any case, would not be substantial. In a country like India, where the vast majority of the people cannot afford a black and white television set, colour television would hardly have a widespread impact. This is more so in the rural areas where there is no electricity even to operate the set. Unless, of course, as Mr Vachani suggested: "If you don't have electricity, use batteries". This unfortunately is rather unlikely.

Besides, little can be done to reduce the cost of a colour television set. Even though the Information and Broadcasting Minister has said that "colour TV is no luxury" yet black and white television sets, radios, and cassette recorders are regarded as luxury items and fall under the luxury tax bracket. There is little justification and no reason why colour television should be exempted from this tax. Even Mrs Gandhi's Emergency Government recognised the exorbitant cost of a colour television set. In September, 1976, under V. C. Shukla, the then Minister for Information and Broadcasting, a committee had been set up to explore the possibilities of introducing colour television in India. The committee had recommended experimental colour transmission of one-hour duration and advised that programmes like *Krishi Darshan* and educational and children's programmes be given priority. But one reason why the idea was shelved was the cost of the colour television set. It was then estimated that a colour television set would cost about Rs 15,000. and would therefore be beyond the buying capacity of most television viewers.

The initial investment will be huge. The studios for example consist of cameras, telecine equipment and VTR. The VTR has to be imported and 70 per cent of the rest is manufactured in India. With the introduction of colour TV, more new equipment will have to be imported. The black and white camera, which costs about Rs seven lakhs would have to be replaced by the colour camera which would cost around Rs 10 lakhs. And the colour telecine equipment costs twice as much as the black and white equipment. To set up a black and white television studio it costs about Rs five crores, whereas to instal a new colour television studio it would cost an additional crore. Besides, new wardrobes and sets will have to be set up and the lighting facilities improved. The programme production cost would rise from Rs 3,000 an hour to about Rs 15,000. Maintenance too has to be taken into account. For example, in the Delhi station, the maintenance cost would move up from about Rs 1 crore a year to about Rs 2 crores. Besides, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is producing most of the equipment necessary for the transmission of "black and white" programmes. With the introduction of colour TV, all colour equipment would have to be imported.

The amount invested in colour television could very well be invested in other spheres of the electronics industry. Telephone lines could be improved. The entire telephone system in India consists of outdated equipment. And improvement in this sphere is more important as it affects a larger section of society. The emphasis should be more on improving the state of existing electronics goods, rather than go in for colour television immediately. After all, is it not more necessary to have better black and white television sets before going in for colour television ? In rural India, there are no facilities even for the repair of transistors and radios.

The electronics revolution, the most important technological breakthrough since world war II, has bypassed India. The output of India's electronics industry is only 44 per cent of the global output and a fraction of the output of Third World countries like Brazil, South Korea and Taiwan. The annual rate of growth of the value of output over the past ten years has been less than half the rate in the rest of the world. People in the industry feel that the blame for this should go to the Electronics Commission (EC) and the Department of Electronics (DOE). They say that the policies of these organisations have led to stagnation in the electronics industry. Especially, since they are based on the assumption that a high technology industry which has witnessed major technological breakthroughs every few years, can reach a competitive level in complete isolation from the rest of the world and within the domestic market. This, in the case of India is extremely limited. The structure of duties, the critics feel, imposed by the EC and the DOE, is irrational as the import of raw materials and components is discouraged while assemblies and finished goods encouraged since they are subject to lower rates of duty. This has led to a lack of incentives to develop indigenously and a consequent crippling of the industry.

However, the Sondhi Committee, which was set up to review the entire electronics policy and organisational set-up and recommend changes has prepared a report which envisages the scrapping of the EC as it considers the EC to be very restrictive. The committee has recommended lowering of duties, liberal and duty-free import of second-hand machines and simplification of import procedures. Says the report: "Unfortunately, the Indian scene in electronics, even after two decades, is marked by a slow rate of growth. Production in 1978-79 was an insignificant share of the global production. This is unfortunate as the most important of all resources in this field is possessed by this country; namely an abundance of skilled and employable manpower and a high degree of technological competence." On the licensing policy for the electronics industry it says: "A critical analysis of the present status of the electronics industry in the country shows that the investment, production and employment generation have not been as high as expected partly because of the elaborate structure for screening and rigid control on all matters connected with the licensing or expansion of new capabilities and approval of projects in this sector. In other sectors of the industry, the regime of industrial control has kept pace, at least to some extent, with changing needs and has been progressively relaxed. In electronics, on the other hand, the emphasis so far seems to have been more on regulatory rather than on developmental and promotional aspects. For example, the General Industrial Policy provisions regarding automatic growth diversification and liberalisation of investment procedures and maximum utilisation of installed capacity for units coming within the ambit of licensing do not seem to have applied to the electronics sector as vigorously as in other areas".

The Sondhi Committee report, however, neither identifies the basic strategy of electronics development in India nor the fields where the industry could maximise its advantages and make a thrust into the world market. And as one insider commented, "The Sondhi Committee report provides just the bare minimums. Even if the report is implemented, India will not be having advanced technology."

In view of this it is clear that the Government is not likely to take a hasty decision. As the Information and Broadcasting Minister recently said in Parliament while replying to a question on colour television, "No decision has yet been taken to introduce colour television nor has any project been prepared for this purpose. However, keeping in view the fact that colour TV technology has replaced black and white technology in most parts of the world, it is proposed to examine the potentialities, keeping in view the cost, manufacturing capabilities and the technical requirements of both transmission and reception".

But the question is : If we are to move towards new technological frontiers, would the introduction of colour television help substantially ? What is important is not the introduction of colour television which in the Indian context would be an isolated phenomenon, but an overall, balanced growth of the electronics industry and a thorough review of the Government's policy on electronics. ■

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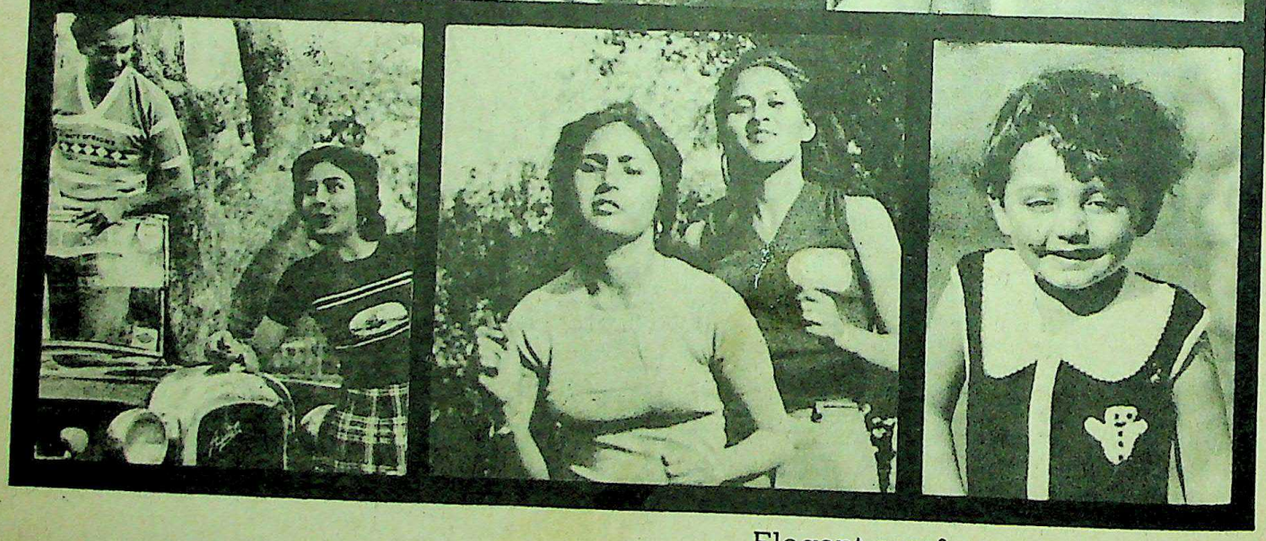
Hi-Fashion Focus



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Happy trouble-shooting

By ASHA BHANJDEO

SOME people may be aware that *The Sea Wolves*, which recently completed an 11-week shooting schedule in Delhi and Goa, is the first major international film to be shot almost entirely in India during the past decade and a half. The antipathy of the Indian government to foreign filmmakers since the overblown encounters with the ill-fated *Nine Hours to Rama* and Louis Malle's television series on India, is a matter of common knowledge.

What magical charisma, therefore, did the producers of *The Sea Wolves* need to successfully manoeuvre their way through the labyrinthine corridors of power to be allowed to set up so outrageously ambitious a project in India?

"None", says Euan Llyod, the British producer of the film. "Absolutely none.

"Certainly", he adds, "some of your procedures are cumbersome, time-consuming and, to us, inexplicable. However, once we agreed to comply with all the rules—and there were many—we were allowed to bring in and take out all our equipment and personnel without any problem".

What exactly are the chronological procedures and logistics involved in making a foreign film in India with special reference to *The Sea Wolves*?

"The first step", says Harold Buck, associate producer of the film, "is to submit the script for approval to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting together with a proposed schedule of dates, durations, locations, broad requirements, etc." However, approval of the script is—as the Americans say—merely a ticket to the ball game. It doesn't necessarily guarantee a seat at the show. Minutely detailed lists together with accurate valuations of every item of equipment the production company was likely to need through its 11-week schedule in India had to be submitted to the Finance Ministry many months in advance. No item, however small, would be allowed to pass through the fine toothcomb of the Customs authorities unless included in this preliminary list.

Furthermore, separate lists were required of 'Equipment' as opposed to 'Expendables' (i.e. stationery, light bulbs, camera tape, make-up, chalk, etc.) on which there is a punitive duty of 120 per cent. As a matter of incidental interest the eventual freight of the film sent to Delhi weighed in at ten and a half tons—of which two and a half kilograms accounted for the aforesaid list itself.

In order to escape paying an impossible amount of duty on equipment worth several hundred thousand dollars, the production company either had to secure an import licence — a process for which one lifetime has been known to be insufficient — or to obtain a mystical *mantra* known amongst the enlightened as a TBRE — Tourist Baggage for Re-Export certificate. Separate TBREs were required for each port of entry, in this case two, Bombay, Delhi. Goods brought in under a TBRE are exempt from import duty. All items brought into the country under a TBRE certificate must be entered on somebody's passport. The production company was therefore obliged to 'distribute' its massive consignment among the passports of a few of its unit members who were then in the somewhat odd position of being unable to leave the country—or, for that matter, their jobs—for any reason whatsoever before completion of the film, unless they took a large part of the equipment with them!

However, if script approval is a ticket to the ball game, a TBRE merely instructs the usher to direct you to your seat. The show is yet to begin. Customs officials at each port of entry now had to be persuaded that the precious TBREs obtained actually meant what the alphabetical permutations conveyed: a somewhat formidable task as most of us can feelingly testify. Once the Customs officials agreed to accept the TBREs —can this now be said to be the happy end of the line? "Not yet", says Harold Buck. "Actually, this is the point at which we really knelt down and prayed".

Lists of requirements had been prepared in faraway London many months back. Each department had been given strict instructions with regard to 'Equipment' and 'Expendables' which needed to be listed and packed separately as per Indian regulations. If one single 'Expendable' happened to have found its way by mistake into a crate marked 'Equipment' there could, literally, be hell to pay. And there were over 1,000 crates to contend with! "However," says Harold Buck, "by the grace of somebody up there, there were no mistakes and our ten and a half tons of freight were cleared by Delhi Customs in the record and gratifying time of only two days."

Special rules necessarily apply to the import of raw stock which is neither equipment nor an expendable. The producers were allowed to import their requirement free of duty provided every foot of film imported —used, unused, discarded or wasted including end bits — was accounted for and eventually taken out of the country. The film's 'rushes' flown to London every day for processing, therefore, left in sealed boxes pasted down with more vital statistics than those of a double line of chorus girls. The same procedure had to be followed for rolls of film for still photographs.

And now, with cast, crew, equipment, expendables and raw stock safely in the country, the producers prepared to face the trickiest problem of them all: the import of large quantities of arms, ammunition, explosives, squibs, etc. (albeit, dummies) needed for the film's action sequences. Since the hardware came from both the USA and the UK, permission had to be obtained from the civil aviation authorities of both countries to carry the consignment on commercial airliners of the two countries. Sanctions were then needed from this country to bring the hardware into Indian airports and to offload it on to Indian soil. Once in Bombay, the cargo had to be placed in the custody of the local police and was taken away by them under heavy escort for storage under police guard. Similar procedures had to be followed in order to transport the arsenal to Goa where it remained in police custody until required for use under daily police supervision. Since guns are listed as 'Equipment' but ammunition and explosives come under 'Expendables' and as such charged with heavy duty, much of the firearm-fodder was purchased in India.

It certainly says a great deal, not only for the meticulous planning and persistence of the film unit but also for the genuine cooperation of the many authorities in India that in spite of the horrifying mileage of red tape and the marathon paperchases involved, *The Sea Wolves* actually managed to start filming dead on schedule on November 23 last with David Niven and Trevor

Roger Moore and Barbara Kellerman, in a scene

AP

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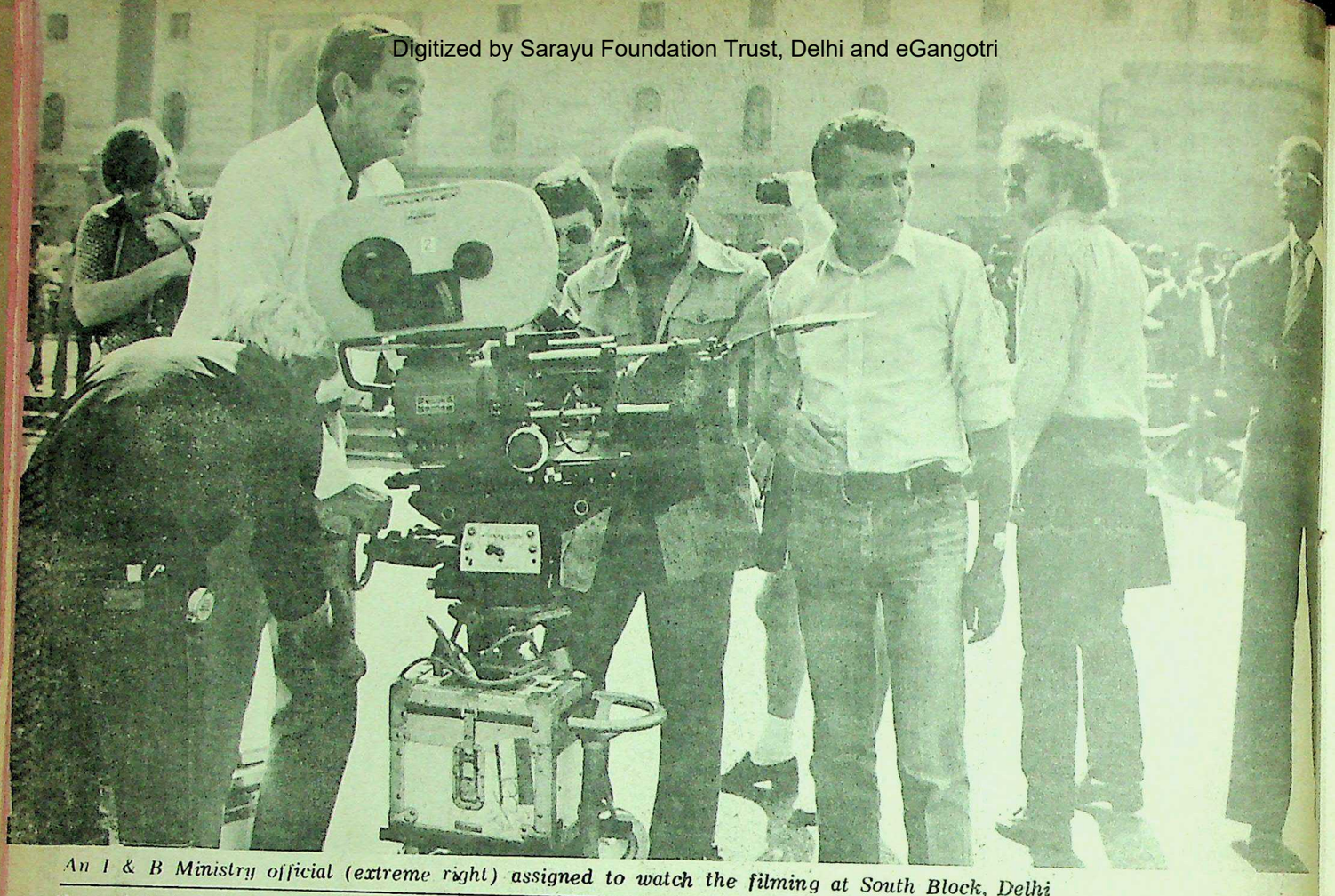

An I & B Ministry official (extreme right) assigned to watch the filming at South Block, Delhi

Howard facing the camera on a crowded street in Delhi not far from Kashmere Gate.

After the two weeks in Delhi came another major headache — the massive logistical problem of packing and transporting ten and a half tons of valuable equipment and expendables, over 300 pieces of personal baggage and a cast and crew of over 100 half way across the country to Goa with minimum loss of time. The initial plan to transport all heavy equipment by road inside the trucks which housed it, was hastily abandoned when it was discovered that a straightforward journey of four or five days could take up to 30 due to the numerous — and often argumentative and expensive — check points and octroi posts along the road from Delhi to Goa. Furthermore, although transporting personnel by scheduled flights would certainly be cheaper, the time lost in an overnight stop in Bombay and in the temperamental uncertainties of Indian Airlines' schedules, were considered too hazardous in terms of possible delays.

Eventually, empty equipment trucks were despatched by road while the dismantled equipment itself was flown to Goa partly by scheduled Airbus and partly by chartered Viscount. The cast, crew, office personnel and personal baggage flew to Goa direct from Delhi by a chartered Indian Airlines Boeing

The last shot went in the can in Delhi at 5 pm on Friday, December

7. The first shot in Goa was taken at 10 am on Tuesday, December 11, less than four days later — a remarkable feat of organisation, discipline and professionalism in an industry which operates on the maxim that time is, indeed, money.

The move from Delhi to Goa put the production company back by almost Rs. four lakhs. The 737 charter alone is said to have cost in the region of Rs 90,000 an hour of flying time.

The Sea Wolves had a total of 61 days of filming and was completed exactly on schedule, almost to the hour, on February 5 in Goa. "Part of the credit", says producer Euan Lloyd, "must go to the magnificent Goa sun. I have never filmed anywhere else in the world where there is guaranteed sunshine for so many consecutive days with no interference from the weather".

What special undertakings, if any, did the film company have to give the government before permission to film in India was granted? The answer is, none. Certain things are, of course, taken for granted. It was understood that the unit would patronise Air India as much as possible. Employment of Indian personnel and expenditure of a large amount of foreign exchange are also inevitable. The total amount of money brought into the country is estimated in the region of two million dollars. Certainly, the unit's daily expenditure ran into around Rs. two lakhs per day.

In fact, contrary to what most people believe, the conditions the Indian government imposes on all filmmakers of foreign origin, are not only minimal but also reasonable and easily fulfilled. Film producers have to sign a bond with the Reserve Bank as to the total value of the goods brought in. The bond is cancelled once the unit leaves the country. The I & B Ministry appoints one of its officials as the governmental 'watchdog' on the set to ensure that the approved script is adhered to and that the film contains nothing that might be considered derogatory to the country. Finally, the completed film must be shown to an Indian diplomatic mission abroad.

Has it all been worth it—the red tape, the paperwork, the yearlong preparations, the delays, the uncertainties, the headaches and the hassles? "Most definitely", says Euan Lloyd. "India has proved easier to film in than many other countries. In fact, I hope that other foreign filmmakers will follow our example. Perhaps your procedures need to be simplified and the uncertainties need to be ironed out but if foreign film producers behave themselves and obey the laws of the land with strictness, I have no doubt they will receive the same warmth and cooperation that we did".

So, the next time you feel weighted down with the burdens of bureaucracy while waiting in a queue at a rationing office—don't complain. It could be much worse. ■

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Soviets blundered in Afghanistan

By MADHU LIMAYE

THE situation in West Asia has been steadily deteriorating in the last two years. The process of detatching Sadat's Egypt from the Soviet orbit, which was initiated by the United States Secretary of State, Mr Henry Kissinger, was given a fresh impetus by President Carter. This led to the strengthening of the American position in the northern sector of West Asia. However, the bastion of US strategy—Shah's Iran—began to disintegrate even while fresh progress was made by the Americans in bringing about "rapprochement" between Egypt and Israel. The revolt of the Iranian people against the Shah regime assumed massive proportions in 1978 resulting finally in the overthrow of Shah's absolute monarchy. Iran has been in turmoil ever since. The foundation of the American strategic plan, based on the feverish arms build up in the Gulf region, collapsed overnight.

The Iranian revolution was fuelled by many ingredients, the dominant being the revival of Islamic fundamentalism of the Shia sect. The liberal and Marxist elements were also important as far as the industrial working class, rural poor and middle class were concerned. While the struggle for supremacy within the badly fragmented Iranian polity continues it is difficult to say what the final outcome would be. But it is clear that this crisis has had repercussions not only in Iran but in the neighbouring states also. The various nationalities in Iran like the Kurds, Azarbaijanis, Turks, Arabs and Baluchis belong to the Sunni sect and the Shia fundamentalist upsurge has not reconciled these recalcitrant minority groups to the Tehran authorities. In the southern oil bearing Khuzistan region the Sunni Arabs are in a majority and their agitation had paralysed Iran's oil production for a long time. Neighbouring Iraq—in which are located the main pilgrim centres of the Shias—has an overall Sunni majority. However, among the Arab speaking people in that country, Shias constitute a majority. Iraq is obviously suffering from the spillover effects of shattering events in Iran.

Under the Shah, Iran not only maintained relations with Israel, the monarchist regime generally pursued an anti-Arab policy. The smaller Sheikhs feared annexation by Iran. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation has now won an important ally in the new Iran. To that extent the American gains in the northern sector have been offset by the turmoil in the Gulf region.

This turmoil has other side effects also. In the oil-bearing states there is a vigorous drive against the immigrants and large scale expulsion of immigrants will have an adverse effect on the economies of the neighbouring states, including India and Pakistan. We are running a trade deficit, and decrease in remittances and further rise in crude oil prices will be a severe blow to our people.

Afghan rebels

AP

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Russian troops with Afghan

The Iranian crisis completely unsettled the Americans and they began to review their strategy in the Indian Ocean area. Several new proposals were made such as the creation of a credible Rapid Development Force and establishment of an independent Fifth Fleet on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Anyway, the American hostages crisis led to a massive naval build up by the United States with a counter build up by the Soviet Union. Instability and insurgency in Afghanistan have produced several Afghan regimes within a short space of time. Mr Daoud's republic regime was replaced by Mr Tarakki. Mr Tarakki was in turn overthrown by Mr Amin and, after the massive intervention by the Soviet troops, Mr Amin himself was liquidated and a new regime of Mr Babrak Karmal installed in his place. The social base of the successive Afghan governments has been progressively narrowing and the consequent uncertainty has aggravated.

While there is no need to overdraw the similarity between increasing American involvement in Vietnam in the Sixties with the deepening Soviet involvement in Afghanistan—after all Afghanistan has a common land frontier with the Soviet Union—it seems to me that the military intervention of the Soviet Union is a blunder of the first magnitude. However, one can easily perceive why the Soviets blundered into this situation. The events in Iran had caused deep anxiety in the Soviet ruling circles. They feared that their own Muslim republics would get infected by the religious revival in the Islamic world. The Soviet defence forces were afraid that Islamic fundamentalists as well as the American intelligence networks would not only create more trouble in Afghanistan but set up a hostile regime there.

While representatives of Pakistan have stoutly denied that the Afghan refugees in Pakistan are being trained by Pakistani authorities, the provocative speeches made by President Carter's National Adviser, Mr Brzezinski, in the presence of Pakistani authorities in the Afghan refugee camps show that the Americans are determined to use these refugees for mounting a guerilla warfare. While it is unthinkable that the Pakistani President would provoke a direct military clash with the Soviet Union, he is clever enough to see that the current Afghan crisis, while increasing tension and escalating military conflict in the area, has provided him with a golden opportunity to strengthen his own internal position. In the name of external danger he has already effectively silenced the opposition forces: the elections in Pakistan have been indefinitely postponed. The crisis has also opened up the Pakistani army receiving massive military and economic aid from the United States and its allies without Pakistan's having to modify its nuclear weapons programme. The Pakistani President is bound to exploit his new opportunities to the fullest extent possible.

All this has adversely affected the security environment of India. We in India have to take our stand primarily from the point of view of (a) preserving our national independence; (b) strengthening the integrity of the nation and (c) ensuring our national security. In the last 32 years the Americans have been pursuing a policy which has very little regard for the interests and susceptibilities of the Indian people. Whoever is the President and whichever Party he belongs to, there has been an amazing consistency in the American policy towards India.

WHILE trying to understand the possible Soviet motives in moving troops into Afghanistan and defending India's security interests we must take note of the following:

(a) that there has been a massive induction of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan; (b) that these troops have crossed the frontiers of an independent sovereign state; (c) that the argument about invitation is neither here nor there, the fact being that the Soviets were actuated by purely security considerations; (d) that unlike India's Bangladesh operations Soviet military intervention is not going to be of a short duration and that Soviet troops are likely to remain in Afghanistan for a very long time; (e) that Soviet intervention has provided *a pretext* for the Americans to step up their military and naval build up in the Gulf and Indian Ocean area; (f) that the American presence in the first instance had nothing to do with nor was it provoked by the Afghan crisis; it had been there for a long time and had been increased in response to the collapse of their military bastion in Iran; (g) that the American hostages crisis, the threat of a blocade of Iran, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the American response to this event have all revived the cold war and have increased the area of military conflict; (h) that the danger of an unstable Pakistan arming itself to the hilt constitutes a grave threat for India's security; (i) that the Americans are over-reacting deliberately because tough postures help President Carter secure re-election in the fall this year; and finally (j) that its West European allies, except Britain, are cool to the American efforts to overheat the situation.

It is against this background that India will have to formulate its policy. This policy, I think, should be based on hard-headed realism. There is no scope for emotional outbursts of any kind. To whip up an anti-Soviet hysteria would in no way advance India's security interests. To launch an emotional outburst against the United States will also not help much.

The second point I would like to make is that the approach to the Afghan developments, military build up in the Indian Ocean and the pouring of massive arms into Pakistan should not be made a political Party issue. India's internal economic problems are very grave. The political problems, especially in the north-east, are also very serious. There is enough ammunition for internal controversy in this. There is no need to extend this Party conflict to the field of national security. I would therefore like a national policy to be evolved in regard to the West Asian crisis. It is the duty of the Government to take the opposition into confidence. The opposition must also desist from the temptation of making Afghanistan an issue of Party strife; there is no mileage to be derived either for the Government or for the opposition.

The next point that I would like to make is that disapproving of the Soviet military build-up in Afghanistan and the American military build-up in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean area by themselves do not constitute a viable policy. The intensification of the cold war and the extension of the area of conflict will not increase India's security. On the contrary, the danger of Pakistan being sucked into the vortex of the conflict will increase our anxiety manifold and it will be impossible in that situation for India to stay out.

Priority must therefore be given to the reduction of tension in the area. A solution must be worked out whereby Soviets will be induced to pull out of Afghanis-

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tan without loss of face. A Dangerously Strategic Location

regime in Afghanistan or may not constitute a grave threat to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is the largest country in the world. Its productive capacities are vast, and it has now achieved military parity with the United States. It can look after itself very well. But a chain of fundamentalist reactionary states from Saudi Arabia right to the borders of India would certainly constitute a serious threat to India. The massive American build-up in the Indian Ocean area, far from providing additional security to India, will actually complete its encirclement. I would like to warn that in future, because of this build-up, our Indian policy will become subject to extraordinary outside pressure. Our energy must therefore be directed towards defusing the crisis. The help of every country which is interested in de-escalation should be mobilised towards this supreme objective. The EEC, especially West Germany and France, Austria, Yugoslavia, the Scandinavian countries all can help in their own way. Even Japanese cooperation can be sought. The regional South Asian approach can also be dovetailed in this concerted effort. The extremist American reaction to the current crisis is the result of the cynical election strategy of the Carter forces. There is reason to believe that a softening will come after November. But the intervening period is a difficult one.

After making a number of contradictory statements it appears that the Indian Government's approach is gradually approximating to the policy which patriotic people have advocated in the last two months. It is obvious that the pro-American elements in the country will not approve this policy. They would like to foment anti-Soviet hysteria, completely disregarding the fact that India's defence effort and India's security today depend to a great extent on good Indo-Soviet relations. They will also totally disregard the fact that the Americans have done everything in their power during the last 32 years to undermine India's position in the Indian Ocean area. It is useless to remind them of the American stand on Kashmir, on Goa and on Bangladesh. It is futile to ask them to read the Nixon Memoirs and Kissinger's latest book. They are serving their own interests.

Among the other world powers only China seems to be bent on a policy of fanning the conflict. China hopes to profit by increased Soviet-American confrontation. They would also like to use Pakistani territory as a base for guerilla operations in Afghanistan. But all this will not promote our national interests. Whatever may be the current difficulties of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan it is well to remember that Pakistan is extremely vulnerable because the Soviets too can exploit separatist tendencies in Pakistan.

We must warn Pakistan about these dangers. We should assure them again and again that we have no designs against them. We should also persuade the Soviet Union to reassure them. But at the same time the President of Pakistan must give up his rearmament plans, prevent the "refugees" being used as insurgents and agree to a real non-aligned Afghanistan which is not hostile to the USSR. It is laughable to maintain that the Americans have a vital stake in the Gulf ten thousand miles away from their homeland but the Soviets have no vital interest in Afghanistan!

The question is whether the Americans will accept a non-aligned Afghan regime with which the Soviets can live. A neutral state on the model of Switzerland or Austria or Sweden presupposes a high level of economic development and internal stability. These conditions do not exist in Afghanistan. Besides this status cannot be imposed on it by outside powers. Other powers have no right to deny to the Afghans their right to freedom. Guarantee against outside aid to insurgency, withdrawal of Soviet troops and a non-aligned Afghanistan alone can provide a solution.

While India will have to maintain state-to-state relations with all the West Asian countries, it is clearly in India's interest to have non-fundamentalist progressive regimes in West Asia. We must therefore strengthen further our relations with Iraq, Syria and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. Meanwhile we should expand our economy, bring about improvement in our infrastructural facilities and strengthen our defence forces.

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Islampur: Police go berserk

By TOOSHAR PANDIT

ON April 7, a cluster of hamlets scattered over a ten-square mile area on the north-eastern fringe of West Bengal was brutally destroyed, after twenty hours of police barbarism. What now remains of these villages — Balancha, Ringkua, Guabari, Phulbari, Borogochha, Gondolgochha — within five kilometres from the subdivisional town Islampur, in West Dinajpur, along a metal road, are the skeletons of charred huts, rubble and ashes. The inhabitants, victims of hate, live on charity, or scavenge the debris for anything they can salvage. Armed para-military Border Security Force and the Eastern Frontier Rifles man the Islampur police station and warily prowl the village roads substituting for the regular policemen, now confined to their barracks by a Government order. Huge shards of clay pots, litters of dimpled tin cans, mounds of charred paddy, chunks of baked mud, gaping chasms in the walls, sullen faces, the glint of sunlight on broken pieces of glass, the twisted tangle of corrugated tin and bamboo poles, heaps of burnt hay, polythene tents, revive memories of Bangladesh or a Mai Lai.

Only in the relative calm of late in the week could a real count be taken of the devastation. The toll stood at two dead and several injured. Property worth an estimated Rs 2 million was damaged, with 600 huts completely gutted rendering some 3,000 farmers and potters, mostly the lower caste migrants from the erstwhile East Pakistan, and Muslims, homeless. Wholesale looting by the police has turned them paupers. The statistics present only a partial picture. For, the damage is more psychological than physical. Even after seven days fear kept many villagers away from their homes and village.

The bizarre story of vengeance and violence begins with the arrival of a posse of six policemen led by the officer-in-charge of the Islampur police station at Phulbari village in a jeep on Sunday April 6 around 7 p.m. ostensibly to answer a tip from the adjoining Rajgunge police station, about a possible dacoity in a *bandookwalla* (literally, a house with a gun) residence. As the jeep left the metal road and pitched on to the village track, the officer ordered its headlights to be dimmed and the engine muffled, and drove to the two-storied stucco residence of Sarat Pal, one of the two affluent villagers owning guns. From there, the OC and two other policemen backtracked for about 500 yards to the residence of Suren Modak, the only other person owning a gun and a *pucca* house.

Suren's second son Sankar, 21, was standing in front of the house when the police walked up, and asked him to fetch his father. "Tell him, barababu is here," one of them growled. When, Suren came out, the officer wanted to know if had a licence for the gun. He had, then the officer asked, who might be near the gun then. "Possibly, my wife," Suren replied. "Then go and be with her and don't dare to come out," the officer cautioned. Suren went in. He recalls, "But even before we could serve some tea to the visitors, shots rang out from the direction of Pal's residence. It had to be the dacoits, we thought. I raced out to the porch 'Why don't you do something?' I begged the policemen. But, they scarcely moved."

Nobody in the village really knew what was happening at Pal's residence but everybody suspected the same thing: the dacoits had come. They cannot be faulted for this. Three of the five police stations—Islampur, Goalpokhar and Chopra—in the Islampur subdivision are located close to Nepal, Bangladesh and Bihar borders, and offer an ideal sanctuary for smugglers. The local people are not only bitter about the mounting incidence of crime and violence in the area but are also firmly convinced that the police was actively nursing the criminals. The feeling that the police cannot or will not protect them has led the villagers to rely increasingly on their own strength and stimulate in them a tendency to take the law into their hands. Thus, the sound of the first

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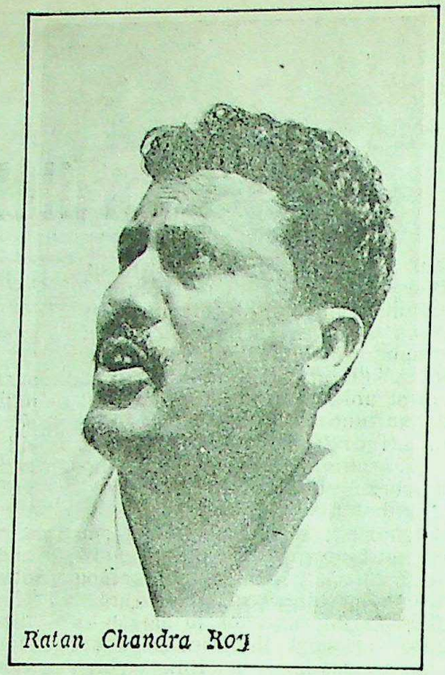
shot dragged many villagers out on the road with whatever weapons they could pick up—kitchen knives, daggers, swords, meat choppers, lances, sticks, bamboo poles, iron bars. The crowd swelled as Suren, bottled up in his room by the police, fired a couple of blanks in reflex response.

BUT what was really happening at the Pal residence? Khiramani Pal, 23, wife of Sarat Pal's nephew Rajen, 31, says that soon after the jeep stopped in a vacant lot about thirty yards from the house, some policemen came and kicked the front door splicing it into splinters. One policeman grabbed Sarat Pal's wife to know if her husband was at home. No, she said. Another asked where the gun was. She bluffed them by saying that she was only a maid-servant. The ruse worked. She ran away.

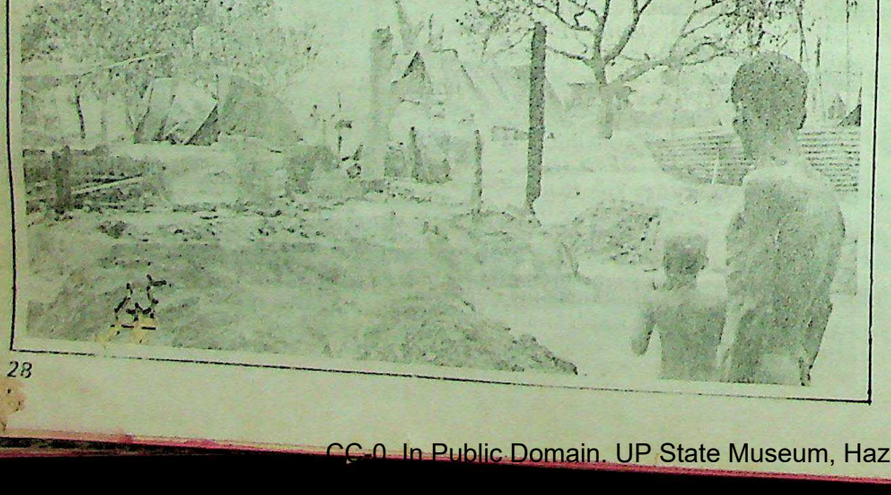
Rajen remembers that the first thing he thought of was the gun locked up in a first floor room. "As I climbed the stairs, the policemen pulled down yet another tin door at the entrance of the main building. But, I picked up the gun before they reached the top of the staircase. A shot rang out pretty close. Then another. I moved to the rear balcony. From there I saw four people—three in uniform and one in plai dress—fan out in different rooms. Then, the sound of the boxes and the trunks being broken open. When I heard them talking about the gun, I climbed higher on to the roof and, clutching the gun firmly, dived, landing on the thatched roof of the outhouse thirty feet below, and went on to the road where a crowd had already collected. Among them I spotted my uncle Sarat Pal and handed the gun over to him".

These testimonies clearly emphasise that the policemen went on a looting spree as soon as they moved into the Pal residence after scaring away the inmates with gunfire. The police, however, insists that the dacoits had actually raided the house



Ratan Chandra Roy

engaging them in an encounter in which both sides exchanged fire, but the dacoits escaped. The villagers think that these explanations are afterthoughts. They argue that if the OC had been serious about catching the dacoits he would have had come better equipped and with a larger force, not with six men of which one was in plain dress. They also deride the police claims of laying an ambush for the dacoits by pointing out that what they really did was to bottle up the two people in the village who could have had offered most resistance to the dacoits. Neither was the help of the villagers sought. If the dacoits had raided the Pal residence, how was it that the inmates did not see them? If there was an encounter where have those empty shells of the bullets fired by the dacoits gone? No wonder, the villagers have dubbed the claims as "the fantasy of phantom dacoits".



And yet, it is hard to believe that an officer-in-charge of a police station was taking his men to a village to loot the people so brazenly. It is also possible that some of Pal's affluence may have come from deals that are not strictly legal. He always had good relations with the police till they soured in January. Why? A row over kickbacks? Nobody knows for sure. However, the presence of Nibaran Bal, a police constable assigned to another police station and long known as a conduit between the police and the underworld, in plain dress, appears to have encouraged such speculation. One assumption is that the police wanted to settle things with Sarat Pal and Nibaran was asked to negotiate the deal as the OC cooled off in Suren's place. But, the policemen apparently went beyond their brief.

THE villagers worked themselves up to a frenzy when the inmates of the Pal house told them that the policemen were looting. The mob swelled to over 500. They surrounded a ground floor corner room in Pal's house where five policemen, including the OC who had come to rescue his men, stood helplessly. The policemen threatened to shoot, but the mob was in such a fury that even artillery could not have had scared them away. They punched, and kicked and clubbed the cops. Some elderly residents feebly attempted to intervene but gave up when they themselves were threatened with violence. Outside, the police jeep was set ablaze. When the fury subsided, two policemen — Harish Sarkar and Nibaran Bal—were dead. The OC and two others, forcing an opening through the mob, escaped with wounds.

A LARGER contingent of policemen headed by the SDO and the SDPO and buttressed with the CPI-(M) anchal pradhan of Islampur, Adhir Biswas, arrived for the second time in the village at about 10 p.m. Strangely, the local anchal pradhan, Pal of the Forward Bloc was completely ignored as the police summoned Jiten Bhowmik, 67, CPI(M) member of the local panchayat for his assistance in persuading the inmates of the Pal house to vacate the building for the police to pick up the corpses. Bhowmik remembers: "I circled the house once and found all the doors and windows closed. A policeman who detected a small crack in one of the windows said, 'Guess it's open, and you can reach it by climbing on my back'. Immediately, he went down on all fours. I slipped through the window, reaching the room where the corpses lay spread-eagled in a pool of blood, their eyes pulled out of their sockets, the arms almost severed, and blood oozing out from the gaping wounds all over their bodies. The police entered, retrieved two rifles and a revolver (the police say the mob had snatched them away) lying by the side of the bodies, chased the

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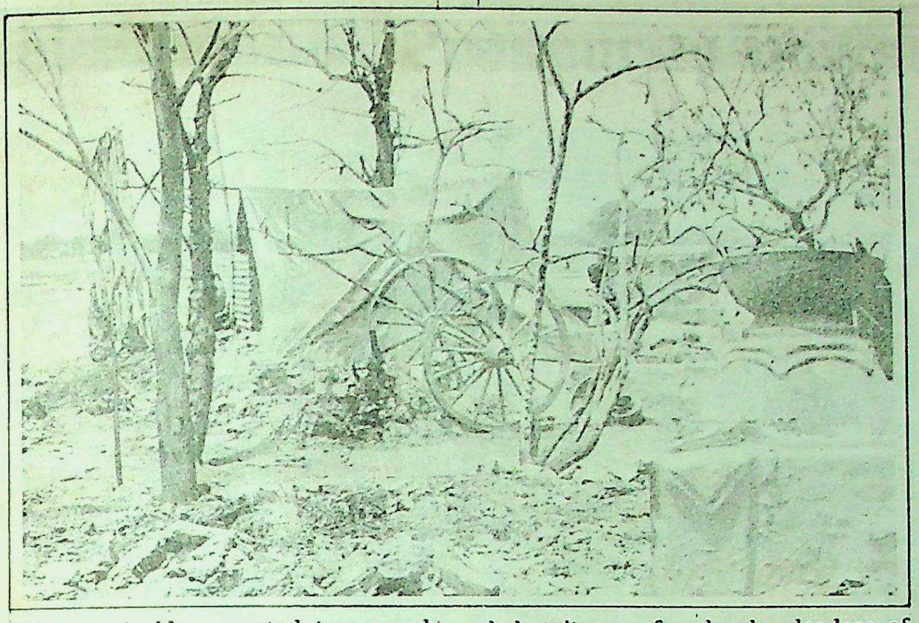
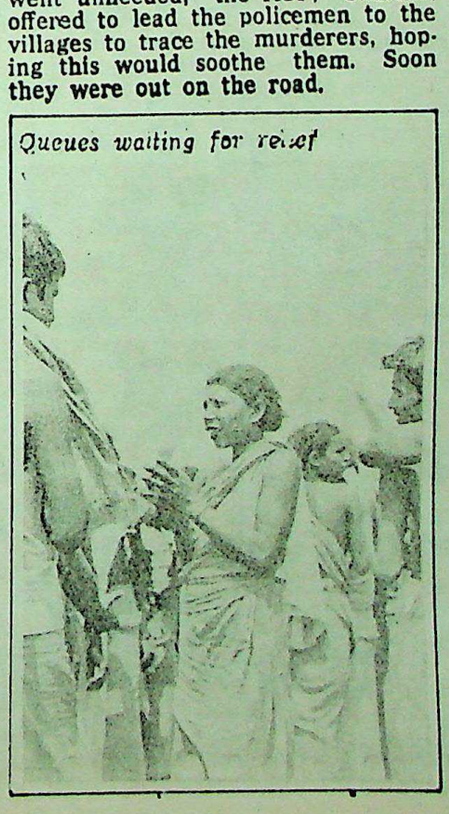


villagers inside, arrested two people, Bhantu and Indramohan".

Meanwhile, the villagers had also been massing before the house. They would not allow either the charred jeep or the bodies to be removed until the policemen had been punished for the attack. After some hassles and promising action, the CPI(M) pradhan, Biswas, finally persuaded the villagers to let the police take the corpses. The jeep remained (it was towed away seven days later). In the meantime, the police however, arrested one person—Ramesh Modak, a BSF personnel posted in Assam who had come to the village on leave —from the crowd.

At the police station, the other policemen were throbbing with tension and anger. Some tore off their uniforms. Others stamped all over the place with hate in their face and murder on their lips. Seeing the bodies, they grew even more furious and demanded orders to raid the villages. In the confusion, a policeman fired in the direction where Bhowmik, Biswas, the SDO and the SDPO were talking, missing Bhowmik narrowly.

At dawn on Monday April 7, the SP Avasthi and the additional SP Vinode Sharma arrived at the police headquarters followed by a van load of armed police. The reinforcements brought by them soon joined the other policemen in demanding revenge. Thumping the desk, they repeatedly asked the officers to lead them to the villages. The situation was close to a mutiny. By then, a large crowd, mostly the residents of a nearby police colony where one of the dead policemen Nibaran lived, had filled the police station compound. The friends and the family members of Nibaran in the crowd demanded explanations from the SP for the death. "Why did the OC go with such a small force? Why did he take Nibaran with him although he did not belong to his police station?" they asked. "You have got my father killed," Nibaran's son screamed. By 7.30 a.m. the crowd had swelled to over 1,000 and included quite a few local leaders of different political Parties. Particularly vocal was Gautam Gupta, a Congress (I) activist, who, however, claims that he had gone there to diffuse the tension. Soon the crowd started pelting stones and smashing the window panes, and, finally surged into the police station pushing and punching both the SP and the ASP on their way to the lock up. They wanted the arrested persons, Bhantu, Indramohan and Ramesh to be handed over to them. "If you don't", they warned, "we will get them ourselves from the lock up", All this encouraged the policemen to become even more defiant. "Jai Ma Kali" shouted the policemen. The crowd shouted back : "Death to the easterners", As all the pleas for restraint went unheeded, the ASP, Sharma, offered to lead the policemen to the villages to trace the murderers, hoping this would soothe them. Soon they were out on the road.



Queues waiting for relief

RATAN Chandra Roy, 38, the headmaster of the Matikunda Primary School was returning home at Balancha village at about 10.30 a.m. when he spotted a police van parked on a bridge some 1,000 yards away. The policemen were chasing the pedestrians bound for the Monday market at Matikunda. They were also snatching cycles from those who were on wheels. After some time, nine or ten policemen strayed into his house and started beating him with the butt of the rifles. "I told them I was a schoolmaster but they went on beating me. As they dragged me towards the van, my 78-year-old mother, my wife, my son — all fell over me. They pushed my mother aside and she fell unconscious; they kicked my wife apart. My son barely escaped being shot."

Vandalism began as soon as the policemen left the limits of Islampur town. Their first act of carnage was setting a betel vine on fire at Balancha, one and half kilometers from the town. They followed it up with more arson and looting as they rolled on. Satish Sharma, the manager of a local co-operative shop at Ringkua village says that a group of policemen came to his shop and asked for water. "After they drank it, one of them pulled out a match box from his pocket, lit a bundle of sticks, and threw them on the thatched roof before leaving".

The police did as they wished. If they saw flames dying down at some place, they would pour more gasoline to revive the fire. The looting and plundering went on unabated. They threw Suren's youngest son Biswanath, 14, into a burning heap of hay with his hands tied behind his back. Another policeman, however, pulled him out, and cut him loose after he had sustained serious burns.

From one village to another it is the same sordid story. At Borogochha village Bholanath Pal mourns the death of his wife Kaileswari holding in his arms their five-day old daughter wrapped in a burnt rag. Kaileswari died on Wednesday April 9. The child was born just as the arson started on Monday. "They kicked her as she tried to run. I should have taken her to the hospital then, but did not, fearing further reprisals. Finally, when I took her, it was too late", Bholanath says. At Gondolgochha, 100-year old Jalaluddin saw the house where he was born crumble before his eyes. "All others fled. I was slow. I am an old man. They took me out under a tree and punched me till I went down," he said.

The language of force was direct, savage and mindless. There can be no excuse, political or personal, for the orgy of wanton destruction in which the police indulged for over three hours. What has really been lost in the village of Islampur are not just some huts and shops but the very substance of the civilised notion that the police protects. Faith is the casualty. ■

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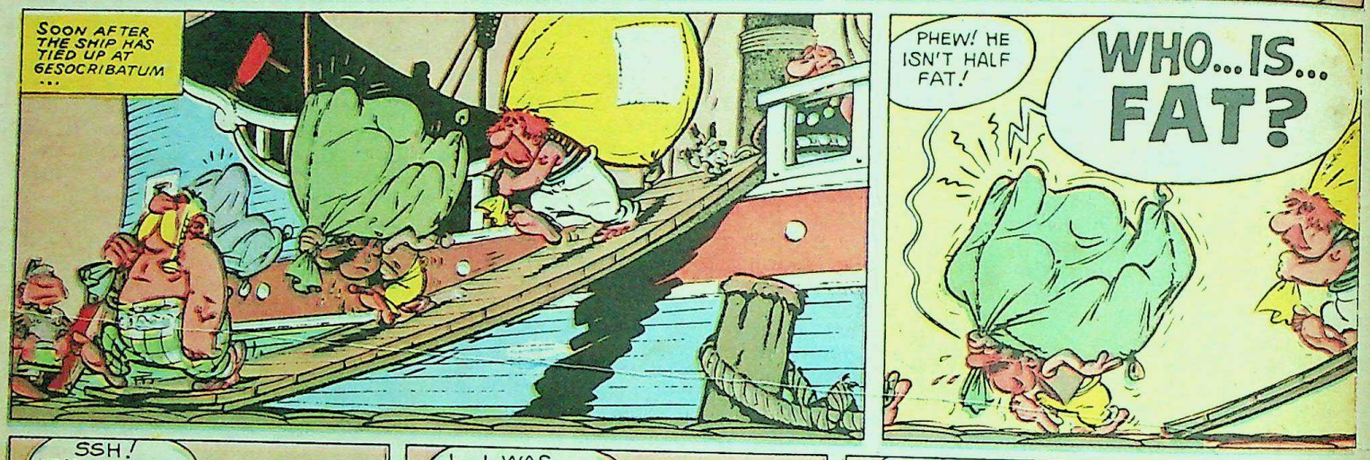

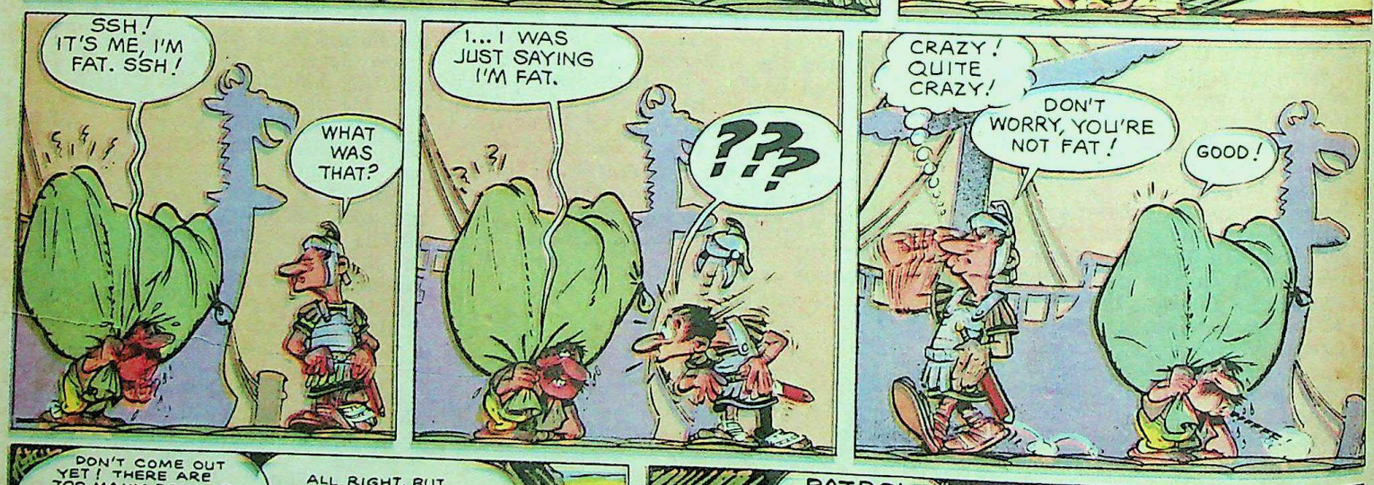

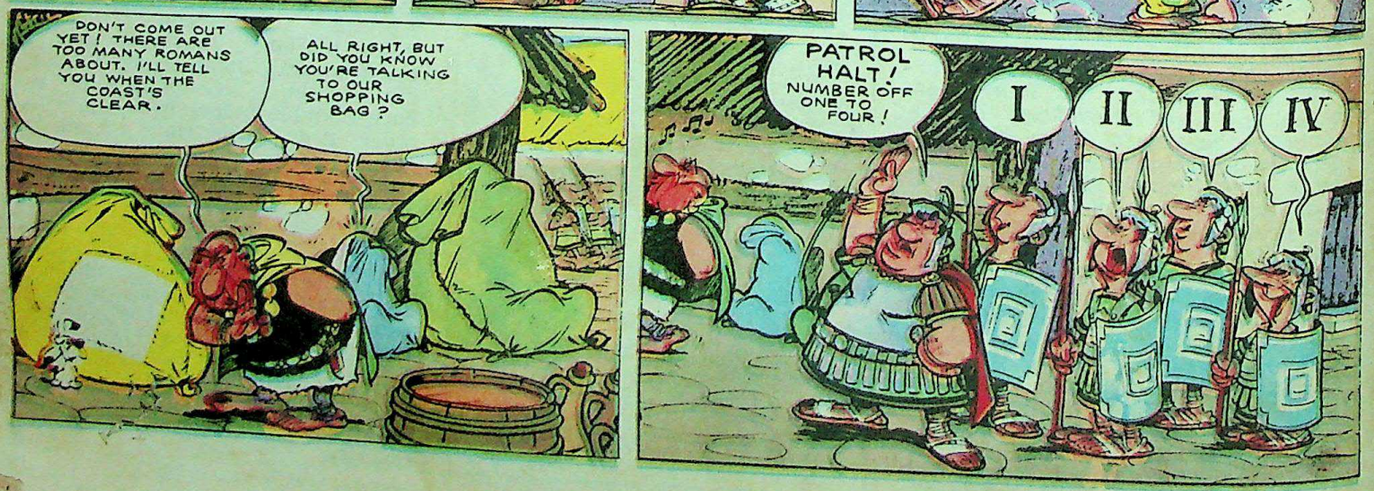

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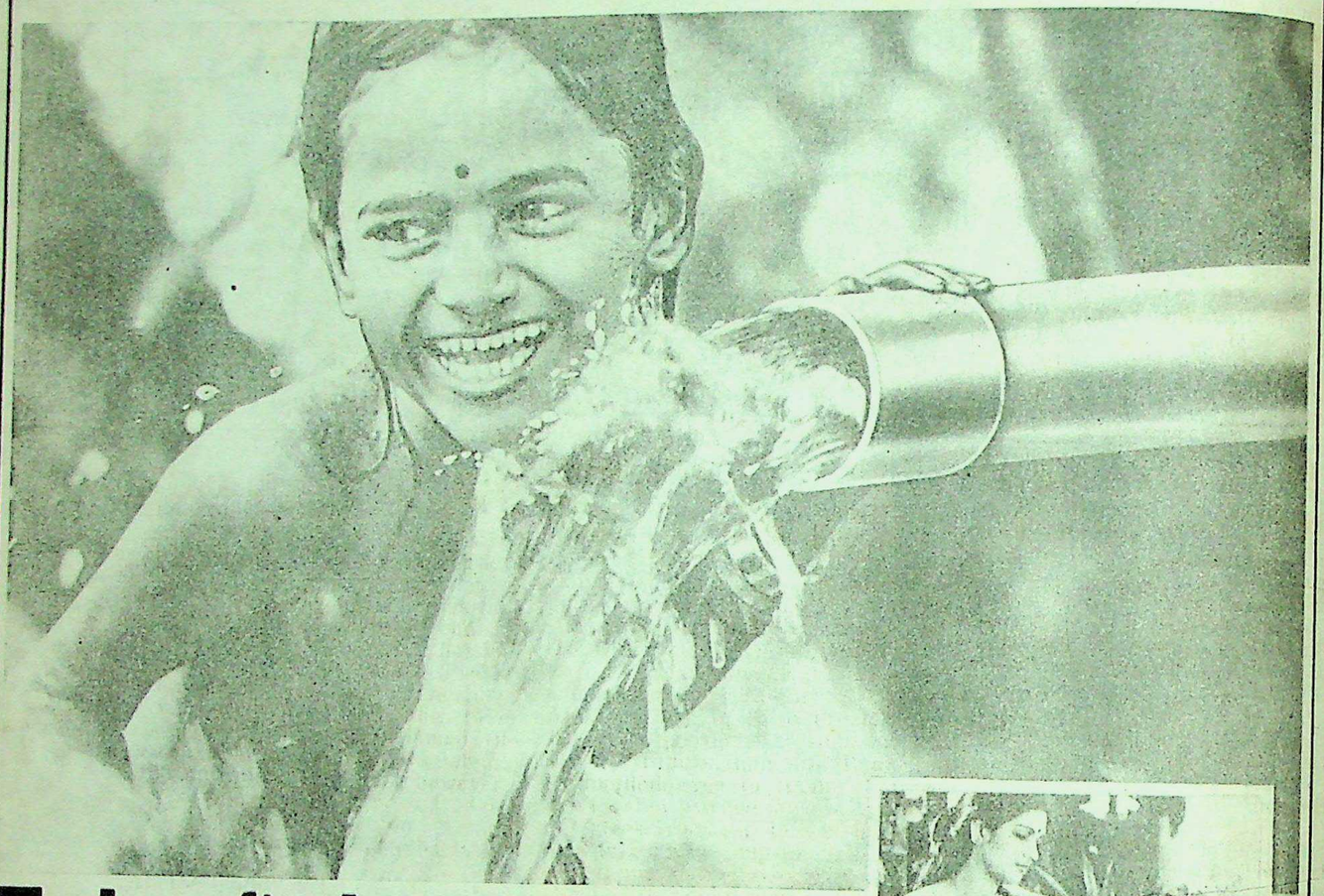

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Leading the blind

By RAJENDRA MATHUR

AFTER voting massively for Mrs Gandhi—and in a country as big and variegated as India, the support of 43 people out of 100 ought to be considered massive—the nation is looking over its shoulders and wondering if it has done the right thing. Prices are rising and Mrs Gandhi has been doing nothing. Populist leftism, which saw her through the seventies, has fallen by the wayside, and the 20-point programme is a dodoistic revival. To connoisseurs of Mrs Gandhi's career, her inaction is not strange; she rarely acts unless she is at bay. The people at large are aware of this, but they would rather not remember the inconvenient truth, for Mrs Gandhi is still India's best bet for action. It does not matter if her action is convulsive and sporadic, for it is convulsive action which has been pulling us out of tight spots ever since 1962. Steady action needs a steady philosophy of growth bringing in steady dividends, and none of the mainstream Parties of India is left with any such philosophy. In that sense, the election of Mrs Gandhi signifies the end of ideas and of ideology, and the beginning of an era of pan-Indian blindness. We all want Mrs Gandhi to act, but does any intellectual or economist or would-be prophet have the foggiest idea of how he would have acted if he had been entrusted with a mandate as massive as Mrs Gandhi's? If a bunch of blind men were to be asked to elect a leader who could deal most successfully with a tiger who had broken loose amongst them, they would of course elect a person with the surest convulsive instincts.

Would the picture be much rosier if the Janata Party had won, or more impossibly, the Lok Dal? Luckily, an answer to this question is not hypothetical; it can be deduced with a fair degree of accuracy on the basis of what has been happening to the opposition since its rout three months ago. Here are some of the scenarios of the road which we did not take.

If the Janata Party had won, Mr Jagjivan Ram would now be the Prime Minister of India, fulfilling—like Morarji Desai and Charan Singh before him—the intensest, unstated ambition of his life. (They all want to become Prime Ministers without knowing what they would do with it.) And in less than six months, the works would have begun.

Jagjivan Ram would not have liked to serve as the Harijan facade of the RSS; he would be crediting the Janata victory to his own personal stature rather than to the cadres of the Sangh. The Sangh would be boiling with inner rage, for Jagjivan Ram would be describing them as the proverbial dog beneath the bullock cart who thought he was hauling the whole load. Party elections would still be out of the question and committees would continue to be ad hoc. Jagjivan Ram would perhaps be trying to Congressise the Janata Party by engineering defections from the Congress (I) and Congress (U). They would have taken place even if he did not try. Chavan and Chandrashekhar would have fretted at the spectacle of Cong-

Vivendra Tyagi

ressmen uniting under the banner of Jagjivan Ram, but mild-mannered Swaran Singh would be extending his fullest cooperation. Realignment would be the need of the hour, for Raj Narain, sore with Charan Singh, would need a new home, and Madhu Limaye would be seething with a new thesis. In the hierarchy of untouchability, the Congress (I), the RSS and the Lok Dal traitors would be placed differently by different factions.

If the Lok Dal had won, the works would have started immediately. Raj Narain would have instantly found his new mission: the demolition of Charan Singh. "The dictatorship of Charan Singh", he would have thundered, "is much worse than the dictatorships of Indira Gandhi and Morarji Desai put together."

If Jagjivan Ram had been the Prime Minister, we would be witnessing strange bedfellows uniting to dislodge him. Charan Singh would be making overtures to the RSS and the RSS might be joining hands with Mrs Gandhi to pass a motion of no-confidence against Jagjivan Ram. Or the Prime Minister might be making a deal with Mrs Gandhi, promising the abolition of the special courts and sundry other prosecutions.

Newpapers would be informing us of these mighty and tempestuous happenings day after day, while nothing really would be happening.

Jagjivan Ram would have been as devoid of ideas as Mrs Gandhi is; no man holds back his originality, until his seventy-second year, waiting to unleash it after he has become Prime Minister. Charan Singh, on the other hand, would have gleefully leapt into several abysses without looking. His Government would have come unstuck in no time, because drastic measures need prior preparation and the creation of a political base to sustain them, for which Charan Singh would have no aptitude. The measures would boomerang on him and finish him off, provided that he had not already been done in by his Hanuman. Inaction and whimsical action would have brought us to the same point: the point of non-government. Following a different route, Mrs Gandhi too compulsively arrives at this very point.

It should be obvious from the above that the alternative to Mrs Gandhi next time cannot be the spent forces of contemporary opposition. Having proved barren, mindless and factious once, they do not deserve another chance, for they are sure to repeat 1977-79. Qualitatively, they are bound to be poorer than Mrs Gandhi. And yet it is strange to see heptagenarian leaders posing themselves as the wave of the future.

The alternative is yet unborn. It shall be born when new political forces come up from below and assert themselves. When Harijans really mobilise as a political force, their authentic leader would surely not be Jagjivan Ram, who has been for 34 years a part of the establishment. When farmers cultivating 15 to 20 acres land together more effectively, would they still have a hare-brained Charan Singh as their leader? Would the opposition have no better tactician than factious Madhu Limaye? It is difficult to believe that the nation has become so frustratingly barren.

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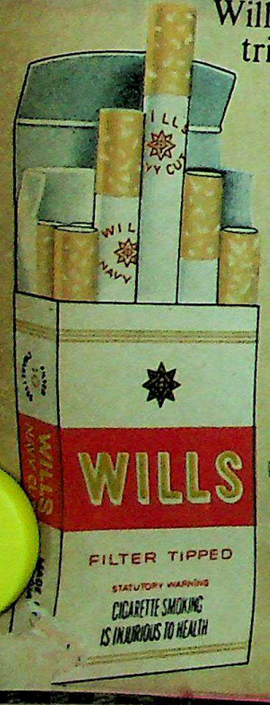

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Ministers in the making

By BARUN SENGUPTA

THERE will be major changes in the Central Cabinet soon after the state elections. At least two or three Central Ministers are expected to go to their respective states after the state elections to assume new responsibilities, so there will be a few vacancies. Some important Ministries have also not been filled in as yet while some of the present Ministers are likely to be shifted to other Ministries according to the assessment of the Congress (I) High Command in the light of their performance during the last four months.

Among the Central Ministers who are expected to go to their own states J. B. Patnaik seems to be a certainty. The Congress (I) is almost sure to get an absolute majority in Orissa and Patnaik, as the "most trusted" politician from Orissa, will be selected as Chief Minister of the state. He remained with Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay during the days of their crisis and however hard Biju Patnaik and Nandini Satpathy may try, it will be impossible for them to weaken JB's position in the Delh. Durbar immediately.

Giani Zail Singh's name is also being mentioned for Chief Ministership. If he goes to Punjab, either Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao or Mr C. M. Stephen will take charge of the Union Home Ministry. Zail Singh is still considered to be very close to Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay — but they cannot be satisfied with his performance in Parliament. Some important persons close to the Party High Command feel that Zail Singh would be more at home in the Chandigarh Secretariat and Punjab Assembly than in the Union Home Ministry and Parliament.

Will P. C. Sethi be also sent back to his own state? There are suggestions that because of his ill health he would do b.tter in Bhopal than in Delhi. But nothing will depend on this suggestion and everything will be decided on the assessment of Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay. They would definitely not like to make V. C. Shukla the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. But who wil then be the Chief Minister in Bhopal? Dr Sankar Dayal Sharma? That is also most unlikely. Then would not Sethi's name come up naturally?

Of all the Central Ministers, Narasimha Rao, Pranab Mukherjee and Vasant Sathe are reported to be considered "most successful" by the Party High Command. Their performances, both in the Secretariat and in Parliament, are being rated as "first class" and "high second class" respectively. With virtually no experience in international diplomacy what Mr Rao has done so far as Mrs Gandhi's Foreign Minister is considered to be "excellent". Pranab Mukherjee's performance as the leader of the Rajya Sabha, where the Congress (I) was in a minority till the other day, is being considered as "first class". It is being said that what he achieved in Paris during his short visit is a "miracle" — though facts of this "miraculous achievement" are not being disclosed immediately due to security reasons. Vasant Sathe was given the formidable task of building up a rapport with the Press, which, the High Command thinks he has been able to do with tact and intelligence to a large extent.

Vasant Sathe

Imagemakers

But all these "successful" Ministers hold very important portfolios. So, it will not be easy to shift them to other important Ministries. If Zail Singh goes to Punjab and Mr Rao is made the Home Minister, then Mrs Gandhi may personally take over the External Affairs Ministry. There is talk that Pranab Mukherjee will be given the Ministry of Revenue and Banking again, by bringing out these two important departments from the Finance Ministry altogether. But who will then be given the Ministry of Foreign Trade which has become an empire in itself and which is expected to be enlarged further in the near future? Sathe can be given some other additional Ministries, but in the midst of his first assignment the High Command is most unlikely to shift him to any other Ministry however important that may be. It should be remembered that none of these "successful Ministers" are known to be 100 per cent Sanjay-men as are A. B. A. Gani Khan Chowdhury, Zail Singh and A. P. Sharma.

Some new persons will also have to be taken into the Cabinet. This time, it is expected to be a "long term" arrangement (at least for two years) and as such no Minister is expected to be in temporary charge. More Ministers will naturally be needed to fill the vacancies. In circles close to the High Command the names of Sukhadia, Salve and Bahuguna are still being mentioned. Of course, if Bahuguna "tries to play any trick" during the Uttar Pradesh state election then his future in the Congress (I) will be completely sealed.

Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay will face more difficulties in selecting the Chief Ministers than in nominating the new Central Ministers. The Congress (I) has no accepted leader in any of the nine states and in all the states the prospective leaders are vying with each other to prove their loyalty to the High Command. But the High Command knows and during the last months has clearly realised that only loyalty will not do. The question of tact, efficiency and acceptability will also have to be considered. Recently, Sanjay is reported to have commented : 'Nobody is my man. Like any other organisation our Party would also like to select the right person for the right job'. The main question is : Who is the right person?

No doubt, efficiency will be considered. The Congress (I) will have to run the state governments and the country. The problems are vast and the situation is very complicated and tense. No single leader, however, efficient he or she may be, can tackle this situation alone. Efficient assistants and helping hands are needed. But, in spite of this, loyalty and reliability will also be important factors during the selection of Chief Ministers and Central Ministers in the month of May. The High Command would not definitely like to boost anyone (however efficient he may be) who may try to harm them in future or may change sides in the question of succession.

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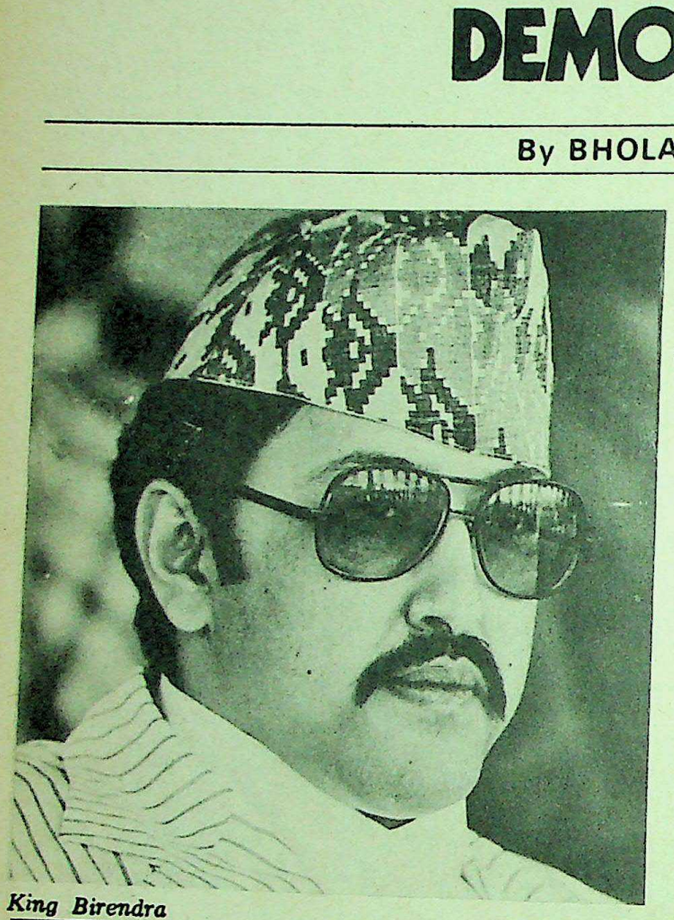
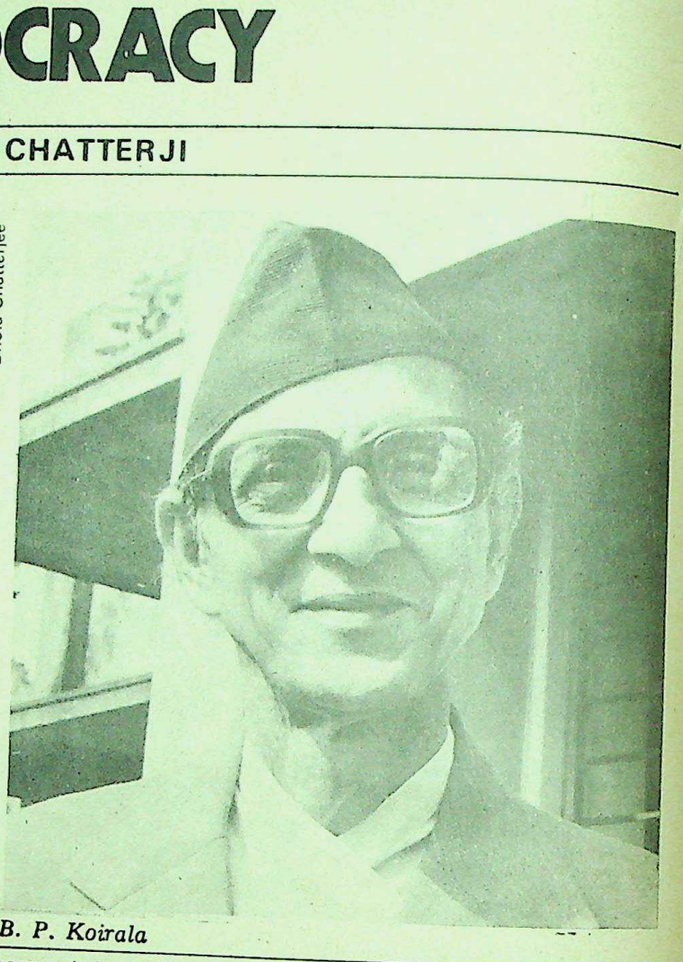
NEPAL: RE-ENTER DEMOCRACY

By BHOLA CHATTERJI



Bhola Chatterjee

King Birendra



B. P. Koirala

IN another few days, May 2, to be precise, the people of Nepal would troop to the polls to decide whether the authoritarian Partyless panchayat or a multi-Party system of polity should rule the country. For the first time in the history of the country 72 lakh voters would on the basis of universal adult franchise participate in a national referendum the significance of which could hardly be overstated. Even a cursory glance at the Nepalese political scene would leave no room for doubt that 1980 is destined to be a turning-point in the kingdom's contemporary history. If 1950 was a watershed in the life of the people, 1980 is most likely to determine whether Nepal would remain a single political entity or break up into as many mutually hostile political units as there are ethnic and linguistic groups.

The battle lines have been drawn, contending passions aroused and the aspirants for the electorate's sanction are grimly biding their time to make or mar things. And that in the name of the King, country and welfare of the nation. A bloody revolution catapulted Nepal into the 20th century in 1950, it is now set to make up for two lost decades through yet another revolution, albeit by consent. Sounds paradoxical? No reason why it should if one takes a close look at the men who are in the limelight, all the circumstances and, of course, the dumb multitude that drags an existence which holds out little hope and no promise.

By common consent the Eton-Harvard-Tokyo-educated 34-year-old King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, tenth in the line of the Shah dynasty founded by Prithvi Narayan Shah, and 65-year-old former, first and so far last elected Prime Minister, Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, are the two men who matter most in the life of the ruggedly beautiful land of the Himalayas. On a collison course until recently, the two are now in a rapport that not a few look askance at. The responsive relations between King Birendra and Koirala are at once the most puzzling and reassuring factor in the Nepalese equation, depending on which side of the fence one is.

At the time Koirala, the undisputed leader of the now technically banned (the panchayat system forbids the existence of political Parties) Nepali Congress, made the 1950-51 revolution, King Birendra was an infant. His grandfather, the late King Tribhuvan, was virtually a prisoner in the hands of Mohan Shumsher, the last of the hereditary Rana Prime Ministers who despotically ruled Nepal for a century. King Tribhuvan cast in his lot with the Koirala-led democratic forces to rid the country of the stranglehold Rana feudalism had put on it as well as to liberate the institution of monarchy. Between then and King Birendra's accession to the throne in January 1972, following the death of his father King Mahendra who had sent Nepalese democracy to the block, the political situation had undergone a sea-change. The Palace, which had assumed absolute power, was locked in a fierce struggle with Koirala who was determined to restore Nepal to democracy.

For better or worse the developments since have facilitated the initiation of a meaningful dialogue between King Birendra and Koirala. This has eventually encouraged them to identify the areas of agreement regarding the basic problem of Nepa-

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lese politics—restitution of democratic government to the people. Much to the chagrin of the Partyless panchayat faithfuls and even some of his own friends, Koirala's repeated emphasis has in recent times been on two points: (a) King Birendra's bona fides are not suspect; (b) the need for effective cooperation between the Palace and the people to get the country back on the rails. As Koirala recently said at a referendum rally in Bhairahwa, the kingdom would not be able to come to grips with the crisis that confronted it unless democratic rule was re-established. Equally true was the fact that neither democracy nor monarchy would survive without mutual cooperation. More, he emphasized, in the given context "monarchy's role in nation-building is paramount". He has at the same time cautioned whoever would care to listen that since "monarchy is an institution acceptable to all...it should not be involved in any controversy".

THIS was no music in the panchayat exponent's ear. The advocates of the Partyless panchayat democracy, an evident contradiction in terms, have been continually harping on the note that it enjoys the King's unreserved support. For the system is the only effective answer to the kingdom's problem of politics. Through public speeches, Press statements and cleverly manipulated reports in *The Rising Nepal* the country's only government-owned English language daily, broad hints are given to the gullible that, whatever might have been the developments since the King's referendum announcement on May 24 last year, the Palace counts on them to pull it off. With crude cunning the panchayat camp exploits every available forum to sell the line that the Palace and the panchayat system are but two sides of the same coin. In fact the security and safety of the Crown and the country are inseparably linked up with the continuance of the panchayat system. As former nominated Prime Minister Tulsi Giri, one of the most sharp operators in the panchayat camp, put it some days ago, "threat to it (Nepal's national interest), if any, would come, not from outside, but from fifth columnists such as the banned Nepali Congress".

Taken at their face value the raucous cries of the panchayat promoters would suggest that a favourable referendum verdict is a foregone conclusion. Tap any of the senior panchayat leaders, for instance, Matrika Prasad Koirala (elder half-brother of B. P. Koirala), Kirtinidhi Bista, Tulsi Giri, Nagendra Prasad Rijal (all former nominated Prime Ministers) and the present Prime Minister, Surya Bahadur Thapa, and he would reel off a fantastic volume of statistical data to establish that the Partyless panchayat sysem inheres in it all the virtures and none of the vices of every conceivable brand of democratic polity.

Their argument is that King Mahendra had introduced the panchayat system "because nationalism and democracy were difficult to maintain under a multi-Party system". Tulsi Giri would go a step further, convinced as he is that nothing is unfair in war and love, and assert that "the panchayat system was peculiar to the Nepalese people and was not less democratic than the democratic system obtaining in any of the rich countries". Comments are unnecessary, considering that it will not be very easy to find Giri's peer even among amoral panchayat promoters who habitually make a virtue of political opportunism.

Talking of Giri, one cannot help mentioning that few Nepalese politicians can match his capacity for rationalizing even the most blatant act of perfidy and personal aggrandizement. More than once he has been the country's nominated Prime Minister only to be given the sack for mucking up matters, internal as well as external. Until recently he was under a cloud for his alleged involvement in what is known as the "carpet scandal"—a multi-million rupee export racket that made a great stir in the country. The former Prime Minister had maintained a low profile since the May 24 referendum declaration last year. Giri is reported to have told some politicians that, as soon as he would able to get himself absolved from the "carpet scandal", he would expose all about the graft, corruption and misuse of public money men in high places indulged in. Not only that, he would spare no pains to unhinge the Partyless panchayat system which was a "fraud" on the people. Most panchayat leaders hold that Giri who cuts up rough at little or no provocation and who reportedly enjoys the support of the now disbanded Rastrawadi Vidhyarthi Mandal, an outfit of fanatically panchayat supporting musclemen, is indeed a thorn in their flesh. But there is little they could do about it, for Giri has patrons who are too powerful to be touched.

THAT the panchayat camp is a house divided against itself is not exactly news. Unlike Alexander Dumas's *Three Musketeers*, every one of the senior panchayat leaders stands for himself, for the Palace's patronage, for personal power and all that goes with it. Matrika Prasad, otherwise a suave person, is a panchayat campaigner not because he has convinced himself that the system is based on sound principles and guarantees a cure for what ails the country. After all, he was president of the Nepali Congress at the time of the 1950-51 revolution; and he could not possibly have unlearnt all the lessons of history he had learnt the hard way. But then, lack of will to undergo suffering and make sacrifice, the desire for power and the good life plus family conflict have landed him in the company of men not one of whom would hesitate to consign him to limb when it comes to the crunch.

Matrika Prasad is not unaware of this. He is also alive to the fact that he could never occupy the Prime Minister's chair unless the Palace desired it and that his panchayat colleagues would oppose him severally and collectively. And he is aware that the present Prime Minister would feel no qualms about deserting the panchayat camp should the referendum verdict go in favour of the multi-Party system.

In terms of resources, however, the panchayat camp is apparently very firm on its legs. Knowledgeable sources confirm that the panchayat propagandists have so far collected about (Nepalese) rupees (100 Indian rupees-145 Nepalese rupees) one crore fifty lakh. Others apart, the panchayat camp is aided and abetted by all manner of vested interests, not excluding a sizable number of former Ranas, landed interests, businessmen and those who have during the 19-year panchayat rule benefitted by their active association with the system. It would not do to suggest that the system has no committed supporters. It has and the bulk of them are from the officially constituted network of basic panchayat units in the rural and urban areas.

It is a hard fact that the panchayat camp also has allies in the royal family, King Birendra excluded. Some very influential members of the sprawling royal family, who control between them the most sensitive and complex segments of the administrative apparatus, have a high stake, both political and economic, in the authoritarian system. Small wonder that nothing would stop them from throwing a spanner in the works. And the ramified organizational structure the panchayat system has spawned over the years, particularly in the remote hill areas where the 20th century still has a tenuous foothold, would be of considerable help to the anti-democratic forces. Intrigues and conspiratorial politics, exploitation, physical violence and the nearly total absence of any effective opposition have generated a climate of fear and fatalism. Continuous drumming on the point that the institution of monarchy and the panchayat system are indissolubly interlinked has not gone to waste. Could it be denied that until the other day King Birendra was the most eloquent champion of the panchayat system.

The picture has another side. The panchayat camp no longer enjoys the King's active patronage. Not that the King has suddenly grown tired of exercising absolute power. Rather a combination of factor has obliged him not to ignore the writing on the wall. He knows it quite well that a section of panchayat hardliners and externally inspired forces of destabilization had a hand in the arson and violence that rocked Kathmandu last May. Neither is he in the dark about the aspirations of some of his close relations, not to speak of their extensive financial interests. Also, if Iran reminds of the tragedy that might befall a tripping monarch.

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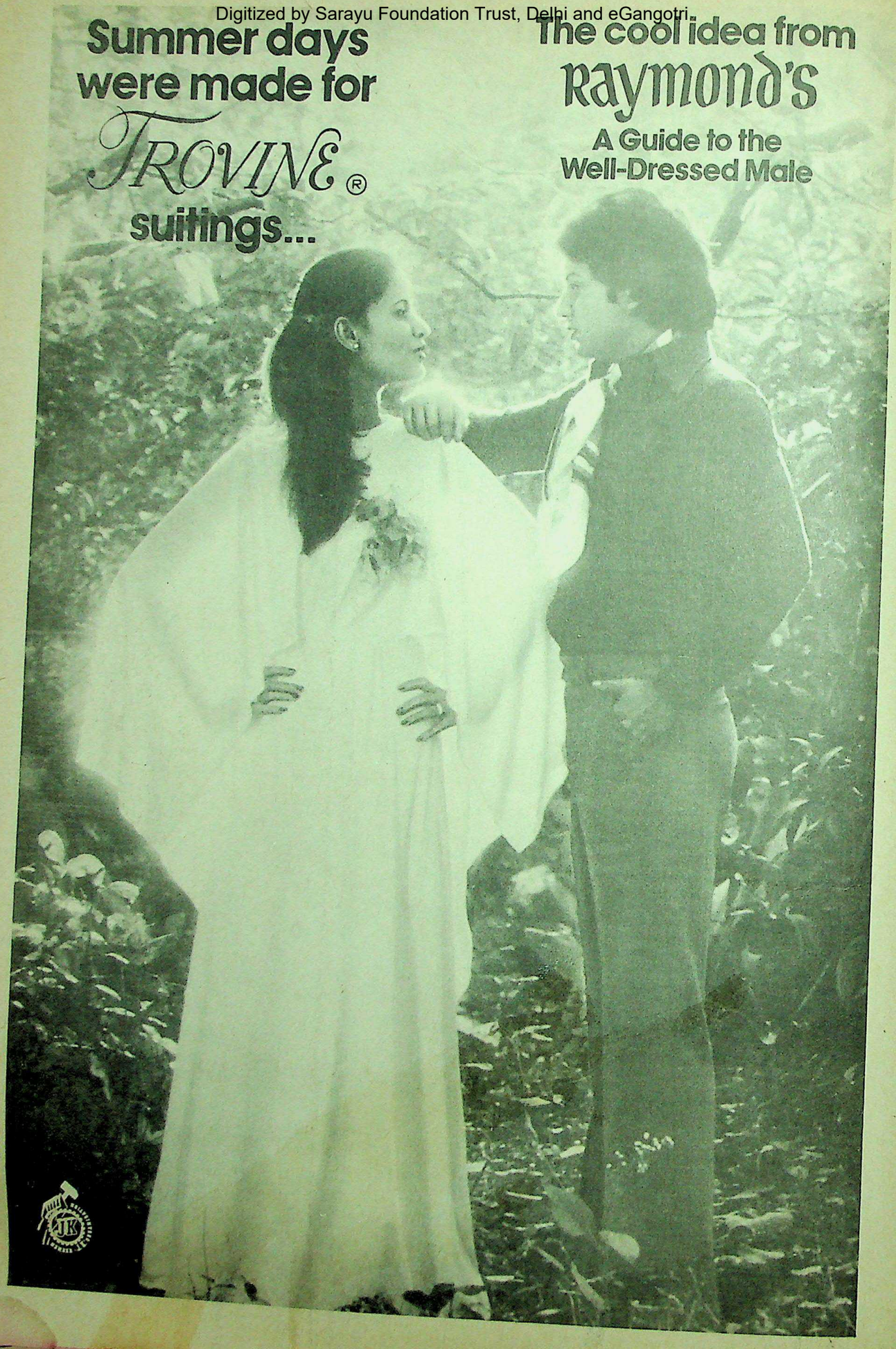

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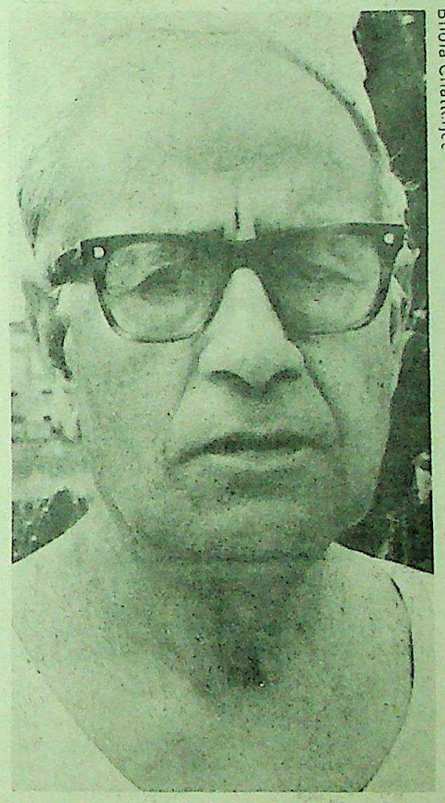
Koirala's words and deeds assure him that the democrats form a dike between anarchy and the institution of monarchy. He is convinced that Koirala is not talking for effect when he says that the Palace and the people must pull together for an effective response to both internal and external challenges.

Of the numerous other factors which are likely to queer the panchayat camp's pitch, the blighted economy is certainly a major one. The performance of the economy in the last two decades has been generally indifferent and, at times, positively counter-productive. In spite of the steady inflow of fairly large quantum of foreign aid and assistance, reasonable mobilization of local resources, elaborate planning and what have you, the economy has refused to oblige the panchayat administration. If official economic experts who are wonted to making understatements, for instance, Y. P. Pant, call the economy "unsatisfactory" others would say that it is in downright bad shape. The fact that Nepal, which has all along been exporting food, "seemed likely", as Lok Raj Baral put it, to be converted "into a food importing country" speaks volumes for the difficult state of the economy. The panchayat government's management of the economy is a sad account of utter inefficiency, wasted opportunities and wrong priorities, of acts of malfeasance and misfeasance. It seems the economic policy formulators do not even have an understanding of the cruel problem of poverty that smites the people. The acting president of the Nepali Congress, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, is not far from wrong when he says that the 19-year panchayat rule has only increased the already massive volume of poverty and unemployment. As he said at a Pokhara Bar Association meet recently, "the rich had become richer and the poor poorer under the panchayat system".

To illustrate the point, five families, not of Nepalese origin, have, during panchayat rule, literally climbed from rags to riches. They are still making their pile, thanks to the highly profitable two-way traffic between them and the panchayat leaders. And where the poverty line gets drawn is anybody's guess. The economic stagnation is much too severe to escape even the most superficial observer's notice. Soaring prices, a shrinking employment market and nil growth rate indeed would not help narrow the panchayat camp's widening credibility gap.

IF cowardice is infectious, courage is perhaps more so. For proof, just step into the Nepali Congress' office at Ranipokhari. With each day that passes, increasing numbers of people from almost every walk of life come there to identify themselves with the democratic forces. Streams of young men and women, their eyes sparkling with hope, come there every day for guidelines and material assistance that the leaders might give them. Their requests are modest; campaign literature, posters and strips of blue cloth—blue happens to be the election colour allotted to the multi-Party camp. More often then not they draw a blank, for the Party coffers are always empty. A few words of encouragement, instructions to make do with locally collected resources are all that Krishna Prasad spares the young idealists before ordering them to remote areas, to reach some of which might require quite a few days' trekking.

The Nepali Congress, its long years in the wilderness notwithstanding, has a large cadre of committed workers. Its organisational base, however, is not as strong as might be desired. To make up for this there is the charismatic Koirala who projects a picture of quiet confidence. He has no doubt about the outcome



Bhola Chatterjee

Matrika Prasad Koirala

of the referendum; and he firmly believes that King Birendra will not break his word. As he sees it, the lingering shreds of suspicion, if any, have been dispelled by the King's grant of general amesty. Which, in fact, has put the panchayat camp at a disadvantage and done the democrats a good turn. It may not be irrelevant here to touch on other groups and individuals that have made common cause with the democratic forces. For instance, Dilli Raman Begmi, along with former Prime Ministers Tanka Prasad Acharya and K. I. Singh. Besides, there are the communist groups, both pro-Beijing and pro-Moscow. True, numerically and otherwise the pro-Moscow communists led by Keshar Jung Rayamjhi count for little. But this does not apply to the group that functions under Monmohan Adhikari's leadership. Founder of the communist movement in Nepal, Adhikari is said to be the leader of one of the pro-Beijing groups. The fact of the matter is that Adhikari, who is Beijing oriented, is the only Nepa i communist leader with a certain following. Admitting his friendly attitude toward China, Adhikari tol me, in no uncertain terms, that he was first and last a Nepal patriot and that the point at issue currently was not communism but the restoration of democracy. In the circumstances, the only course open to him was to work for the success of the multi-Party camp, of which, Adhikari readily conceded, Koirala was the unrivalled leader. That is why he chose to cooperate with the Nepali Congress.

This is not to suggest that the Nepali Congress will just romp through the referendum. It is hamstrung by forces and factors that just cannot be wished away. Relentless persecution and suffering over a two-decade long period have not left the Party unscathed. Dogged, almost all along by the interminable process of fission, fusion and fission, it is certainly in no position to claim that it is as purposefully united today as it was when it won, hands down, the country's first general elections in 1959. Lack of resources, intra-Party conflict and, above all, the large gaps in the leadership chain have had their adverse effect. Could it be denied that the distance, albeit in terms of leadership qualities, between Koirala and the rest is much too great? Another complicating factor is the presence of the big powers. They are not disinterested onlookers; each has its own set of reasons to take more than merely an academic interest in the goings-on in Nepal. It is just that some do it brazenly while others prefer to act on the sly. This is something the democrats can hardly afford to ignore.

Be that as it may, it does not call for much inside knowledge to say that things will never be the same again in Nepal, irrespective of the referendum verdict. Even if the panchayat group gets through, the kingdom will not revert to the authoritarian system it suffered from these past two decades. For that matter, a carbon-copy of the Westminster variety of Parliamentary framework will not immediately become operative should the people opt for the multi-Party system. But one thing is sure and it is that post-referendum Nepal, no matter what nomenclature its political system might adopt, will have no more than two alternatives to choose from. Either its political system must depend for its survival on the people, ensuring their participation in the decision-making process, or it must brace itself to meet the challenge of the forces of disruption and disintegration. King Birendra knows it, so does Koirala. Which, in a way, explains why the two are talking on nearly identical wavelengths. ■

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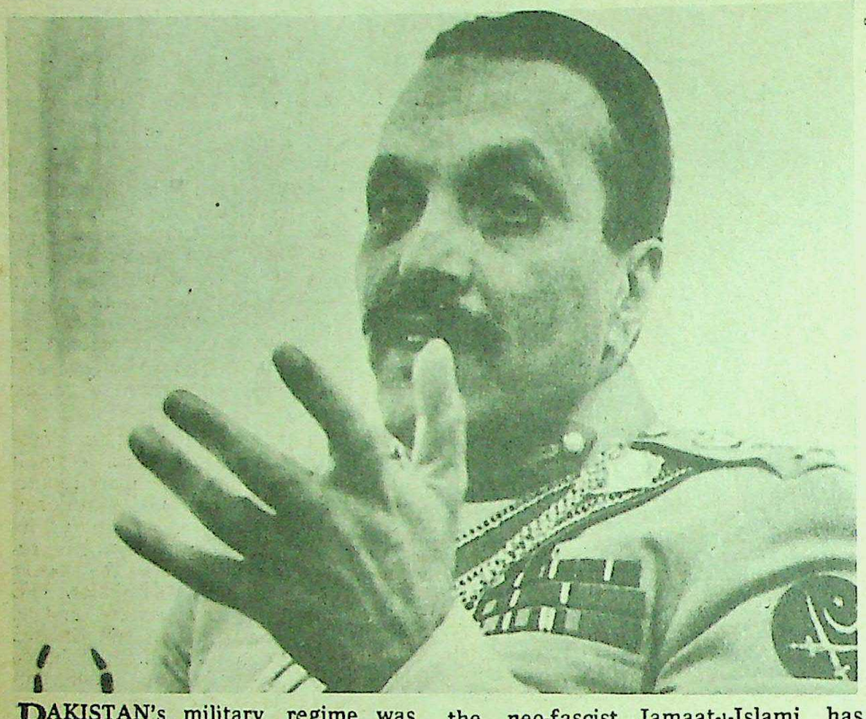
Move over Zia

But who will take his place ?



— Raghu Rai

PAKISTAN's military regime was never regarded as a stable political enterprise in any major capital, with possible exception of Peking. The Chinese leaders have, over the past two decades, amply demonstrated their fondness for Pakistan's uniformed Presidents, but even they must now be developing serious doubts about Zia's viability. Developments in Pakistan over the last month indicate that the dictator's isolation is virtually complete. The General is more unpopular than he was at the time of Bhutto's execution a year ago. Undoubtedly aware of this fact, he recently told Pakistani journalists: "I am not a know-all. There are many Pakistanis who are abler than I, who are more capable than I, more competent than I. They must come at the right time to take off from where I leave. But I must leave at the proper place and not just run away". The fact of the matter is that the overwhelming majority of the country believes that there is no time like the present for the General to depart. Zia's refusal to share power gradually isolated him from the right-wing political Parties. Many of these have lost all credibility for having collaborated with the military in the first place. In reality they were cynically utilised by the Generals who felt the need for a modicum of civilian support in the period leading up to Bhutto's execution. Their services were dispensed with soon afterwards. Today even the neo-fascist Jamaat-i-Islami has withdrawn its support and called for a civilian Government.

The new crisis is clearly a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Zia was confronted with a real dilemma. The fact that hatred for his regime is almost universal inside Pakistan meant that he could not utilise the Soviet intervention to win mass support. The response of the Pakistani people to Afghanistan has been extremely muted. Many of Zia's opponents cherish the hope that the Red Army might solve their problems with a quick thrust onward to Islamabad. In private they will even say so. Immediately after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Pentagon and the US wanted to transform Pakistan into a US military base. This display of indecent haste further limited Zia's options. A regime as unpopular and unrepresentative as his could not afford a decision which might further inflame public opinion. So the US plan was rejected on the grounds that the £ 175 million being offered was 'peanuts'. At the same time Pakistani civil servants made it known to the United States that most of the aid should, in any event, be routed through China, which was still regarded as the country's 'oldest ally'. The State Department was displeased and talk of replacing Zia began to be heard in the corridors. Aware of what was taking place, the desperate dictator threw out some feelers to the Soviet Union. He offered to allow mutually agreed inspection teams to be stationed on the Pak-Afghan border and stressed Pakistan's commitment to 'non-alignment'. The Cuban Foreign Minister recently visited Pakistan to assess the situation, but Moscow itself has yet to respond to the overtures.

Between 14 and 17 March there was a half-baked attempt at a coup designed to topple Zia. It failed and a Chinese military delegation in the country led by Xiao Ke, Vice-Minister of Defence, pledged in public support 'as ever' the struggle of Pakistan 'and its armed forces' to safeguard the country. Zia dismissed two of his senior military colleagues and appointed six new Lieutenant-Generals. The two dismissed men, General Faiz Ali Chishti and Ghulam Hassan, were relieved of their military commands and dismissed from the Federal Cabinet. General Chishti had been the mastermind behind the coup which toppled Bhutto in July 1977. An extremely aggressive and self-confident officer, he had clearly chafed at the succession of mistakes made by Zia. General Ghulam Hassan, a Pathan General, was the Co-ordinator of the Intelligence Services and third most powerful General in the country.

Some weeks prior to his removal, Chishti had visited North America and Britain. While in London he had been unusually frank in informal discussions with Pakistanis resident in London. He stated that Zia was a disaster for the country ; that his incessant lies were an embarrassment to the military; that the army was in a demoralised state and "I've reached the end of my patience". Whether Chishti was being groomed to take over from Zia by the US State Department is an open question, but American journalists had evinced a remarkable interest in his movements since last December. Chishti remained confident even after his removal. A friend who rang him from London and asked what he intended to do was told : 'I'm at least the elected President of the Rawalpindi Golf Club !"

The break-up of the unity of the top echelons of the army is the strongest manifestation yet of the crisis afflicting Pakistan. Zia is seen as a liability by the United States. But who can replace him ? Another coup would not necessarily improve matters, though it might provide a bridge to the leadership of Bhutto's People's Party, which would win a majority in any election. But an election could prove to be an expensive gamble. It would unleash a set of mass mobilisation and in Baluchistan it would return a nationalist Government.

TARIQ ALI, London

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The cigarette war

Smoking injures the vendors, too

Dharna of cigarette retailers opposite the Municipal Corporation

"NEXT time you stop to buy a packet of cigarettes, think about the poor vendor's economic exploitation at the hands of manufacturers. Come to think of it, the courteous vendor is obliging the owners of cigarette industry. What does the vendor get in return for selling the cigarettes? Hardly anything; eight paise as gross pront on a packet means a daily gross income of only Rs 16 if a vendor sells as many as 200 packets. And most vendors don't sell as many as 200 packets; they subsist on the sales of bidi, pan matchboxes and cold drinks. This is grave injustice and we decided to do something about it", the organising secretary of the Mumbai Bidi-Tambakhu Vyapari Sangh, Mr Harishchandra Shetye, told SUNDAY.

To press their demands, the Sangh launched an indennite strike on April 4 and ever since not a single vendor in Bombay has reportedly traded in cigarettes. Till the time of going to press, there has been no perceptible softening of stands on either side—the 14,500 vendors represented by the Mumbai Bidi-Tambakhu Vyapari Sangh and the cigarette manufacturers by the Cigarette Manufacturers' Association. A compromise seems to have been ruled out and each side is apparently waiting for the other to surrender. The prelude to the strike was the dharna outside the factories of the two major cigarette manufacturers in the city—Golden Tobacco and Godfrey Phillips on March 27.

The Sangh's most important demand is that the commission for vendors must be raised to 15 per cent of a cigarette packet's market price and the wholesalers be given a commission of 2.5 per cent. If and when the cigarette manufacturers accept this formula it would mean a gross profit of 37.5 paise for the vendor and 6.5 paise for the wholesaler on a packet of cigarettes priced at Rs 2.50. The Sangh has communicated its demand to all the five principal cigarette manufacturers; Godfrey Phillips, ITC, Golden Tobacco, National Tobacco and the Vazir Sultan Tobacco company.

The Mumbai Bidi-Tambakhu Vyapari Singh was founded in 1968 under the leadership of George Fernandes who was responsible for initiating trade union movements in other fields too. The office bearers of the Sangh contend that over the years, cigarette vendors and wholesallers have been treated very shabbily by cigarette manufacturers. The prices of cigarettes have skyrocketed during the last decade but the vendors' commission has remained static. According to the Sangh organisers, the Government should have intervened in the matter long ago and brought an end to the "unpardonable and savage exploitation". Ashok Vaikul, the Sangh's secretary and the owner of a small cigarette shop in Bombay told SUNDAY: "We were agitating for some sort of common commission that is, trying to get for ourselves something akin to what the Government gives for all essential commodities. For instance, the grain and groceries retailers get 15 per cent. Also, lottery sellers get 15 per cent and the retailers of non-essential items like liquor get as much as 35 per cent as commission. Despite the fact that cigarettes are luxury items, on an average we only get six per cent as commission". A cigarette vendor told SUNDAY: "What I earn as commission is shameful. After sitting in the cigarette stall for more than 14 hours every day, we can't earn more than Rs 10. This is the gross profit. From this sum we have to substract the establishment cost, among other things. Eventually, our net income works out to less than Rs 9 every day".

Ashok Vaikul is confident about the success of the strike in Bombay. He says: "We first gave the manufacturers an eight-day ultimatum to amend their rates of commissions. They did nothing. So we did what we had said we would. Since the strike not a single cigarette pack has been lifted from any of Bombay's cigarette manufacturers. We are fortunate in one way. Since smokers found it impossible to buy cigarettes, they switched over to bidis where our commission is considerably higher, between 30 and 35 per cent. We have the strength to see this strike through".

The Sangh has now taken up the task of taking their struggle to other parts of the country. A delegation of Sangh workers came to Calcutta in the third week of April and organised a meeting which was attended by a large number of wholesalers and vendors. The Sangh proposes to organise a strike in Calcutta while the Sangh office bearers who had travelled from Bombay told SUNDAY in Calcutta: "We are happy with the response we received. We shall soon go to Delhi and Ahmedabad to meet cigarette vendors and wholesalers". On March 22, the group left for Ahmedabad.

Calcutta has roughly one lakh vendors, most of them without a proper licence issued by Corporation authorities. The initial investment is paltry enough to attract a large number of unemployed people. As a matter of fact, Calcutta is the largest cigarette selling centre in eastern India. ITC dominates the market in the region and the vendors and wholesalers are yet to form a proper union.

The Mumbai Bidi-Tambakhu Vyapari Sangh recently won a small battle against cigarette manufacturers. Sometime ago, ITC launched Classic, a luxury brand priced at Rs 10 but the vendors in Bombay refused to sell it unless they were given 15 per cent as commission. ITC did not agree to this demand and as a result vendors did not sell Classic. On the other hand, Golden Tobacco agreed to dish out a 15 per cent commission on their new product Panama Prince. As a result of this, cigarette vendors are making 28 paise as profit on every Panama Prince pack. The Sangh is also responsible for boosting the sales of Sivakasi match boxes in and around Bombay at the expense of Wimco. Sharad Rao, the Singh's president says that the movement of cigarette vendors will soon become a national phenomenon.

R. A. Poddar, chief executive advisor of Godfrey Phillips is bitterly critical of what the Cigarette Manufacturers' Association (CMA) calls "blackmail" on the part of vendors. He told SUNDAY in Bombay: "You have to remember that the vendors have made absolutely no investment—at one time we calculated that their annual profit on investment works out to over 740 per cent. Most of the vendors are selling the cigarettes at inflated rates and earning 1,500 per cent as profits in the process. And why are vendors in Bombay alone demanding larger commission? All over the country vendors get a standard 6 per cent commission".

It however appears that the movement will soon have the country in its grip. Unless a compromise is reached, in the near future smokers of all shades will face an acute cigarette famine. In Bombay, most middle class and lower middle class customers have already switched over to bidis.

S. N. M. ABDI and ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA, Bombay

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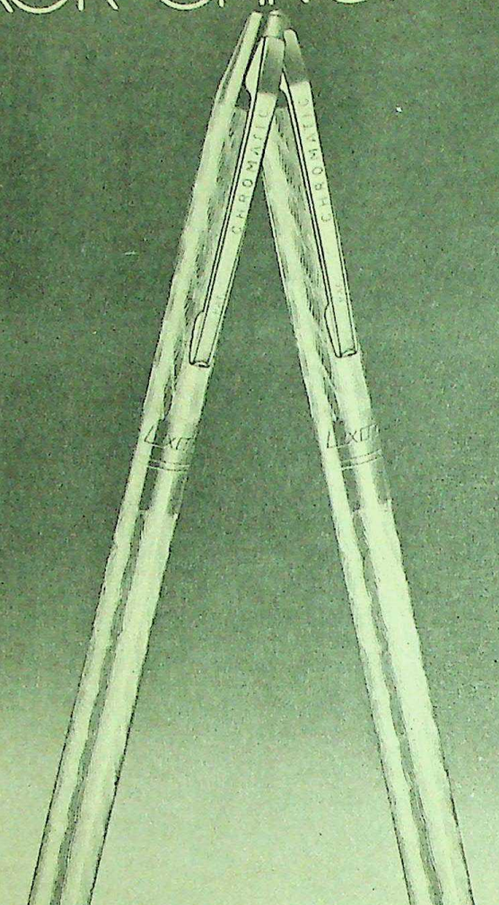
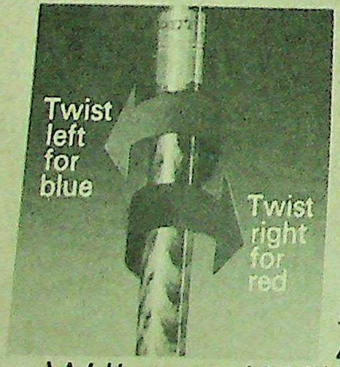
LUXOR-CHROMATIC



A PEN FIT TO BE SMUGGLED



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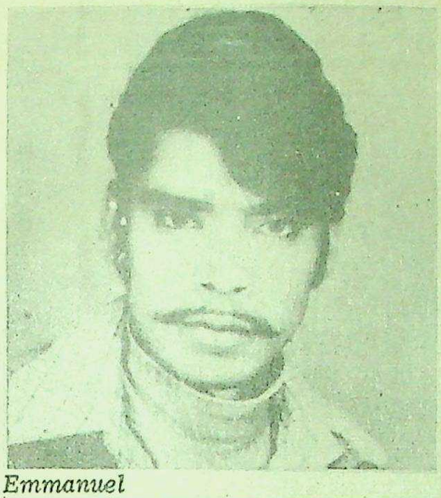
What was Emmanuel's crime?

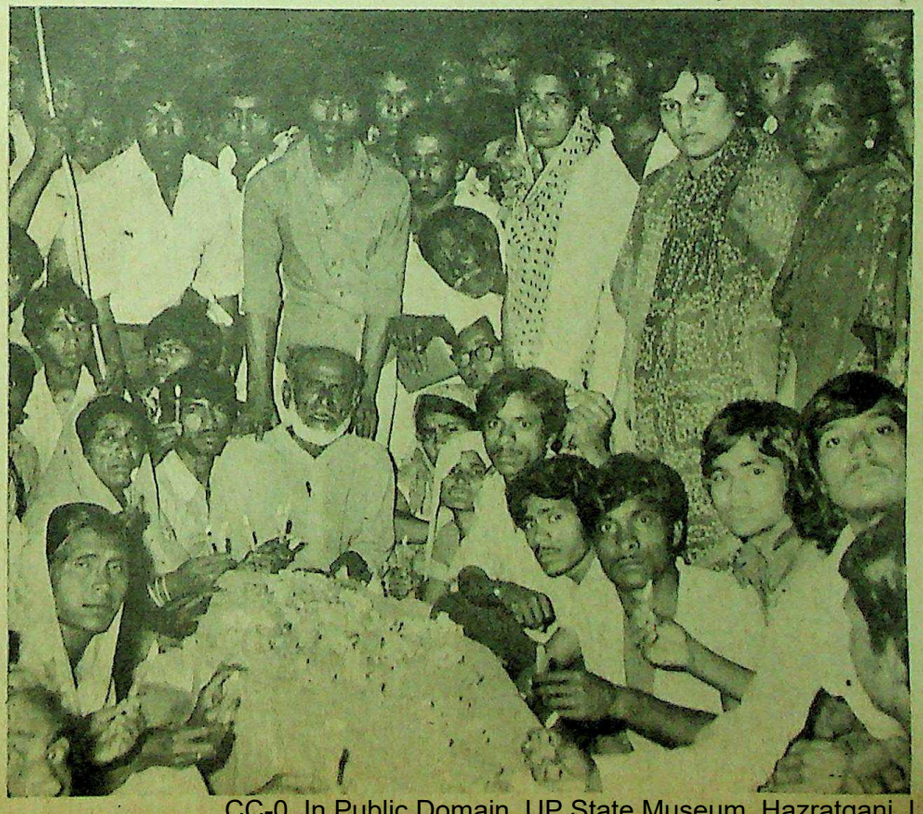
A case of no clues



Emmanuel

ON the morning of March 29, Emmanuel Williams, 22, finished his bath, got ready and left his home for Mehta Export, the factory where he worked. On the way he stopped at a tea stall near his house at Moor Lines, Delhi Cantonment, to have a cup of tea. Even before he could get his cup of tea, he suddenly felt a hand on his shoulder. He turned around and saw constable Vijay Pal Singh, standing next to him. Before he realised what was happening he was whisked away to the Delhi Cantonment police station for interrogation. The reason: he was suspected to be involved in the kidnapping of a girl, Raj, who had been missing for the last two days. Raj, a 14-year-old girl, and daughter of Jaipal Singh, a gate keeper at Palam cinema worked as a maid servant in a nearby locality. On March 27, she went out for shopping but never returned. To this date her whereabouts are unknown. Anxious about what had happened to his daughter, Jaipal Singh went to the Delhi Cantonment police station and lodged a complaint. He, however, did not file an FIR until March 31, wherein he stated that he suspected that Emmanuel might be involved in the kidnapping of his daughter. Sometime back he had found a photograph of Emmanuel in the possession of Raj. Suspecting that they were having an affair, he had admonished her. Further, he said that on the day his daughter disappeared, some people had seen Emmanuel around the locality where he lived. In the meanwhile, according to D. F. Williams, Emmanuel's father, word had got around that the police had taken away his son. He waited throughout the day for him to come back home. When finally, till the evening he did not return, he went to the police station to inquire. There he found his son in police custody, sitting in a corner and weeping after being subjected to torture. A similar pattern developed in the following days. Either on his way to work, or while returning from work, Emmanuel would be picked up by the police, interrogated and then released. Emmanuel would return home a broken boy and tell his father the torture he had gone through.

The dead body of Emmanuel



Helpless at what was happening, D. F. Williams, finally approached Mrs Vimal Nagi, an ex-Metropolitan Councillor and Member of the Contonment Board for help and advice. On April 8, Mrs Nagi, after hearing the story went to the police station and met the Station House Officer. She also saw Emmanuel in the police lock-up who, she said, on seeing her said: "The police will kill me, they won't leave me. Please help me get out of here". Once again, that night Emmanuel was released. But this did not stop his plight. Emmanuel's father said that every day the boy was taken for interrogation and he returned home in a bad condition. On April 11, too, Emmanuel was taken for interrogation by the police at around 4 in the evening. And the same day after a couple of hours, Emmanuel was found lying by the roadside about a 100 yards from his house, in an unconscious state, frothing at the mouth. Immediately, D. F. Williams's neighbours contacted him. He rushed to the spot and took his son to the cantonment general hospital. The doctors at the hospital referred the case to the Safdargunj hospital, where Emmanuel was admitted in the emergency ward. At no stage, despite the repeated beatings, could the police extract a statement from Emmanuel saying that he was involved in the kidnapping. For five days he battled for life, all the while unconscious and in a state of coma, unable to utter a word. On April 16, at 3.30 pm he died, without having issued any statement. Before his body was released, a post mortem was conducted.

That evening Emmanuel's body was brought to Moor Lines, to his home and was put in a coffin. By this time word of Emmanuel's death had spread and tempers got inflamed. Relatives, friends and neighbours who were aware of the police beating decided to take the body in a procession to the police station. With cries of "Khooni police hai, hai" (murderer police, shame, shame) and "Baccha mar diya, hai, hai" (they have killed a child, shame, shame), the procession proceeded to the police station. Most of those in the procession carried black flags and some had even draped themselves with black shawls. As the procession reached the police station and people refused to move, the SP and the ASP arrived. A. M. Das, the general secretary of the Air Force Civilian Workers Union, who was leading the procession along with Mrs Vimal Nagi, then explained the situation to the senior police officials, who assured them that the matter would be looked into. Finally, after a four-hour long dharna, and after the assurance had been given, the body was taken to the cantonment cemetery and Emmanuel's body was laid to rest in the presence of senior police officials. Subsequently,

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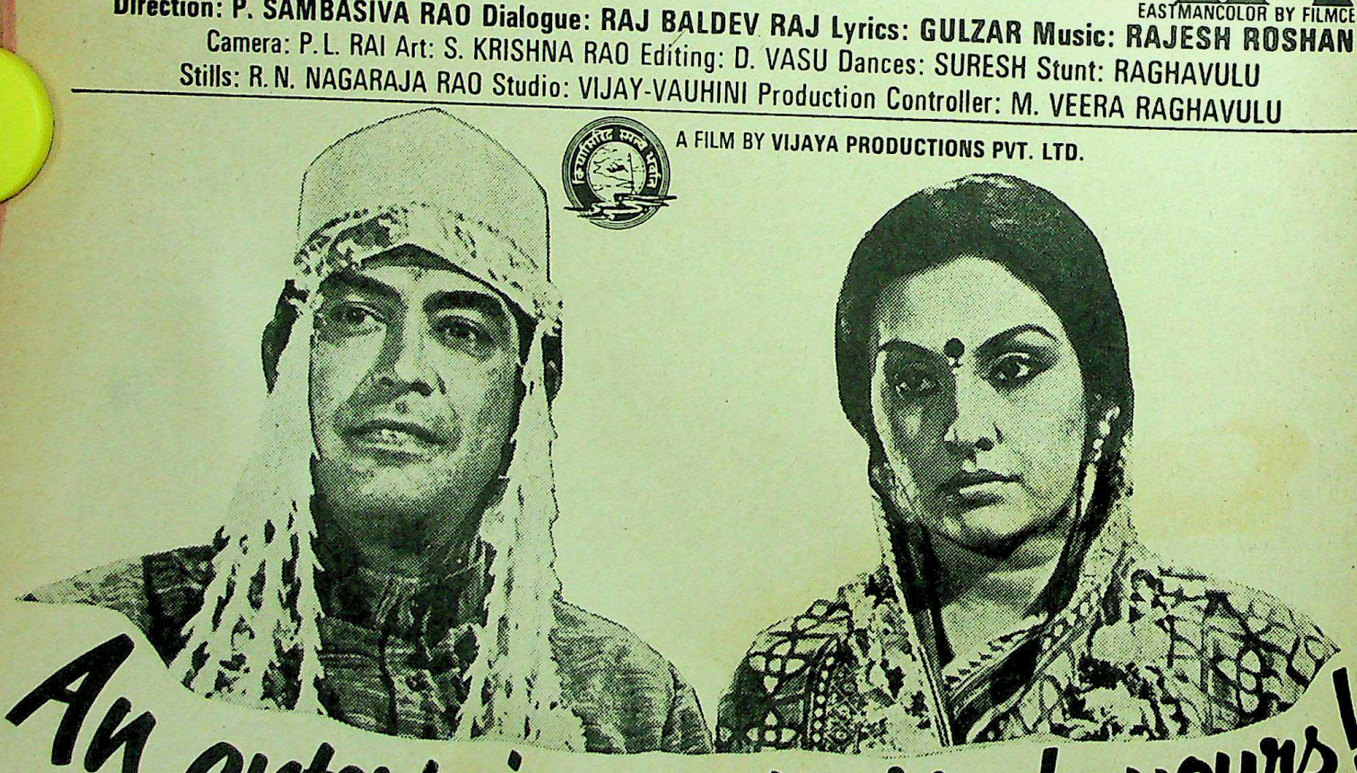

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police personnel, Vijay Pal Singh and Naval Singh involved in the interrogation, have been suspended pending an inquiry.

Though no final medical report has been made out, according to the post-mortem report a greenish substance was found in Emmanuel's stomach and it is claimed that he died due to some unknown poisoning. But the real cause of the death will be announced after the examination of the viscera. The medical report also says that no signs of external injury were found on the body of Emmanuel. But it is common knowledge that police beating does not always leave marks on the body. And as a police officer admitted, "He was given beatings, but not third degree ones".

According to Mrs Vimal Nagi: "The police tortured him so much that he probably decided to commit suicide. He could not take the torture any more. After all, if every day you are tortured without any hope of the beating ending, then what do you do?" Emmanuel's father suspects foulplay, and as he told this reporter, "It was because of the police that he died. I can tell you, my son was innocent". There are some interesting facts, however. Though the police, on the basis of the information given by Jaipal Singh, suspect that Emmanuel did have a hand in the disappearence of Raj, they did not either arrest or officially keep him in police custody. Yet, they regularly brought him over for police interrogation and kept him for considerably long periods of time. Secondly, there seems to be a contradiction as far as the number of occasions on which Emmanuel was interrogated is concerned. Though the police authorities should have a record of the exact number of times on which a person is interrogated the statement issued by them says: "Emmanuel was called for interrogation to the police station three or four times". Emmanuel's relatives and neighbours, however, say that he was called for interrogation virtually every day. The police are also singularly tight-lipped and defensive on this issue. "An inquiry is on and therefore we are in no position to say anything. It is only after the inquiry is over that the facts will emerge," said Dr K. K. Paul, SP, South Delhi. But the police maintain that they had no hand whatsoever in Emmanuel's death.

The police maintain that they see no reason why they would be involved as no complaint was made against the police between April 11 and 16 and say that the matter was politicised after the death of Emmanuel. But as Emmanuel's father said: "At that time we were more bothered about saving the life of my son. We did not even think of complaining against anyone." Again, the police say that they got to know of Emmanuel's condition only when the Safdargunj hospital authorities informed them that it was a medico-legal case of suspected poisoning. What the police, however, admit is that "some irregularities were found in the investigation of the case" as a result of which two police personnel were suspended. The nature of the irregularities they refuse to reveal. The "irregularities" are being investigated by Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr Sewa Dass. Whatever may be the cause of Emmanuel's death, his father will now be without his only son. Shortly after his death, a delegation was led to the Lt Governor's house and Mr M. S. Jagmohan has promised to pay compensation for his death. But will that compensate for the loss of his only support during his old age?

SAUMITRA BANERJEE, Delhi

Isle of discontent

SIX years back when the Indian Government gave away a tiny, uninhabited island of Kachatheevu, situated in the Palk Strait, to Sri Lanka, the fishermen of Rameshwaram were not really happy. The island which contains a small chapel of St. Anthony, where a big feast is held annually, was once the personal property of the Raja of Ramnad. Since Sri Lanka claimed it, Mrs Gandhi who was keen on building up better relationship with the Sri Lanka Government handed over the island. But with certain conditions. The annual St. Anthony's festival was to go on, and pilgrims from India would not be asked to show passports or visas. Also, Sri Lankan and Indian fishermen would be allowed to fish in the "traditional" waters. This small condition which seemed so innocent then has become a bone of contention over the last years. The situation in Rameshwaram today is quite grim and thousands of Indian fishermen who fish around the island are living in constant fear. Franklin Rayon, one of the more articulate fishermen leaders told me that from "time immemorial" Indian fishermen have been fishing in waters beyond Kachatheevu. "The waters around Rameshwaram hardly produce any fish. So our fishermen used to go beyond Kachatheevu island, fish for the lucrative prawns, rest on the island for some time and then return to Sri Rameshwaram", he explained. "Sri Lanka fishermen didn't really object to this, never mind the small quarrels and misunderstandings occuring now and then. For the waters around Kachatheevu offer good prawns throughout the year."

But once the island was handed over to Sri Lanka, the situation became "terrible" for the Rameshwaram fishermen. "The Lanka authorities allowed the feast of St. Anthony to continue, and pilgrims from Sri Lanka continued visiting the shrine, but the Indian fishermen always felt unwanted on the island during the week-long festival which takes place in March". More than 30,000 "pilgrims" from both countries congregate on the barren island during this festival which is an excellent occasion for bartering and smuggling in-demand goods from both countries. "A couple of days before the festival this year the Lanka naval authorities seized 60 mechanised boats". continued Franklin Rayon, "and after seizing our prawns, asked us to go back —thanks to their rude behaviour and incautious approach, one of the mechanised boats was sunk". Rameshwaram fishermen claim that the Sri Lanka navalmen are only interested in pocketing the prawns which they would sell clandestinely through their friends. In fact their presence is resented even by the Lanka fishermen. For as their boats move around they destroy the nets of the Lanka fishermen".

Nearly 800 mechanised boats are engaged in the trade in Rameshwaram: a number of them are repatriates from Sri Lanka and had bought the boats through loans by Government agencies. "A number of boats have been lost in recent years due to the unpredictable cyclone and to make things worse, we are the victims to the Lanka navalmen's greed", complained P. A. Fernando, Secretary of the Rameshwaram Fishermen's Association. It is believed that each boat catches 10 kg of prawns on an average: each kg of prawn can fetch Rs 60 to Rs 80 in the export market. "Sri Lanka naval authorities are playing a hide-and-grab game", continued Franklin Rayon. "Some days they don't turn up. And then suddenly they appear, and order our fishermen to follow them. Of course, the situation today is not as bad as three or five years ago, when they used to take our fishermen to jails on the mainland and starve them for couple of days".

Leaders of the Rameshwaram fishermen told SUNDAY that when the going is good, prawns and other fishes worth Rs five lakhs are caught every day, but not even one fourth of it reaches the mainland. The Lanka naval authorities wait for such "fine, bountiful" days and then attack, it is alleged. "We do not have enough coast guards in this area. A couple of times when we got into 'trouble' with the Lanka authorities, the timely presence of our coast guards helped us immensely", explained Franklin Rayon. The fishermen are in contact with the Coast Guard (Eastern region), St. George Fort in Madras and are expecting a number of beneficial measures to be taken soon.

ARTHUR PAIS, Madras

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KHAAS BAAT

A TOP producer thought he was being very wise when he wanted to sign up *Raakhee* for a role in one of his overcrowded multistarrers. It was supposed to be a very "challenging" role and therefore the producer assumed that the star concerned would not demand a fabulous sum. The very name of the producer was supposed to make the star jump for the role. But Raakhee is not just another star—she is an individual who thinks. When she quoted her price, the man acted in typical, crude fashion. He told her that if she didn't agree to their price (peanuts) they would take the next plane to get another star and she would jump for it at half their offer! He thought the threat would force Raakhee into accepting his offer. On the contrary, it put her off completely!

SPURRED on by her films' success, *Rekha* has become bold and innovative. Like she did this Madras film with *Kamalahasan* when she found out that another South Indian sex-bomb, *Kalpana Iyer* was slated for that role. Never before had Rekha gone out to ask for roles, leave alone, one in a film from Madras. And now she has gone one step further to prove to *Raakhee* that she can also wear white in her hair

Yogita: Kishore Kumar's loss is Mithun's gain

Sital Das

Raakhee knows her price. Producers should know this

like Raakhee did in *Kabhi Kabhie* and *Tapasya*. Good for Rekha; at least she is concentrating on her work.

NOW that the *Kishore-Yogita* divorce has come through, will it be long before *Leena* officially begins living with Kishore? And will it mean *Mithun* and Yogita tying the knot legally? Hope that doesn't upset the scales because Mithun is a rising star and marriage might tilt the balance unfavourably for him. Yogita, who was showing a bit of promise after her Kishore-marriage-fiasco, may again slip down. Why can't such girls (like *Rekha* and *Parveen*) who need to be constantly in love with a man stay that way—they make a hash out of their marriage, by hurrying their spouses into it unwillingly and then making a hash out of their careers by concentrating on other things besides their work!

WHAT started as a helpless undertaking might well turn out a money-spinning venture: *Raakesh Roshan* was helping out a friend who wanted to make a film, and then the friend backed out. So Raakesh made *Aap ke Diwane* and if the advance reports are to be trusted, the film should do very well. ■

Shivaranjan Gulvady

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KHAAS BAAT

EVEN during the "wet" years of Karunanidhi's regime, Madras was never notorious for the kind of film parties which take place in Bombay. In sharp contrast, such parties and get-togethers have become common today; sycophant journalists are shepherded into a safe hotel and their fantasies are irrigated by alcohol. Of late, some actors and actresses too are throwing "wet" parties in their hotel suites. And a heroine with a musical name organised one such binge but some of the journalists were reportedly annoyed as she kept the best booze for her producers and served second grade alcohol to the Press.

IN one of his forthcoming films *Hitler Umanath*, actor *Sivaji Ganesan* is shown wearing a Hitler-like mask. That may be the only connection the film has with Hitler. Years ago, Sivaji produced a film entitled *Vietnam Veedu*, a terrible melodrama about a house of perpetual conflicts. In one of the scenes from the script (which was also produced by Sivaji), he was heard saying: "My sons are never good to me but then why should I complain? After all even Gandhi's sons weren't faithful to him". Well, one of Gandhi's grandsons who's an IAS officer wrote a letter to Sivaji Ganesan correcting the observation. Sivaji promptly dropped the incorrect line from the script and didn't include it in the film too. Incidentally, of late, Sivaji is showing great aptitude for decorative titles. He has acted in *General Chakravarthy*, *Justice Gopinath*, *Pilot Premnath*, and now, *Hitler Umanath*. Suggested titles: *Stalin Muthuchamy*, *Marshal Tito Manickam* and *Mountbatten Mannarsamy*. Please note, PIOUSJI holds the copyright for these titles.

NOW that *Kamalahasan* is accepting assignments in Hindi (he has three Hindi films on hand), it's high time some enterprising producer remade his Tamil super hit *Kalyana Raman*. As the dim-wit Kalyanam, Kamalahasan was superb and the film pulled crowds solely because of him.

Recently when Madras Doordarshan announced that *Kalyana Raman*, would be telecast, dozens of letters, mostly from students, requested the Doordarshan authorities not to telecast the film during the examination season. And some "miscreant" (was it a student?) even telephoned the Doordarshan Kendra and announced that four bombs had been planted inside the building. The film was telecast according to schedule. Scores of police personnel combed the sprawling Doordarshan Kendra and realised after four hours that it was only a hoax.

HOW can we have yet another hero called *Mohan* when *Lakshmi's* actor-husband *Mohan* is still in the field? The makers of *Nenjathai Killathey* feel that Lakshmi's Mohan may not stage a come-back in Tamil films at all (we hear he has a couple of Malayalam films), and people have even forgotten his existence. As a matter of fact, he was never popular in Tamil films and hasn't acted in more than four Tamil films. And Mohan seems to be an intelligent and sensitive person. He avoids sticking to his wife's saree. When Lakshmi took up the direction of a Tamil-Kannada bilingual, she didn't even whisper her husband's name during the casting. When asked why she didn't do so, she quipped: "He just didn't suit that role"

SRIPRIYA's *Natchathiram* too has opened to full houses: if the initial enthusiasm is carried on, the film will help to prop up Sripriya's sagging popularity.

RAJNI SHARMA wants SUNDAY readers to know that she hasn't given up trying for Hindi films: She has a couple of assignments like *Satte Pe Satta* (the film has five heroes including *Amitabh* and five heroines). And though Tamil producers are paying more attention to her than Hindi ones, she believes her stars will soon shine in Bombay.

PIOUSJI

Sripriya in a scene from "Nachitram"

Jayen and Gita: Forbidden fruit tastes sweeter

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THE WORLD

Barely musical

The song had a very catchy beat, so it was not surprising that it shot to the top of the popularity charts all over the world. The group that called themselves *The Village People* had established themselves in the big league with the release of the song called "YMCA". Suddenly, everyone, from grandmothers to primary school kids, was humming the tune. Some branches of the YMCA even picked up the song and began using it for advertising purposes, but that was before someone discovered that the lyrics had homosexual overtones. *The Village People* were under a cloud for some time, but not their music. No sir, their music continued to go places. The group was later asked to do a film—Allan Carr's "Can't Stop The Music" and

the picture shows them with Valerie Perrine in a scene from the movie itself. Although you wouldn't think so, judging by their costumes, the film is being brought to theatres this summer with a 13.5 million price tag. Looks as if *The Village People* are baring up well to the demands of Hollywood.

Stiff upper Chunnel

The Chunnel (the British Channel Tunnel) is not yet dead. Around 1975, when the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson backed out of the Anglo-French project because of financial reasons, the French were rather annoyed. That was understandable, since the idea of the Chunnel has long enjoyed official support in France. Of late, however, under the Prime Ministership of Mrs Thatcher, the project has received a shot in the arm. As regards Government involvement in the project, the French national railway, SNCF, is directly linked and in fact totally committed. However, there are others in the French private sector who have impressed the Conservative Government with their proposal for private financing of construction. One such company is Spie-Batignolles, one of the founder members of the European Channel Tunnel Group. The company has approached the French Government about the project but the Government is silent.

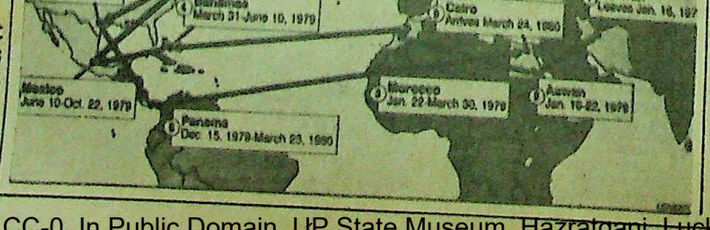
No wonder then, that Frenchmen say: "But it is not the French you must ask about the tunnel—we have always wanted it. It is the British who must decide".

Hair today, gone tomorro'

Two hundred of the best-groomed heads in England gathered in Eastbourne for the annual conference of the National Hairdressers' Federation. And what did they confer about? Oh, well, the kind of attitude that drives people to use boot polish on their hair, for instance. In addition, they were told to modernise their views and be nice to young people, no matter what their idiosyncracies were. Mr David Colclough, president of the body, told his members that it was not their business to moralise on their clients. He insisted that they should open their minds—and doors—to all people, no matter how outlandish they looked. Punks for instance.

Running—not a country

The Shah has done quite a bit of travelling lately, although it would seem that he has finally found a place of sanctuary. From Teheran, which city he left on January 16, 1979, he went to Aswan and from there to Morocco. From Morocco it was a long hike all the way to the Bahamas and then to Mexico. He was in New York from October 22 to December 2, 1979 and in San Antonio for two weeks in December following which he celebrated Christmas in Panama. He arrived in Cairo on March 14 this year, where Sadat was determined to show his gratitude to the Shah for the help that the former Iranian monarch extended to Egypt in the face of a boycott by Arab nations following the Camp David peace agreement with Israel. There has been a furore over the Shah's arrival in Cairo and the warm welcome extended by Sadat, has increased pressure on the Egyptian President to redouble his demonstration of loyalty to the Arab cause.



Programmed action

Computers are the "favoured tools of people who dominate. They serve to exploit, to document, to control and to punish. Tomorrow telematic techniques will inaugurate 1984", said the Committee To Liquidate Or Neutralise Computers (CLNC) in a letter to the newspaper, *Liberation*. The Committee members, "technicians in the computer field, well placed to appreciate its dangers to society", have lived up to their name and their professed ideals. In early April they set fire to the computer works of Philips Data Systems at Toulouse, near Paris. And to clinch their objectives the group removed programmed tapes containing material "destined for use by French forces and secret services", which loss Philips has denied. The company, however, need not have worried about losing business, thanks to the CLNC group which is also known as Direct Action. The urban guerrilla group members destroyed programmed tapes of their rival company — CII-Honeywell-Bull.

And the French Government? They are not bothered about any direct action. Inspite of the attacks the Cabinet has decided to expand the existing memory banks for industrial, official and public use. As far as the CLNC is concerned, that's more fuel for their fires.

Who's right?

Ballet dancers of the Rome Opera House staged a wildcat strike on April 10, only hours before the opera *Giselle* was scheduled to open. *Giselle* starred two big names Rudolf Nureyev and Carla Fracci. The stars, unused to this sort of treatment, declared that they would dance irrespective of what the Rome Opera House dancers did. Backstage, Nureyev told the striking dancers, "In a true democracy the right to strike is sacred but so is the right to work". Not surprisingly, then, as he went to work, the 32 male and female dancers walked on to the stage to read a statement about their strike.

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Save my Teddy

Pope John Paul II has been known to do a lot of things: hug babies, watch circus clowns perform, write poems and even see his own play being enacted at the Vatican. Recently he was asked to perform a rather extraordinary miracle. At Rome's Fumicino Airport, 36-year-old James Leo Connor from Philadelphia paced up and down wearing a sandwichboard with a message imploring the Holy Father to help Senator Edward Kennedy win the Pennsylvania primary. And the Senator did win!

(en)Lighten your pockets

Where is the World Government of the Age of Enlightenment? It is in Buckinghamshire, in the stately ancestral home—Mentmore Towers—of Lord Rosebery. And there are Ministers, too. There is the Minister of Information and Inspiration and a Minister of All Possibility. The function of the World Government is to take those who have been unable to find mental peace on a "journey towards creative intelligence." The Ministers try to explain how mental peace can be achieved through transcendental meditation.

Most of those who visit Mentmore Towers have tried drugs and hormones, the whole works. In desperation they each spent a pound for a day of "enlightenment". But what they received was nothing.

Dogged resistance

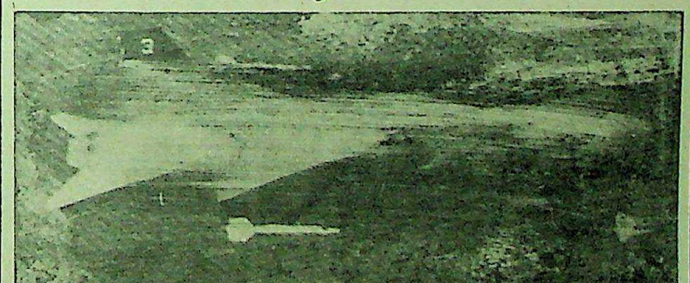
This is one dog who has earned his salary many times over. Rats, the British army cross-bred Corgi terrier, was honourably discharged from the Services after a vet found that his health was going to the dogs. More than being physically ill, Rats has been mentally shaken. Reason: for the past couple of years he was based in Crossmaglen in Northern Ireland, and while accompanying his human colleagues on patrol, he braved the occasional bombs. He has also been injured by something called a "car bomb" and been burnt by a petrol bomb. In fact, he still has four pieces of car metal in his body from the first mishap, when he also received head and leg injuries. In addition, he has been presented with a gold medal for devotion to duty. The Prince of Wales Company of the First Battalion Welsh Guards, with whom he did his last stint of duty, gave him a fitting farewell. Since Rats loves Army helicopters, they flew him to his place of retirement in one. His place of retirement, incidentally, is a secret since Irish terrorists have a price on Rats' head. It's a dog's life indeed!

Bitter Pill for husbands

If you have been deprived of something, revolt. That's precisely what the wives of European Economic Community bureaucrats in Luxemburg did. Their demand was that their husbands—based in Strasbourg—return permanently. The European Parliament is now in Strasbourg while a new £1,200 million building has been built to house it permanently in Luxemburg. Parliament staffers, who number about 800, have to commute to and fro for one week every month along with tons of documents from Luxemburg to Strasbourg.

Wives and husbands tolerated this shifting temporarily because they had been told that the Parliament would shift to Luxemburg permanently this year. That never happened since the department which controls the Parliament's working life passed by seven votes to four the decision to remain in Strasbourg. The lonely wives have already signed a petition to be handed over to the Chairman of the EEC Mr Roy Jenkins, to shift the headquarters permanently to Luxemburg. There is a standing joke about the Luxemburg wives: that they do not have to resort to the Pill because their husbands are hardly ever at home.

Them planes don't fly no more



American military planes don't fly. The US Air Force's F-15 and F-16 and the Navy's F-14 and F-18 are having serious technical complications. These planes have engines that wear out too fast, stall in manoeuvres or even explode in mid-air. If they are to be kept in combat readiness their defects have to be set right, so the Pentagon is diverting urgent defence funds to keep these four aircraft types flying. Costs are also rising. A single F-18 costs around 17.4 million dollars. Once the planes are in the air they can outfly or outshoot anything that flies today, according to the Pentagon. But till the technical problems are ironed out the USA is in a losing race against other super powers.

Body beautiful

UPI

Whoever heard of women flexing their muscles? Well in the beginning of April there was a body building Championship in Atlantic City, USA, where 33 contestants not only showed their well-formed muscles but also their bodies. The judges agreed on the choice of 24-year-old Rachel McLish of Harleton, Texas as the winner. There goes one more sacred preserve of men!

Economy drive

"The most massive and profound industrial revolution in peacetime history" is about to take place in the shape of what the American Press terms "world cars", said Ford Motor Company chairman, Philip Caldwell. They will be smaller, will consume a lot less fuel than other American cars and will also be marketed internationally. These models, the Ford Escort and Mercury Lynx, will have components from 12 different countries, will be assembled in the USA and Europe and sold almost anywhere in the world. General Motors another big name in the car industry will make its first "world car" in 1981, while American Motors and their French partner Renault will join hands to produce a similar car in 1982.

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Jurisprurience

Goa's most eligible bachelor, the young and debonair Law Minister Dayanand Narvekar, a busy lawyer until he took to politics, has a serious problem on his plate. Four women employees of the Judicial Commissioner's Court have complained to him that fornication within the court premises is not at all unique. Narvekar, whose good looks have set many a pretty heart aflutter, did not remain insensitive to the occupational hazards of the young damsels and ordered an immediate police investigation. However, the acting Inspector General of Police, Prabhakar Sinari bowed out on the plea that the conclusions would in no way enhance the reputation or prestige of the judiciary.

By way of a gentle reminder, Mario Cabral e Sa points out that about a year ago, PWD plumbers were summoned to unclog the drains of the court's privies. There was a great deal of ribaldry when they emerged with over 150 used rubber condoms, but discretion being the better part of valour, no one enquired into the mystery.

Meanwhile, having failed by way of the police, Narvekar referred the matter to the Central Government and received the answer that the judiciary was to appoint its own vigilance officers. But then again, that doesn't solve many problems. Narvekar is already ordering an investigation into the case of a young female typist who, lacking legal qualifications, is about to be appointed a judge.

Picking up the tempo

Neither of them saw the "No Entry" sign at the crossing of Royd Street and Free School Street, Calcutta. The driver of the three-wheel tempo swung his vehicle across the corner and the motorcyclist, close on his heels, did likewise. The shrill sound of a police whistle rent the surroundings and the two lawbreakers were flagged down by an indignant traffic constable. All of a sudden there was the sound of an engine being gunned and it became clear to all around that the tempo driver was taking the opportunity to make a quick getaway. The constable swiftly ordered the motorcyclist to start up and chase the errant tempo. The ensuing race did not last long as the motorcycle soon overtook the tempo and the policeman—who was riding pillion—was able to flag it down once more, this time for keeps. The chastened tempo driver had to contend with a very irate policeman, while the motorcyclist waited nervously to see what was going to become of him. After it was all over, the constable walked up to the motorcyclist. "And you", he announced grandly "are free to go since you helped me." And to prove his gratitude, he erased the motorcyclist's number from his book.

All's fine

What is the maximum fine (under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act) if one causes injury or death to an animal? Be it a horse or a squirrel, the penalty is Rs 50. Despite this, the Madras branch of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has filed a case against the producer of a Tamil film, *Kali*. It was during the shooting of this movie that ten horses were recently injured in a fire. Since there was no fire service unit in attendance and it took more than eight hours to admit the horses to the veterinary hospital, two died.

Please God, how about a few goals?

If you don't have a god, worship an idol. But what if you don't even have an idol to worship? In Calcutta, reports Arijit Sen, the answer is simple. Find yourself a goalpost, get yourself a pundit and then kneel down and pray. Each year, the first day of Baisakh (Bengali New Year), brings football officials, players and fans in their thousands to the maidan, the scene of many an epic soccer battle. At most of the big soccer clubs, a goalpost is put up amidst a great deal of pomp and ceremony and at the hour appointed by the Hindu almanac, a pundit invokes the blessings of the almighty. One has never been able to understand the invocation but it is obviously directed towards the dual blessings of saving and scoring goals, to the satisfaction of the club in question.

The origins of this ritual date back to the days when trophies became more important than anything else. The recruitment of top players is also backed up by bringing the game within the ambit of the Kali temples of the city of Calcutta— and the pundits, of course. However, the gods have never been able to keep everyone happy at the same time.

This year, April 14 saw thousands brave the scorching heat to gather on the Mohun Bagan and East Bengal grounds. But, while East Bengal's prayers ended at 9 am, Mohun Bagan's began one hour later. The intervening period was utilised by the supporters of both clubs to exchange brickbats from the ramparts, during which 30 teenagers were injured. Talk about religious militance.

Tenants' penance

The things some people think of! Madras must be the only metropolitan city in India where houseowners advertise their preference for prospective Brahmin tenants.

There is the case of an ultra-conservative Brahmin houseowner in Santhome who is trying to throw out his tenant—who is also a Brahmin — because he doesn't much care for the latter's fondness for fish.

And he is not the only one having problems. Arthur Pais recently underwent a rather strange experience while househunting with his fiancee. When he saw a house that he liked, he naturally decided to discuss the rent. But he received a shock instead when the owner told him discreetly, "We are pious Catholics and we don't like the idea of giving out our house to people who roam around together even before they are married. For that matter, how can we be sure that you'll ever get married?"

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The Hit King

"You want to know what's the safest business in films? You put up a large, impressive set for your film, and once your film is completed, start renting it out to producers who are making films in languages other than your own," says D. Rama Naidu, one of the shrewdest and most successfull producers down South. Naidu has half a dozen Telugu hits to his credit, and is now putting finishing touches to his ambitious Hindi venture *Bandish* starring Rajesh, Hema, Danny and Tanuja. Earlier he produced such bumper hits as *Prem Nagar*, *Dildaar* and *Dil Aur Deewar*, "I signed Rajesh and Hema much before Rajesh staged a comeback through *Amar Deep*, and Hema was already receiving bad publicity, thanks to a couple of films but then I sell my films on the basis of the story and both Rajesh and Hema did good work for my *Prem Nagar*," Rama Naidu told Arthur Pais.

His next venture, a remake of one of the hits in Telugu stars Jeetendra, and of course Rajesh Khanna. Naidu recently opened a very useful, comfortable dubbing theatre in Madras. Mr B. Nagi Reddy, himself a very successful producer and studio-boss (Vauhini in Madras) was among the first few invitees to bless the new venture. Reddy was "patron saint" Naidu when the latter forayed into films.

All at sea

First he had his hands and feet bound with metal chains. Then Nathubhai Pahade, aged 54, slipped from the boat that was carrying him into the waters of the Jamuna. A motley crowd of about 100 people cheered exuberantly as he did so and then waited in anticipation to see how long it would take the swimmer to reappear. It took a few seconds, but his head soon bobbed above the surface and the people cheered again, this time slightly louder than before. Pahade kept afloat for half an hour before he made his way to the shallow waters and was picked up by the boat to be brought back to shore. The intrepid swimmer was unchained by Vidyaben Shah, president of the Gujarat Samaj and, free of his shackles, he waved gleefully to all those who stood around.

Said Pahade, "I have swum the seven seas but I have not kept this honour for myself. It is for the youth of today and the children of tomorrow". And, Saumitra Banerjee adds, he has literally swum the seven seas, all within the period of just one month. However, Nathubhai Pahade is not just a swimmer; he was involved in the Independence movement and during the 1942 Quit India movement, was sentenced to eight months RI by the British. Incidentally, he is a dancer as well and has been performing Kathakali and Bharat Natyam for many years. He bases his style of swimming, with his hands and feet bound, on *Pranayam*, a yogic exercise and says it was his desire to do something different that prompted him to take up this challenge.

Film feast '80

A little boy tugs your sleeve and says "Two for six" Translated, that means he is offering you cinema tickets at three times their genuine price of Rs two. This actually happened to Paranjoy Guha Thakurta before the screening of an unsubtitled print of G. Aravindan's award-winning film *Thampu* during the Calcutta Film Festival '80. Incidentally, this was the first-ever Indian film festival of its kind organised by a state Government.

Between April 11 and 17, four of the city's premier cinema halls in the New Market area screened about 60 films including ten Ray evergreens and some old Bengali films, many of them obtained from the Pune archives. With most of the non-Bengali films (there were over two dozen in Telugu, Malayalee, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi and Oriya) being subtitled and with tickets going at nominal prices, filmgoers in Calcutta responded enthusiastically. With a bonus Bengali New Year holiday thrown in, most of the four daily shows ran to packed houses. And though many tried to prove otherwise, certainly a good time was had by all.

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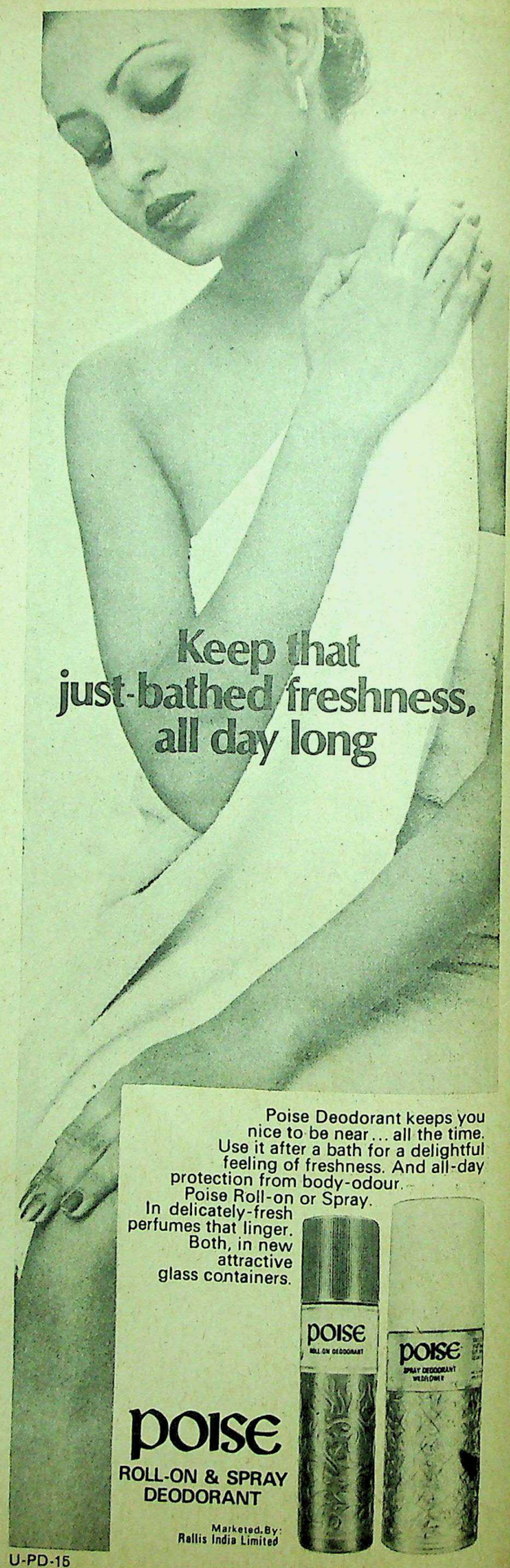

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Beginning May 4

This week the Sun and Mercury are in Aries, Venus is in Gemini, and Jupiter, Saturn, Mars and Rahu are conjoined in Leo. Uranus and Neptune are in Scorpio, and Kethu alone is in Aquarius. The Moon will be moving through Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces from Sagittarius.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) There is threat of a sudden change on your business or professional front. If the threat materialises, a change for the better will result. The rest of this week will bring a lot of domestic joy. Your business affairs will prosper and you will make fantastic headway. This week favours love and marriage. You are advised to check all extravagant tendencies. **Good dates:** 6, 7, 8 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 2 and 8. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) A valuable new friendship may develop this week. Be content with slow (but sure) progress and meet inevitable delays and obstacles with patience and tact. Occult advice may prove very helpful at this juncture. Exercise care and discretion in your dealings with friends of the opposite sex. Devote a little extra attention to business details and some good fortune will be yours. **Good dates:** 5, 7, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6, and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Pay great attention to your financial and professional affairs. Hard work, your own hunches and elders benefit you. A property deal will be clinched in your favour. Many will win promotions through clever hunches. Some unreasonable opposition on the part of an old person of the opposite sex is to be expected. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 8. **Favourable direction:** North.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) A fair measure of success and good fortune is indicated. Speculation is likely to pay. Your prospects have now completely changed for the better. You will be helped by high officials and a promotion is probable. Letters from distant places will bring good news. Your domestic front will remain a source of joy and happiness. Check all extravagant tendencies. Revive old contacts to suit your ends. **Good dates:** 6, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 7 and 8. **Favourable direction :** North

LEO (July 23 — August 22) A busy week lies ahead of you. Make the best of existing favourable influences. More than average success is predicted for most people. In many cases, promotion will result from hard work and application. On the social front, things look slightly complicated. Accept all reasonable risks and forge ahead on all fronts. Wait for letters before taking an important decision. **Good dates:** 4, 6, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** East.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Exercise caution and restraint in your professional and personal life. Take nothing for granted. Keep away from gambling, betting and speculative ventures. On the whole this week should prove moderately lucky. A journey may have to be postponed. Domestic problems will be solved at the weekend. A friend of the opposite sex may give you cause for worry. **Good dates:** 6, 7, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 8 and 10. **Favourable direction: West.**

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) A week of mixed fortunes is predicted for you. A sudden change of fortune will strengthen your position and your success will be praised by all your friends and relatives. A new friendship will brighten your prospects. A promotion is probable. You will gain in business by using original methods. Your domestic life will not pose many problems. Legal problems should be promptly handled. **Good dates:** 4, 6, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 9. **Favourable directions:** East and North.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) This week begins on a happy and joyful note. A happy romance is forecast. You will gain in speculative ventures. You are, however, advised not to take needless risks. This week is particularly favourable for business expansion and speculative investment. Letters will bring good news. You are advised to check all extravagant tendencies. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 2. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) A modicum of success and happiness is predicted, especially if extravagance, law suits and heavy expenditure are avoided. Influential relatives and friends, especially womenfolk, will prove helpful. Your home front will remain lively and joyful. Be discreet in speech, correspondence and actions. You are likely to meet an old friend of the opposite sex. **Good dates:** 4, 5 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 2 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) One of the most important and exciting weeks in recent times lies ahead of you. Expected and unexpected good fortune is predicted. Your domestic front will present a happy picture. Valuable new friendships are foreseen. Unexpected medical expenditure is predicted. Borrowing or lending money may lead to unnecessary problems. **Good dates:** 5, 6, 8 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 2 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 2 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) This week will prove difficult and trying. Safeguard your health and that of your womenfolk. You will benefit in diverse expected and unexpected ways. A promotion is on the cards. Guard against physical and mental overstrain. Be discreet in speech, correspondence and actions. Marriage, changes and travel should be postponed. **Good dates:** 6, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 10. **Favourable direction:** West.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Your power of reasoning and keen perception should enable you to successfully circumvent treachery and evil machinations, particularly in business. Watch finances carefully and do not speculate. Intellectual activities are well signified. Make hay while the sun shines. Exercise care and prudence where documents are concerned. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 2 and 4. **Favourabe directions:** West and East.

M. B. RAMAN

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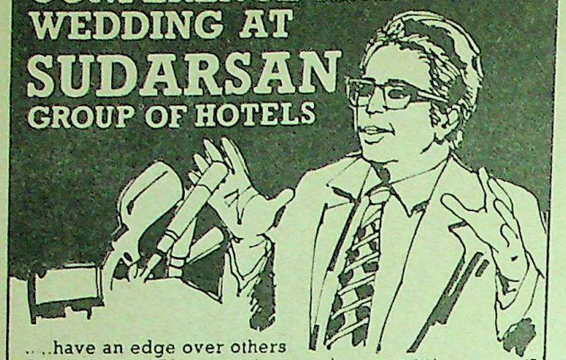

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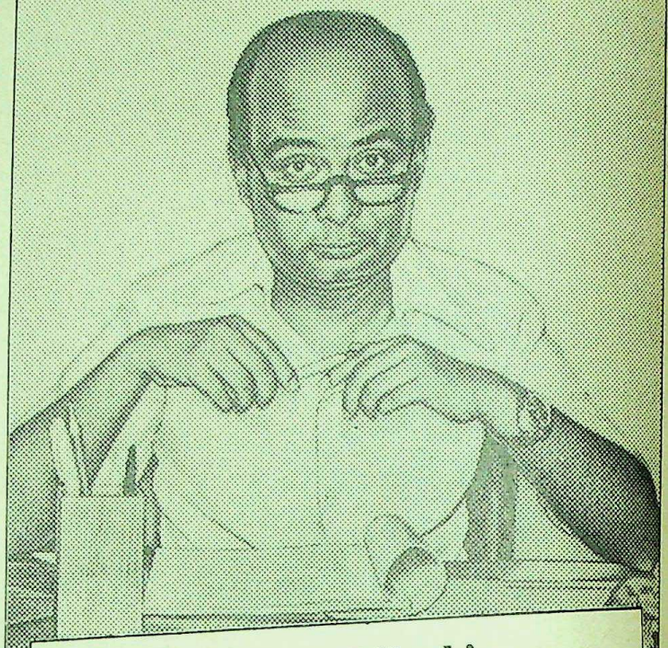

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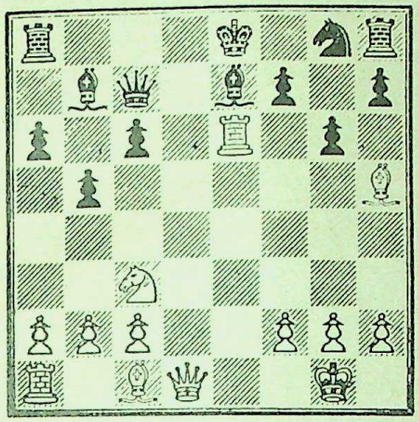
chess

Polugaevsky (Black)



Kasparov (White) to move
Position after Black's 13th move

A new Fischer?

IN THE PAST year a 16-year-old Russian has been making an impact on the world scene unknown since the early days of Bobby Fischer. His name? Well, there seems to be some confusion over this point. Although he is known to the world as Garry Kasparov, I am reliably informed that he is known to his father as Garry Weinstein. This seems a curious anomaly, especially in a country which does not go in for stage names.

Whatever alias he may decide to adopt, Garry Kasparov/Weinstein's play and results bear the unmistakable stamp of true genius. He first sprang to light in last year's Soviet Championship, which having qualified for the final, itself a remarkable feat for a then 15-year-old, he made a sensational start and was actually leading after six rounds. Naturally such a pace could not be sustained by one so young, but his final score of 50 per cent in such company would be highly creditable for an established grandmaster of twice his age. To prove this success to be no mere flash in the pan, the Soviet Chess Federation sent him to play in the international tournament in Banja Luka in Yugoslavia last spring. Not only did he win first place, but he came through unbeaten, 2 points clear of a field including Andersson, Smejkal and Petrosian. Not a bad baptism into international chess.

Without doubt Kasparov and Weinstein are destined to become champions of the world. Here is a game which is already famous as their first win against a World Championship contender:

White: G. Kasparov: Black: L. Polugaevsky
USSR Championship Final 1978 Sicilian Defence

1. P—K4, P—QB4; 2. N—KB3, P—K3; 3. P—Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, P—QR3; 5. N—QB3, Q—B2; 6. B—K2, P—QN4; 7. B—B3, B—N2; 8. 0—0, N—QB3; 9 N x N, P x N; This position is known to theory as being very comfortable for Black, but Kasparov immediately sets the game alight with a hitherto unknown pawn sacrifice.

10. P—K5!? Q x P; 11. R—K1, Q—B2; 12. B—R5! B—K2; Not 12 . . . P—N3? 13. Q—Q4!

13. R x P, P—N3 (DIAGRAM) Apparently a total refutation of White's play.

14. R—K1! So simple. If 14 . . . P x B then 15. Q—Q4, P—B3; 16. Q—Q1! followed by Q x P+ keeps the attack very much alive. An extraordinary conception.

14 . . . R—Q1; 15. Q—B3, P—QB4; 16. B—B4! Q—N3; 17. Q—N3, P x B; 18. B—B7 Not 18. Q—N7? Q—N3!

18 . . . Q—N3; 19. B x R, Q x Q; 20. RP x Q, K x B; It is the ensuing phase of the game I find so impressive. A rook is usually no match for two bishops in the endgame, but Kasparov manages to establish an unshakable grip on the position, despite the reduced material.

21. QR—Q1+ K—B2; 22. N—Q5+ B x N; 23. R x B, P—KR3; A rather pathetic attempt to develop his rook, but what else can he do?

24. R x RP, R—R2; 25. R(5)—K5, K—Q2; 26. R(5)—K3, R—N2; 27. R—Q3+ K—B3; 28. R—R3, R—N3; 29. R—KB3! Stronger than 29. R x P+ K—Q4, when the black king becomes active.

29 . . . B—B3; 30. P—B3, K—Q2; 31. R—Q3+ K—B2; 32. R—K8, N—K2; 33. R(8)—Q8, N—B3; 34. R(8)—Q7+ K—N3; 35. R x P, B—K2; 36. R—K3, B—Q3; 37. P—B4, P—B5; 38. K—R2, B—B4; 39. R—K2, P—N5; 40. R—K4, P x P; 41. P x P, B—B7; 42. R x P, B x P+ 43. K—R3, B—K8; 44. P—R4, N—R4? He had to try 44 . . . R—N6+ 45. K—R2, R x BP; 46. R x R, B x R, though after 47. R—KR7 White's kingside pawns would certainly decide the issue in his favour.

45. R—N4+ K—B4; 46. R—B5+ Resigns. The knight is lost.

Footnote: Black did not manage to move his king's knight until move 32! Can this be a record?

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

ONE of the surprises of the European Championship was the uneven form of the Swedish team that had won so impressively in Denmark two years ago. On this deal from an early match against Israel they were badly off course at both tables.

Dealer, North. E-W vulnerable.

	♠ A Q 9 6 ♥ Q J 8 7 ♦ 5 ♣ A K J 7	
♠ — ♥ K 6 ♦ Q 10 9 8 6 3 ♣ Q 9 8 6 4	N W E S	♠ 7 3 2 ♥ A 10 9 5 4 2 ♦ — ♣ 10 5 3 2
	♠ K J 10 8 5 4 ♥ 3 ♦ A K J 7 4 2 ♣ —	

The Swedish North-South pair seemed to charge at the grand slam:

SOUTH	NORTH
—	1♣ (1)
1NT (2)	2♣
3♦ (3)	3♠
5NT (4)	7♠
No	

(1) Conventional, 17+.
(2) Positive and showing at least five spades.
(3) Diamond suit and 3 to 4 controls.
(4) Apparently a grand slam force, asking partner to bid seven with two top honours in spades.

East led the Ace of hearts, so the Swedes soon knew their fate. The Israeli bidding was much better co-ordinated.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	2♦ (1)	No
2NT	No	3♣ (2)	No
3♣	No	4♣	No
4♦	No	4♠	No
4NT	No	5♥	dble
6♠	No	No	dble (3)
No	No	No	

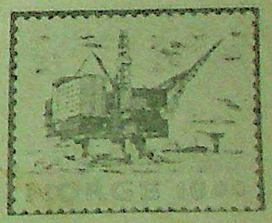
(1) Roman Two Diamonds, indicating a strong 3-suiter.
(2) Showing that the short suit was diamonds.
(3) Presumably a Lightner double, correcting the previous request to lead a heart.

Holding the King of hearts, West nevertheless opened ♥K, on which East dropped the 10. The Vu-graph audience naturally thought a diamond would follow and that the Swedish pair in the closed room would be relieved to find they had gained on the board. But West, seemingly without reflection, led a club at trick two, so the slam was made. No doubt it was difficult for him to picture the declarer with a concealed six-card suit. Possibly, too, the 10 of hearts was not the right card in their signalling system.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

EVEN BEFORE the first stamps, the Penny Blacks, were issued in 1840, the Treasury was obsessed with the fear that unscrupulous people would wash or bleach the postmarks from used stamps in order to re-use them. The printers, Perkins, Bacon and Co. and Thomas De La Rue Ltd., conducted interminable experiments to develop an indelible postmark and a fugitive printing-ink. One result of these researches was the issue in January 1880 of this unexciting penny stamp known to collectors as the Venetian Red. The stamp is still very common if postmarked.



A NORTH SEA oil drilling production platform, Statfjord A, is featured on one of three new Norwegian stamps devoted to modern engineering projects in Norway. Another new Norwegian issue is a miniature sheet containing four stamps which show aircraft used in polar exploration. This is intended to publicise Norwex 80, the international philatelic exhibition to be held in Oslo in June. London will also be staging an international exhibition at Earls Court in May and the Post Office plans to issue a miniature sheet to mark the occasion. Other British issues during 1980 will illustrate Britain's contribution to the world of music and will commemorate the centenaries of the Amateur Athletic Association and the Welsh Rugby Union.

C. W. HILL

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this india

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UJJAIN : The sale of country liquor has increased manifold here thanks to Kal Bhairav the drinking deity, whose temple across the Kshipra River is a centre of attraction for Kumbh pilgrims. According to temple priest Sunderlal, more than 500 devotees are visiting the temple every day as compared to some 30 to 40 on other days. He expected the number to swell from April 13, the second auspicious bathing day of the Kumbh. Normally, the 'prassad'—in this case liquor—is offered to deity in the morning and in the evening, but these days it is being offered about a dozen times on request from the visitors— *United News of India* (Y. Ramakrishnan, Madurai)

SHAHABAD : Just for a cup of coffee, the Super Fast Bombay-bound Miner Express was detained for over an hour at Wadi junction. A passenger of the train, who took a cup of coffee, found the quantity was less and cold. He manhandled the vendor and that created the trouble. The Railway Police who appeared on the scene, were pushed out by the irate passenger. Then the sub-inspector was forced to bring down the passenger, who was a militaryman, seized his movement order and identity card. After taking his written statement, he was allowed to move. A report has been sent to his military unit for disciplinary action— *Indian Express* (K. S. Soma Sunder, Bangalore)

NEW DELHI : There was panic as patrol cars dashed to the Bank of Maharashtra in the Dholpur House on Shahjehan Road on April 1 and armed guards took up positions. The bank had received an anonymous telephone call that it was going to be raided. The petrified bank officials immediately informed the police who swung into action. It was only later, when the police control room had received several bogus calls during the day that the officials realised that these were the usual April Fools Day pranks —*The Times of India* (Satyajit Chakravarty, Shillong)

PANAJI : The body of a three-year-old boy was practically eaten up by ants in the Hospicio hospital morguemat Margao. The Speaker of the Goa Assembly, Mr Froilano Machado, said he had himself seen the child's body as the parents were from his constituency of Cortalim. Mr Herculano Dourado (Congress-I) had moved a calling attention motion on the death of the boy, Rehman Agha, who was admitted to the hospital on April 8 after an accident and died there. The Health Minister, Sheikh Hassan denied that the death was due to negligence. He said he was not aware whether the body, as alleged by Mr Dourado, had been eaten by ants. At this stage, the Speaker intervened and confirmed the charge—*The Statesman* (Kajal Chakraborty, Calcutta)

UJJAIN : Mr Arjun Singh Dharu, leader of the Lok Dal group in the dissolved Madhya Pradesh Vidhan Sabha and a former state parliamentary secretary, has rejoined as sub-inspector of police. The Ujjain district superintendent of police, Mr D. D. Gupta, told UNI that Mr Dharu, after reporting for duty, had gone on five days' leave. He will be posted at some police station in Ujjain district, the superintendent said. Mr Dharu had been dismissed from service on the charge of corruption but the high court subsequently ordered his reinstatement. By that time, Mr Dharu had won the 1977 assembly election and become a parliamentary secretary. According to official sources, Mr Dharu's return to police service entitles him to a large amount of compensation and salary arrears—*The Times of India* (Santha Ramachandran, New Delhi)

NEW DELHI : Two constables of the Delhi Armed Police — Rampal and Rishipal—have been arrested for allegedly trying to sell one of the two cars stolen from Gurgaon a few days ago, according to the police. It is stated that the two cars were found abandoned in Delhi on Monday (March 24). According to the police the constables tried to sell one of the cars (RJA 7787) to someone in the Jama Masjid area—*The Statesman* (M. P. Gupta, Ranchi)

UJJAIN : It is not all simple living at the Kumbh Mela here. The tents and shamianas of some of the leading sadhus now here to attend the mela are equipped with fans, coolers, refrigerators and telephones. Of course some of them still prefer 'Khas Tattis' to keep them cool, with their 'chelas' frequently sprinkling these with water. 35 telephones have already been provided to leading sadhus and the telephone authorities are receiving requests daily for more and more connections—*Nagpur Times* (A. B. Vishwakarma, Amravati)

without comment

I HAVE two leaders (Indira Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi) and as long as I have their support, I will continue to be the Chief Minister here. We all belong to the *Indira Krupa Poshaka Nataka Mandali* (Indira-blessed drama troupe)— Gundu Rao, Karnataka Chief Minister quoted in *Deccan Herald*

I DO not need to impress Sanjay Gandhi and that too by shouting in a Lok Sabha—Jagdish Tytler, Congress (I) MP, quoted in *Onlooker*

WE cannot afford to have leaders who want to stick on to their seats till they die—Dharam Veer, Uttar Pradesh Congress (I) president

EVERYONE claims to speak for the people even if his Party has won a paltry five or seven seats. I speak for the people, because I belong to a Party that has won over 350 seats. I say "Janata" is me— Giani Zail Singh

THE police have once again gone crazy — *Frontier* on the police brutality near Islampur in West Bengal

RAM is dead while Hanuman is alive—and kicking — Raj Narain quoted in *Indian Express*

THE United States is a monstrous leech, sucking the blood of mankind; the Soviet Union is the burial ground of so many people: in France, housewives become part time whores to buy furniture; Israel is a nest of vipers; Saudi Arabia is an inferno of harems; and China stands on naked force —Bani Sadr, President of Iran quoted in *Current*

WHAT do I buy with 200 million dollars? The hostility of the Soviet Union, and that does not suit me —General Zia-ul Haq of Pakistan in *Time*

WHENEVER they (the Press) didn't know what I had bowled they would say it was a googly— B. S. Chandrashekhar, ex-Test cricketer quoted in *Sportsworld*

I DON'T think there is ever a stage where you can say you are a writer. If you get too big for your boots, you can always read a page of Tolstoy and you'll be humbled —Ved Mehta quoted in *Asiaweek*

THE most dangerous profession in India today is being a company director—Aditya Birla in *India Today*.

THEY (westerners) would come to my recitals high on dope and would smoke pot and make love while I played—Ravi Shankar, sitar maestro

Illustrations/Abu Bhusan Mahl

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CENTRE OF ATTENTION

THE Pradesh Election Committees (PECs) of the Congress (I) met on April 18 to finalise the Assembly ticket lists in the nine states. Overheard in Delhi Congress (I) circles on April 17 :

Q : What will the PECs do?

A : They will compete with each other to go to 1, Safdarjung Road to tell Mrs Gandhi that they left the decision to her? The PECs have been so constituted that no unanimous decision can possibly emerge. The possibility of a decision by a majority vote is remote. Therefore, many Congress (I) men in the capital feel that the ultimate choice will have to be left to the Central leadership. As an example, they point out the composition of the Punjab PEC, which has 13 members. Eight of them are shared equally by the two main rival groups led by Giani Zail Singh and Darbara Singh. Two belong to Chaudhury Balram's group and the remaining three to Swaran Singh's camp. The balancing factor will be Swaran Singh and in all probability the indecisiveness of the Punjab PEC will land the list in the hands of the Centre.

THE BARODA MUDDLE CASE

"BARODA" has become an important name in Delhi. While on the one hand the Supreme Court was busy hearing a petition seeking the reopening of the Baroda Dynamite Case, Lalwani of Baroda stepped in with the "Baroda Knife Case". Interestingly, the lawyers in both cases have the same surname. While Ram Panjwani is trying to persuade the Supreme Court to reopen the Baroda Dynamite Case, R. L. Panjwani appeared for Lalwani in the assault case. R. L. Panjwani is lesser known so the publication of court reports caused some embarrassment to Ram Panjwani, who is a ruling Party lawyer.

IDENTITY CRISIS

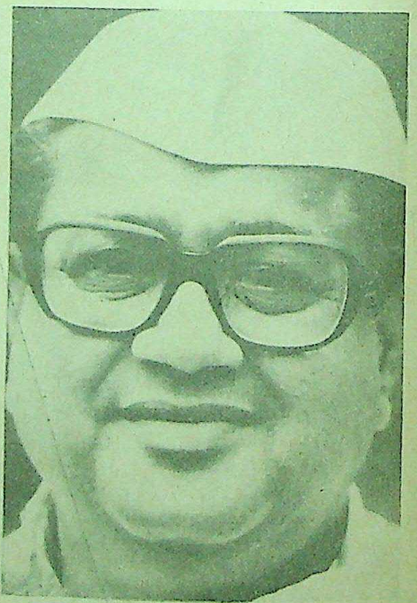
SHRI BRAHMA MAHENDRA, General Secretary, Punjab Pradesh Congress (I) Committee, is allegedly involved in the Poornima Singh episode. Mr Bhupesh Gupta, CPI leader of the house, stated the episode in the Rajya Sabha on Monday, March 31. All Delhi and Punjab papers — the language papers included — carried the news on April 1. Brahma Mahendra did not issue any contradiction till the evening of April 2. He issued a statement after consulting Mr Bhagwan Singh Siddhu, President of the Patiala Rural DCC (I) and also a leading criminal lawyer of Patiala who has vouched for Mahendra. Sanjay Gandhi has also criticised the CPI leader, Mr Gupta, at a public meeting in Patiala for making remarks in the Rajya Sabha

Who is Brahma Mahendra? He belongs to Patiala and is the son of an income-tax practitioner. His age is about 35. Stays in Modi Building, near Anardana Chowk, Patiala. He was never a functionary of the Congress (I) or Youth Congress (I) till he suddenly became — thanks to Mr Kamal Nath — Secretary of the Patiala PCC (I) in 1979. He was a hangeron and closely associated with Kamal Nath, Devinder Singh Garcha, MPs, and others. For the last five years or more, he was always in Delhi, very often in the Western Court, sometimes even forging MPs' signatures. His stay, generally in Room 54 can be verified from the Western Court reception.

What was he doing in Delhi? Did he have any ostensible means of livelihood? Was he doing any political work or other activity? No. Was he involved in a stabbing incident (over an attempted misbehaviour with some girls)? The case was registered and he was in Rajendra Hospital, Patiala, for over a month. He was in Delhi trying to arrange Sanjay Gandhi's Patiala programme and, on the night of the incident, he was with Devinder Singh Garcha and Mr Balbir Singh. Brahma Mahendra also used to frequent the temporary residence of Garcha at D11/67, Shahjahan Road Flats which is in the name of Chawla, a journalist working as a stringer for the *Indian Express*.

TITLED

THE man to watch in Delhi is Jagdish Tytler. He is now sitting officially in the PM's house every morning and evening, handling the public appointments of Mrs Gandhi. While this rise in the status of Tytler should have made his opponents in the Party jealous, a section of them are happy. After all, they say, powerful men like R. K. Dhawan and Yashpal Kapoor will soon be joining the anti-Tytler camp.



WHO'VE RUSHED IN NOW ?

The Afghanistan situation has given rise to a new brand of political humour in the capital. Recently a poster appeared on the walls of the city which said : "Travel free : visit the Soviet Union before the Soviet Union comes to visit you. For particulars contact Russia's comrades available all over India."

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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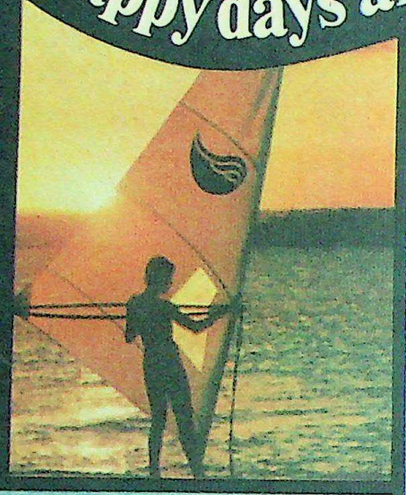

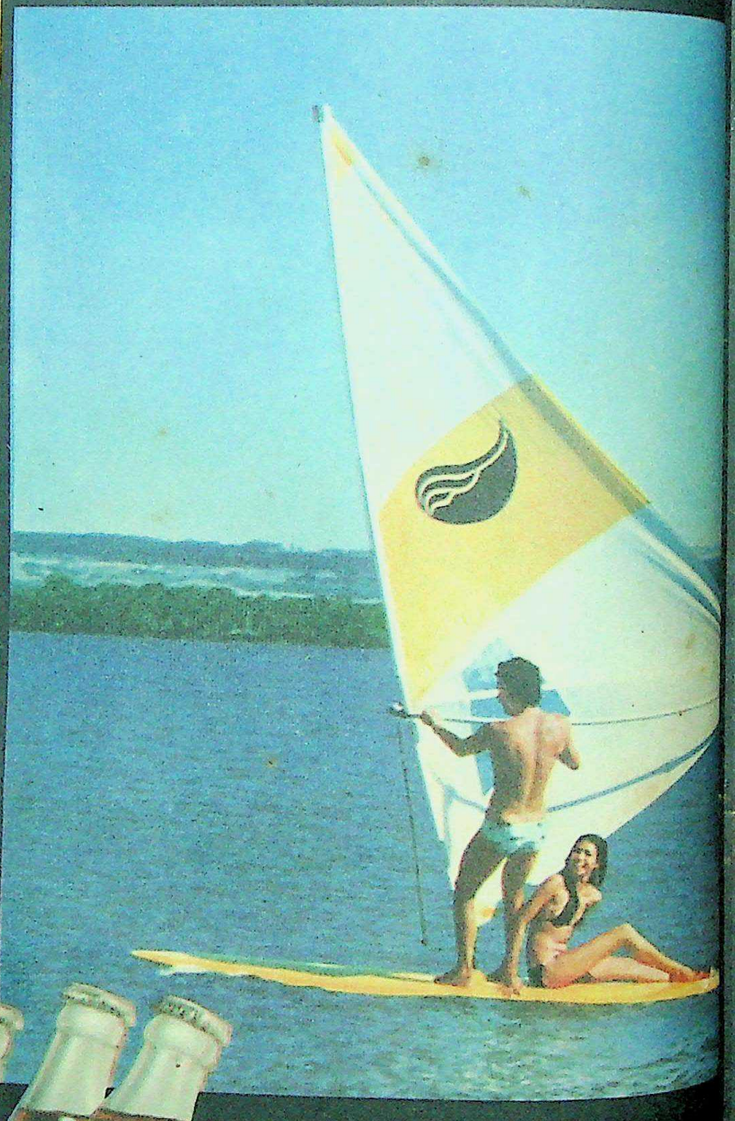

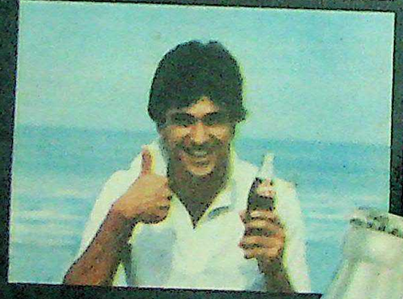

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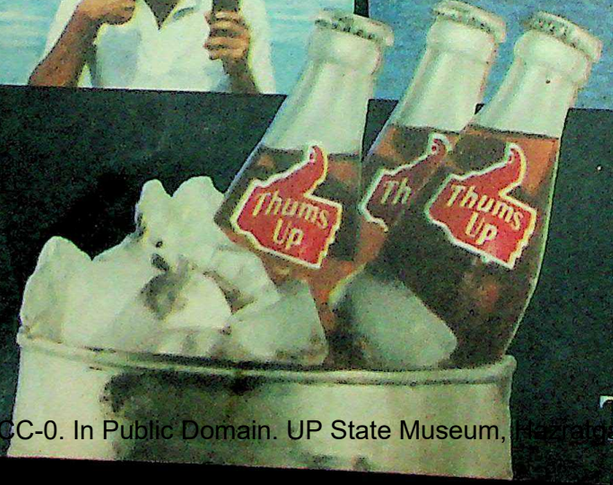

Thums Up

The refreshing Cola

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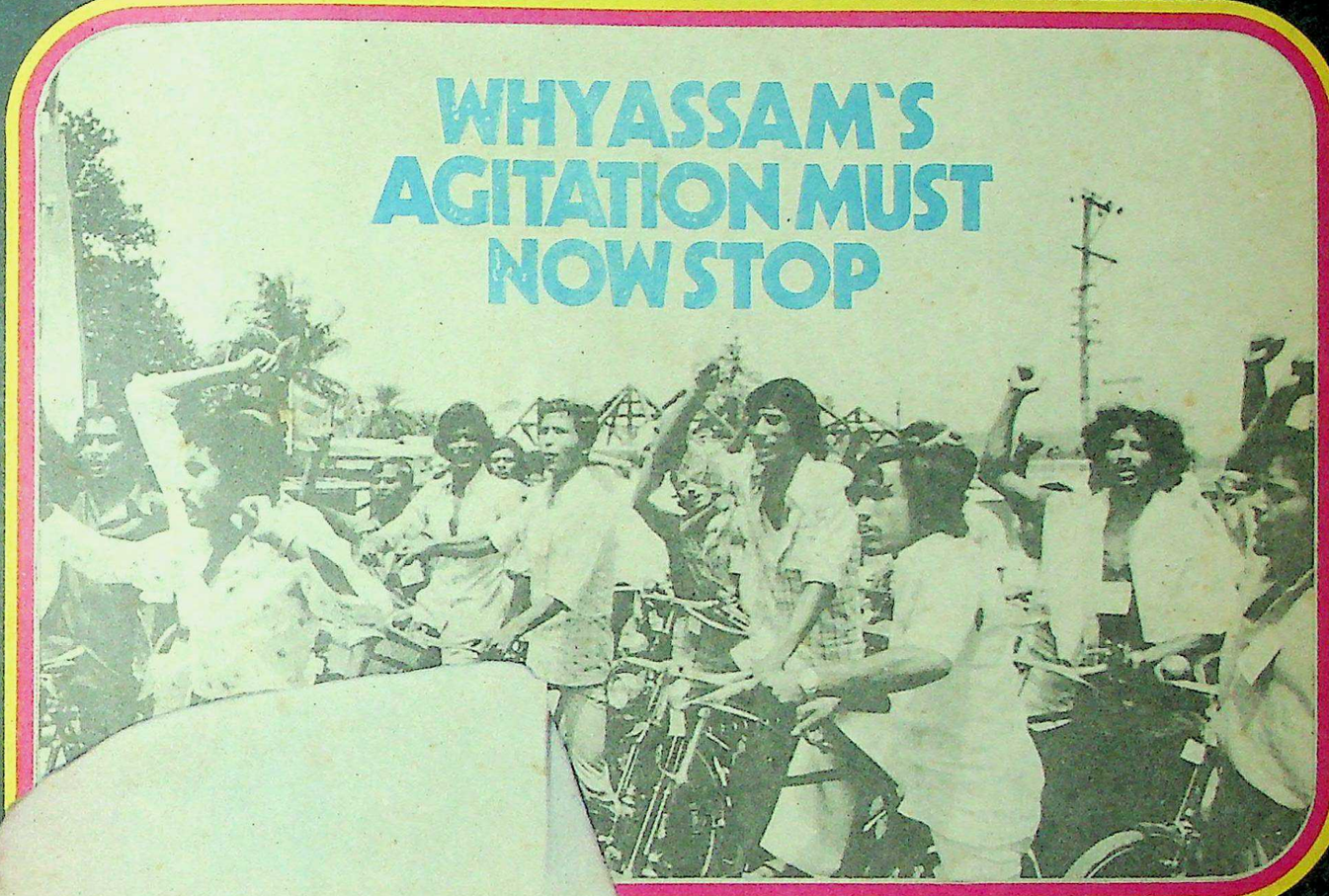
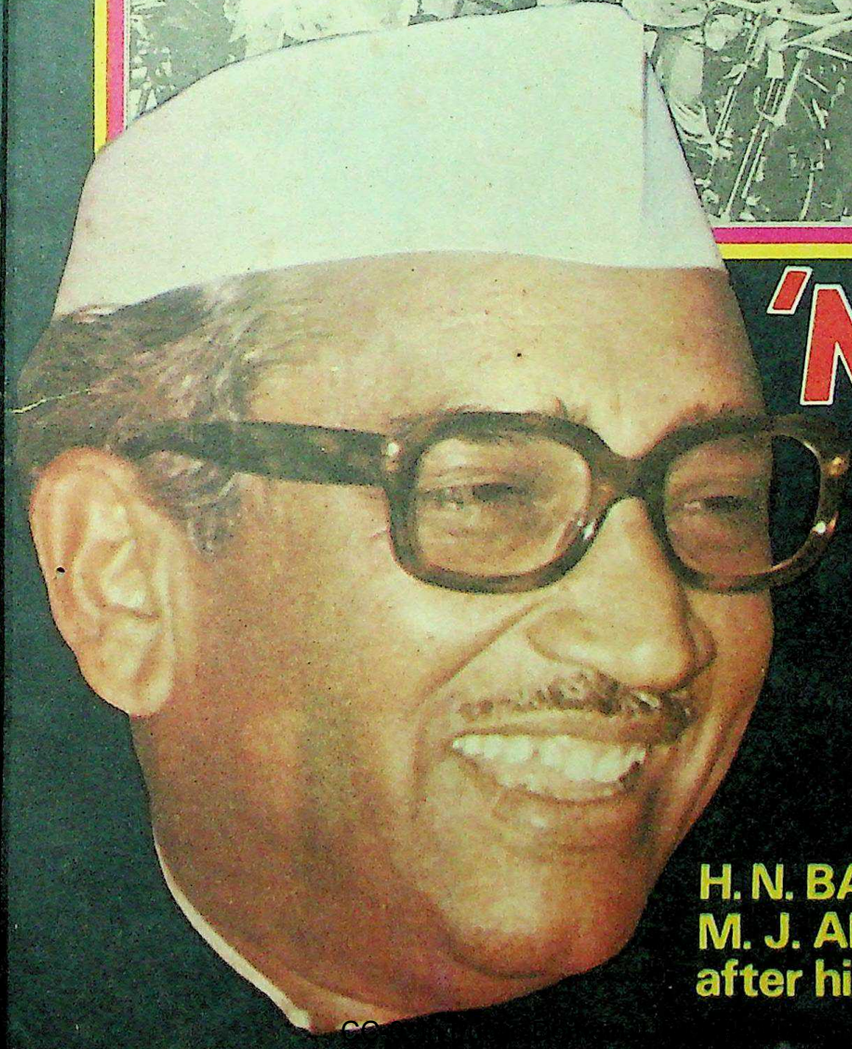
SUNDAY

WHY ASSAM'S AGITATION MUST NOW STOP





'Mrs Gandhi is Sanjay's rubber stamp'

H. N. BAHUGUNA tells M. J. Akbar in exclusive interview after his resignation

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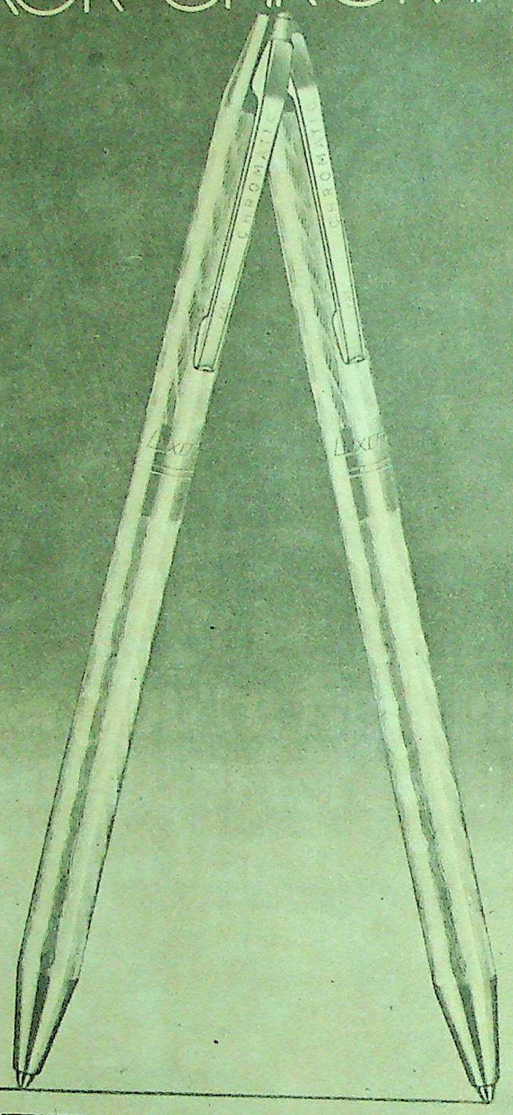
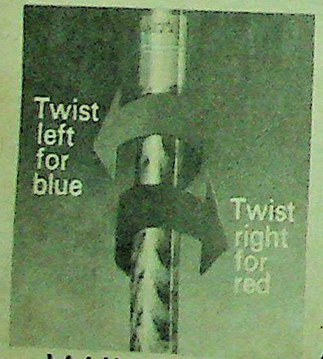


A PEN FIT TO BE SMUGGLED



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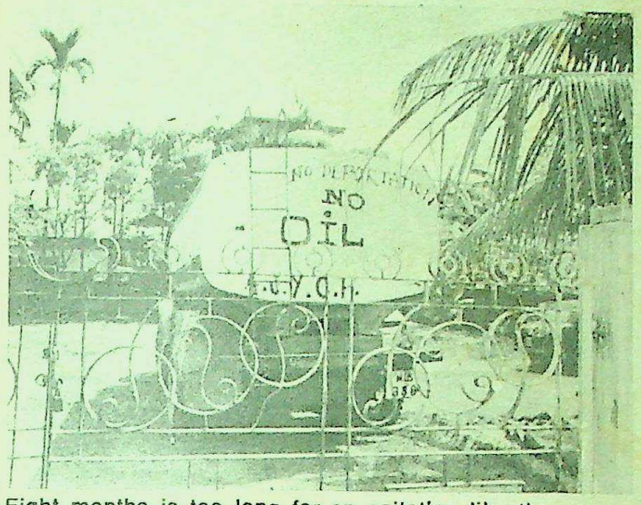
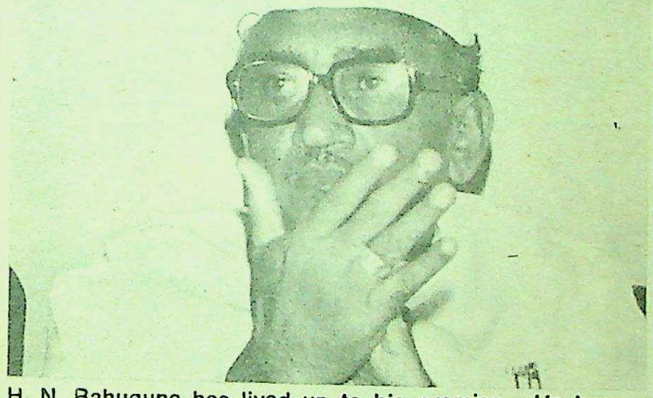
SUNDAY VOLUME 7
ISSUE 47
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

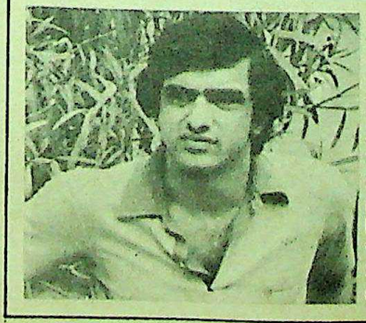
May 25, 1980



Eight months is too long for an agitation like the one in Assam to continue. It has taken over 80 lives, crippled the state's economy, harmed national integration and created panic among the state's non-Assamese citizens. Now everyone's worst fears, of communal violence, seems to be coming true.



H. N. Bahuguna has lived up to his promise. He has quit the Congress (I), resigned his Lok Sabha seat and unleashed a massive broadside against Mrs Gandhi. How will this affect the Assembly polls in UP ? As Bahuguna has a reputation for starting new phases in our national politics, how will the others take the cue from him ?



It has been many years since India has had a a world champion. But Prakash Padukone is not at all affected by his success and all the fame that goes with it. All the receptions and the publicity have not gone to his head, for he is still a very genuine person. SUNDAY presents an in-depth profile of the star.

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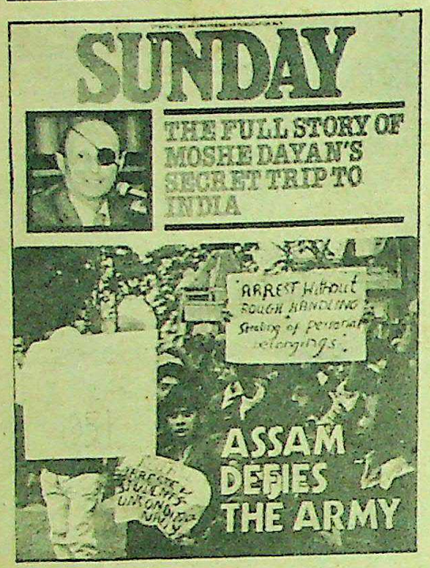

Secret mischief

M. J. AKBAR's report on the "Full story of Moshe Dayan's secret trip to India" (April 27) reads like the unfinished script of a Hitchcock thriller movie. However, there was an element of anti-climax in the whole thing. This sort of journalism is really very appreciable. One wonders how seasoned politicians like Morarji Desai took such a calculated risk. It needs only an elementary knowledge of international affairs to be aware that the Israeli connection is the most sensitive issue with oil-producing Arab nations and our crude requirements are met only by them. Mr Desai's secret invitation to Moshe Dayan to visit India can only be called 'adventurous'. This sort of secret diplomacy is highly deplorable when national interests are at stake.
Andres Tudu, Burdwan.

MR AKBAR's story on Moshe Dayan's secret visit to India is simply fascinating. It is hard to believe that a figure like Moshe Dayan came to India like a thief.
Amrit Lall, Barasat, West Bengal.

WHAT prompted the former Prime Minister, Mr Morarji Desai, to invite Moshe Dayan to take a secret trip to India remains a mystery. India's stand on the Arab-Israel confrontation is too well known. Vajpayee too should be blamed for the idea. The episode must have tarnished the image of the Government of India. It has also revealed the fact that the government sought the help of America. The Israeli consul-general seems to have won even if it's on paper. Morarji Desai owes an explanation to the Indian people for encouraging this trip.
Shyamal Gupta, Calcutta.

YOUR readers may be interested in a little background on India's Israeli connection. It has been like a grapevine that has been spreading on Indian soil ever since Israel was born. The Israel lobby had found strong supporters among the so-called Gandhian diehards of the Congress (O). Some of them fell for the kibbutz and moshava as alternatives to the Russian agricultural collectives and the Chinese communes. Jayaprakash Narayan and his socialist friends believed in the anti-USSR, pro-Western Socialist International brand of socialism. And US-backed Israel has been an essential part of this movement in our country. When the Janata Party gained momentum, India's Israeli connection got much prominence. The Jana Sangh and its parent organisation, the RSS, had always cherished a secret love for Israel.
Jag Mohan, New Delhi.

ONE cannot but admire the courage of former Prime Minister Mr Desai for allowing Moshe Dayan to come to India and present Israel's point of view personally. There is no doubt that India is pro-Arab and it is mainly due to the oil politics. But does this mean that she should condemn Israel blindly? The Israelis are a very brave people and one cannot help admiring them. Moreover, Israel has been shouldering much greater responsibility than the Arabs who are clinging to worn out values. it seems we are non-aligned in name only. We are supposed to judge issues on their merits which we have failed to do. India's stand on the Afghan issue has made this obvious. If India is to play a meaningful role in world politics today then it should shed hypocrisy and assert its rights even if that displeases the Russians and the Arabs.
Mrs Krishna Malhotra, New Delhi.

THE 'expose', as you call it, does not say when exactly Moshe Dayan visited this country. Neither the year nor the month is mentioned. We can only make a guesswork from the reference to Morarji Desai and Vajpayee. Again, it does not identify the house where the Israeli leader was supposed to be staying. Why this poverty of information? More important, you kept quiet all these days. You should have published the story before the Israeli newspaper came out with it.
V. Krishnamoorthy, Trivandrum.

Agitators, judges, executioners

"ASSAM defies the army" (April 27) could not really be considered an eye-opener. The agitation in Assam is taking a new turn. The agitators as well as the police officers have decided to give notice to the Bengalees to quit Assam as early as possible. But this can be done by the tribunal or the court. The Bengalees should take a firm stand against this kind of anti-national feeling of the Assamese-speaking people.
Ashish Sarkar, Dibrugarh.

I SINCERELY hope that good counsel will prevail over the leaders of the Assam movement and they will co-operate with the Prime Minister in settling the Assam question. Otherwise, it might have serious repercussion on the future of the north-eastern region. Not only that, the foreign powers will jeopardise the national integrity..
Debabrata Sengupta, Howrah.

IF we go back to history we find that the Ahoms themselves are foreigners for they had come from Upper Burma and they are the ones who invaded India sometime around 13th century. Mongoloid by origin, the Ahoms have gradually adopted Hinduism. As far as the foreign nationals issue is concerned, the Ahoms should realise that they too are foreigners on the Indian soil. So the cut-off year should be 13th century and not 20th century.
Saswathi Ghose, Calcutta.

SUBIR ROY speculates that Mr H. C. Sarin may repeat what he did in Telengana. I think that mere administrative solution will not be enough for Assam. The people of Assam do have genuine grievances but unfortunately the movement has taken a secessionist turn. The bour[illegible] the Assamese community and the feudal lords, in order to maintain their exploitation, have misdirected the movement. The Assamese people instead of rising against these exploiters started their struggle against the non-Assamese people. The Assamese people must be convinced that the whole country is aware of their problem and that it is the exploiters not the common non-Assamese people who are responsible for the present situation.
Marmabina Sen, Bangalore.

THE cover (April 27) shows a photograph of the agitation in Meghalaya. The photograph was taken in front of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly. But the caption reads "Assam defies the Army".
A. Zaman, Gauhati.

SURELY a magazine of your stature should know the meaning of army. Your heading "Assam defies the Army" may be sensational but it was a thoughtless act on your part. The article nowhere refers to the

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defiance of the army. This is one organisation in the country which means business and is available when the need arises.
S. Mukherjee, New Delhi.

TV's true colours

SAUMITRA BANERJEE has raised a vital question in "A colourless scheme" (April 27). So long as the TV is considered a luxury item and is a source of entertainment there is little justification for exempting it from taxes. Doordarshan was brought into the scene to serve a meaningful social purpose. But so far what has been its achievement? The committee set up by the Government in September 1976 to examine the feasibility of colour TV came out with the observation that the "development programmes like Krishi Darshan, health education, science education and children's programmes should be given importance in the colour production as colour heightens the impact and the message will be more effective". If there are plans to include these and other developmental activities in colour TV as well as encourage community viewing of it then it would certainly be worthwhile.
Bijoy Kumar Jaiswal, Katihar.

Nth time, no mistake

THIS refers to "Soviets blundered in Afghanistan" (April 27) by Madhu Limaye. This is not the first time that the Soviets have blundered. Such blunders were committed so many times in the past. One could never forget the Soviet troops in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The countries threatened by the Soviet aggression—directly or indirectly—should be assured that they will be given prompt and effective help by the rest of the world.
Kiranmay Nanda, MLA West Bengal Legislative Assembly.

MADHU LIMAYE is right in stating that "the military intervention of the Soviet Union is a blunder of the first magnitude". He is equally right in saying that a national policy has to be evolved in response to the Soviet action. But I must say that the author himself has blundered in equating the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan with the American naval build-up in the Indian Ocean. The Soviet naval bases in the Indian Ocean stretch from Aden in the west to Danang and Cam Ranh Bay in the east. Surprisingly, it receives a fraction of the publicity. How many Iranians, Afghans or other south-west Asian people have been killed by the Fifth Fleet? And how many by Soviet MI-24 helicopters, T-54 tanks, napalm and chemical warfare attacks on the innocent villagers? Mr Limaye is expected to have a right perspective when he is dealing with such issues. Mr Limaye also says that the "Soviet Union is the largest country in the world. Its productive capacities are vast, and it now has achieved military parity with the United States." So, what is the justification for such a show of strength on a small country like Afghanistan? The article dismisses the western security interests in the west Asia. According to Mr Limaye, the Soviet interest in the Gulf is nil and the Americans although miles away have a "vital stake" in Afghanistan. "The question" is not "whether the Americans will accept a non-aligned Afghan regime with which the Soviets can live," the question is whether the Soviets will accept a non-aligned Afghanistan at all.
Ajit Kumar Roy, Calcutta.

CONFUSION! I cried out after going through the write-up. Throughout the article Madhu Limaye has tried to justify the Soviet action in Afghanistan. His point that India's security will be endangered is not clarified.
Dipankar Das Choudhury, Shillong.

Supreme power

DRS Meyyappan and Veerapandian's spirited search for "social and environmental pros and cons of nuclear field" (April 13) is really rather reassuring; the air of confidence refreshing. More concerned about amorphous public debate than reality it is clear that they have missed the point completely. First, some factual misconceptions. Their conclusion of Tarapur being a futile venture is based on their misconceived notion about the "expense" involved in purification of fission fuel. Even outright purchase of enriched uranium does not substantiate that claim, especially bearing in mind the dwindling supply of oil and the pathetic management of coal mines. If the United States, on the other hand, ceases to supply us with enriched uranium, India is perfectly entitled to use the already built reprocessing plant at Tarapur for proper processing of the used fuel rods. Meanwhile, the oxide fuel would be adequate for running Tarapur.

No sensible nation in the world however is banking its future on an enriched uranium light water reactor like Tarapur. The fast breeder technology with thorium as the input is the answer. The touching concern of Drs Meyyappan and Veerapandian about the depletion of thorium resources is unfortunately misconceived—once the breeder technology gets off the ground one doesn't require any fresh input—the breeder reactor breeds the fuel! Their acute anxiety about the imminent explosion of a breeder ractor is, I am afraid, a horrific fantasy—it hasn't happened in the last 20 years.

Worried as we all are about genetic imbalances caused by radiation, I am sure that most of us are rather more concerned with what is happening in Iran, in Afghanistan and indeed in most of the third world countries. Caught in the erratic grips of the superpowers, and faced with the dwindling oil levels in the Gulf, the threat of a major war is infinitely worse than an unlikely event of core meltdown. We accept death due to malnutrition as merely a curse of impoverished nations; but a not so terrible disaster in a remote island in the United States evokes immediate antipathy towards anything nuclear. It appears that some of us are at last catching up with the fashions of California!

With all due respects to Prof A. K. Saha, it is difficult to visualise hydrogen, theoretically a tremendous source of energy, filling up the power vacuum of tomorrow. The whole idea is yet to get off the laboratory stage. Within 20 years oil could run out. Hoping for hydrogen as a possible substitute of oil and other sources of power would be dangerous optimism. Professor Saha's dismissal of nuclear energy as inconsequential is frankly irresponsible and hardly substantiated by any factual evidence. The somewhat slow progress of the nuclear power programme in our country is not a reflection of the irrelevance of nuclear power but probably a rather sad commentary on our management of the research and development programme as a whole.

Fusion energy as a possible immediate alternative is a pipe dream. The intensive research costing billions of dollars is yet to lead to a probable commercial breakthrough. For India to beat everyone else in that race is unrealistic; for India to think of fusion energy in commercial terms would be far fetched. I repeat what I had already indicated in the article: with solar, hydel and thermal energy tiding over the low power demands in tomorrow's India, there is no other alternative but to press hard a nuclear programme. The contemporary sagging trend in the power situation, without nuclear power, would lead to a collapse and total darkness. There will be no load shedding. There wouldn't be any more load to shed, just complete power cuts all day long.
Bikash Sinha, Calcutta.

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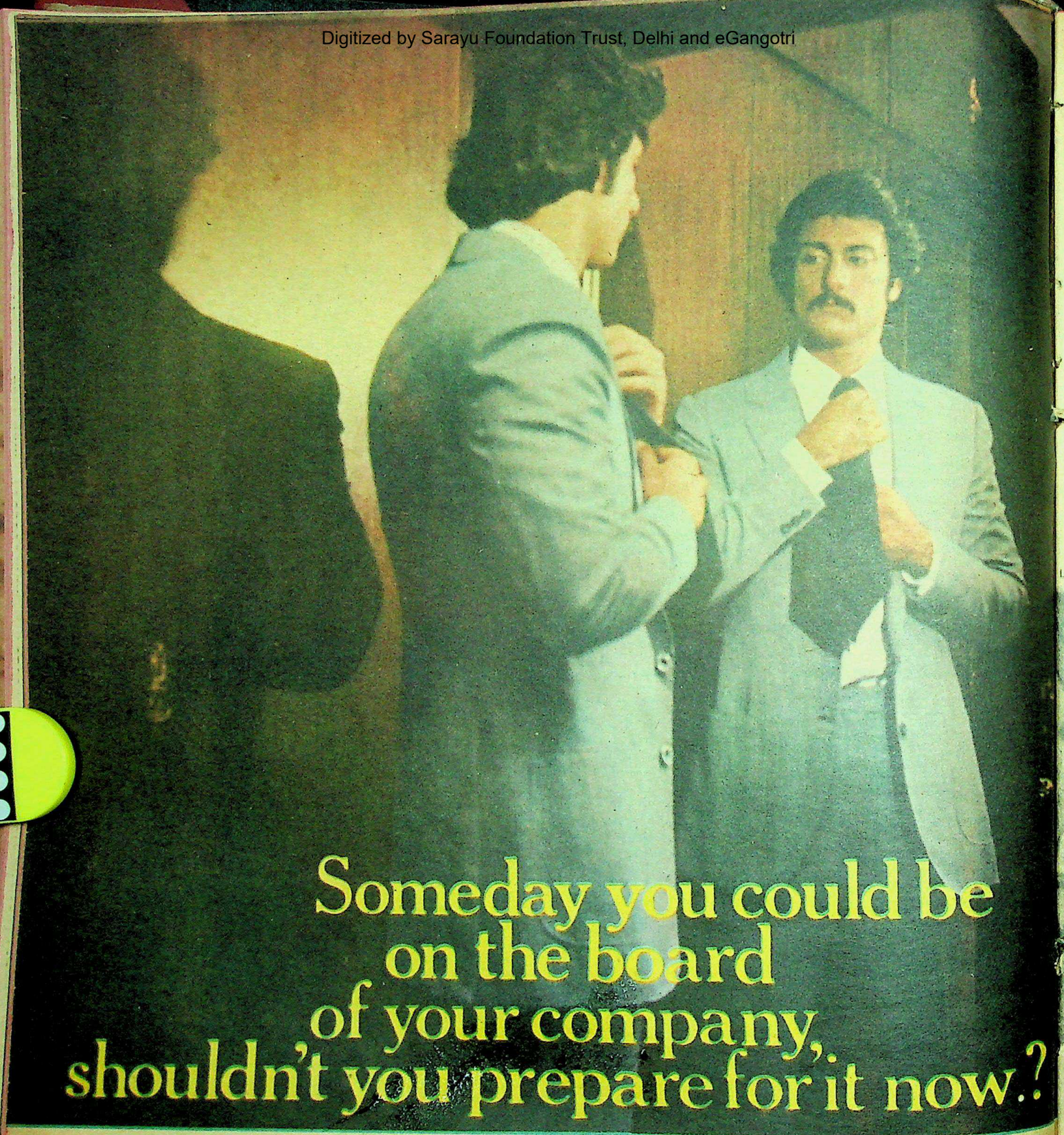

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WHY ASSAM'S AGITATION MUST NOW STOP

The students are not professional agitators. Nor do Prafulla Mohanto and his men see the agitation as the last Battle of Saraighat. They have legitimate fears about the percentage of immigrants in Assam's population, and now they are showing every sign of wanting a dialogue. The time has come for Delhi to withdraw the Army, and the AASU and Gana Sangram Parishad to withdraw the agitation—long before a point of no return is reached. TOOSHAR PANDIT reports from Gauhati

Devi Prasad Sinha

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WHEN the newspapers announced on May 23 that Mrs Indira Gandhi had called an all-Party conference on May 31, it was the clearest sign so far that there might yet be a sensible solution in Assam. This was tacit admission that the government basically would use cooperation now instead of provocative confrontation. The chessgame in Assam has reached a dangerous point; tensions could easily explode into virulent clashes between the various communities. The recent bloodshed at Howli and Tinsukia is a gruesome reminder of what could happen : 85 people have already fallen victim to the eight-month-old movement. There are perceptible signs of growing restlessness among the non-Assamese, many of whom think that the movement is directed specifically against them, whether they are recent immigrants or not. Fears of being displaced and losing their hard-earned possessions have become a recurring nightmare for them. And numerically, the Assamese and the non-Assamese are evenly matched.

Every sensible person in Assam is convinced that conciliation rather than confrontation is the answer to the impasse, and that is why one hears so much about "dialogue" and "negotiation" these days in Assam. Even the All Assam Students Union (AASU), which has spearheaded the agitation, is now strongly inclined not only towards negotiation, but is making a deliberate effort to keep itself away from the extremism which is now beginning to manifest itself even more strongly. Provocative pamphlets and inflammatory wall-posters have begun to appear in the name of the agitation. One recent poster said : 'Between the snake and the Bengali, kill the Bengali first'. The AASU has disowned such sentiments. And this is important because the AASU forms the heart of the Gana Sangarm Parishad (GSP, a united front of ten groups and associations officially in charge of the movement). But the AASU can hardly ignore the fact that the longer the stalemate continues, the greater the chance of militants increasing their influence.

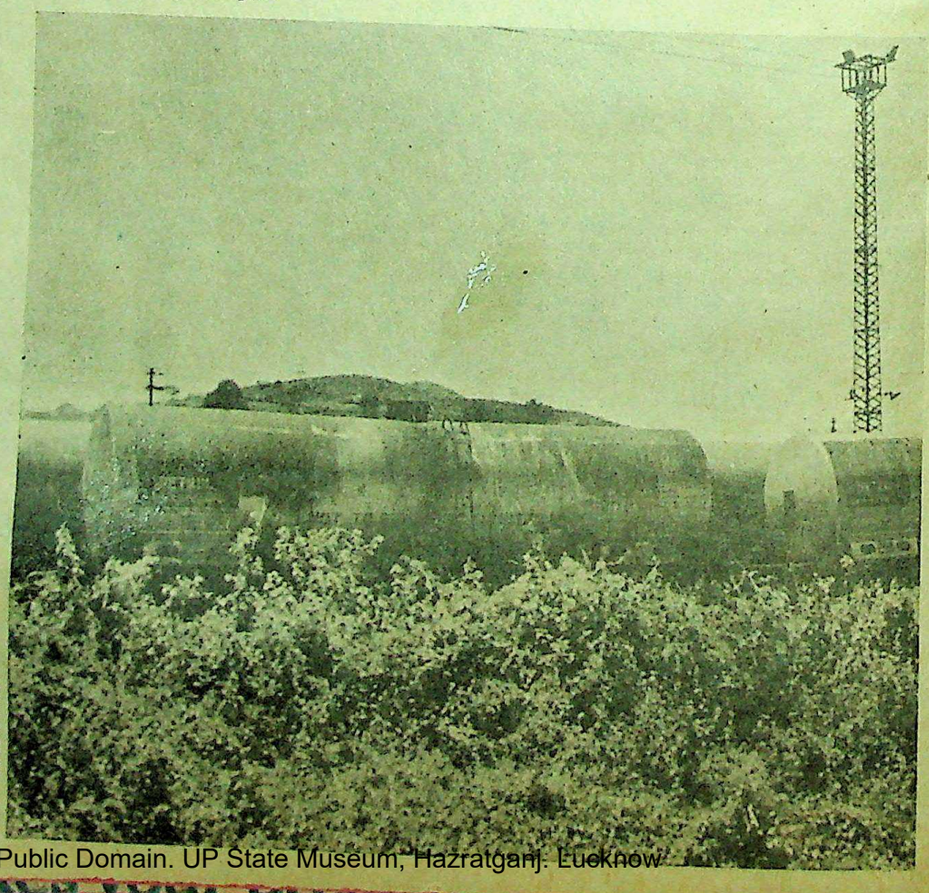
Prafulla Mohanto and his followers in AASU are not among those who see the agitation as a prelude to secession, or the Last Battle of Saraighat, or even as the first renaissance. They are well-meaning people who genuinely feel that if the immigrant population is not thinned out, the Assamese will soon be reduced to a minority in their own state. Their ambitions are not political power (although the same cannot be said for some of the other factions of the GSP). The students want this problem to be solved : soon, and peacefully. Moreover, the students had already paid a huge price. They have been away from their schools and colleges for eight months now, and many of them are becoming impatient to return to their classes. "We have already missed quite a few all-India selection tests," one of them moaned to this reporter. Another complained that the students of Cachar, who had not been agitating, had gained through default. A third pointed out : "Losing a year is bound to put us at a disadvantage in the job market". Clear proof of the students' desire to return to their classes is available from the city bookshops : once again books have begun selling. "Why else should they buy books now?" a city bookseller asked.

People believe that it is the professional politicians who created this mess. First, they turned a blind eye to largescale immigration in order to gain political leverage among the new populations. And now they are delaying a settlement. Circumstances catapulted students to the leadership of the movement; indeed, the students came to the fore because of the people's lack of confidence in the politicians' ability either to solve the problem or lead a genuine movement.

But the signs of weariness are visible now. And the internal debates between the "hawks" and the "doves" is finding expression in the occasional indecision in the conduct of the agitation. It was a bit of an anti-climax when the AASU announced a two-day pause after having worked up the agitation to a feverish pitch, culminating in a spectacular torchlight procession all over the state, in which millions participated, on the evening of May 16. After this two-day holiday, they announced a programme to evict "foreigners' from government lands and the tribal belts, to be followed by a nine-day nonparticipation movement by government and semi-government employees from May 21. Nobody needed to be persuaded to make these gestures a success; the non-participation, in particular, was complete. But all this was more by way of keeping the hearth warm rather than stoking up fresh fires. In truth, the tempo of the movement has clearly slackened after the AASU decided not to press its ultimatum to the government to screen and deport "foreigners" by May 15.

The Assamese certainly have not given up, far from it; but the atmosphere is surprisingly relaxed and is hardly reminiscent of the passion of a revolution. The picketers at Narengi, the pipeline headquarters of Oil India, which has been one of the focal points of the movement ever since the agitators stopped the flow of crude to Barauni on December 27, now wear a tired look. The lush green fields near the Judges' Court, that had been converted into an open prison to hold the unending crowds of demonstrators courting jail, has once again become the haunt of budding footballers, starry-eyed couples, and elderly retired folk out

Oil is the big weapon



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for a gossip. Picketers are exchanging gossip with CRP personnel and having tea with them in front of the state secretariat at Dishpur. Most shops and establishments are open. If there are fewer vehicles on the road, it is only because fuel is in short supply. Of course, vital installations continue to be disrupted. The cement plant at Bokajan has closed down. Banks and post offices are not offering normal services. But, considering the magnitude of the movement, these are at best minor inconveniences.

It was perhaps inevitable that the movement would lose some of its momentum after a while. But more important is the fact that the AASU leaders have deliberately opted for a more controlled agitation, unsure of what a combination of Army crackdown and reprisals from the non-Assamese could lead to. Plus, there is always the fear that the leadership of the movement could always pass into the hands of extremist elements if the confrontation took on Bangladesh proportions.

THE AASU leaders were anxious to resume a dialogue with the government as soon as opportunity provided. It was hardly a coincidence that Mr H. C. Sarin, the principal adviser to the Government of Assam, and Mr B. G. Verghese, of the Gandhi Peace Foundation (who was in touch with the students), talked about resumption of negotiations on the same day, May 20. Both knew that the students were willing to talk.

Sarin had been carefully preparing the stage for such a meeting ever since he assumed office on April 21. His first decision was to overrule those zealous bureaucrats of the Union Home Ministry who wanted to use force to settle the Assam problem. Simultaneously, he opened a channel for communication with the students through influential people enjoying the students' confidence. Prominent among them was the Jnanpith award winning Assamese novelist, Dr Biren Bhattacharya. Sarin met him twice for dinner at the government guest house where he was living before leaving Gauhati for talks with Mrs Gandhi on May 18. Early in May, Mrs Gandhi's troubleshooter for Assam, Mr Yashpal Kapoor, had a secret meeting with some of the student leaders and their advisers in Shillong. Sarin also kept in touch with a number of AASU advisers: Kumud Nath Sharma, the dean of the faculty of law in Gauhati University and official "interpreter" for the AASU leaders at meetings with Delhi leaders; H. K. Borpujari, professor emeritus, Gauhati University; Lolit Rajkhowa, lecturer at the Law College; Nagen Saikia, general secretary, Asom Sahitya Sabha; and Ganesh Phukan, a former finance secretary and brother-in-law of the owner of *Assam Tribune*. These efforts were supplemented by two former chief justices, M. C. Pathak and Baharul Islam, and a former vice-chancellor of Gauhati University, Dr Mathura Nath Goswami.

So when Sarin floated the idea of two-stage discussions—first a dialogue and then the negotiations—he was confident that his proposal would be welcome. After his return from Delhi on May 21, he held a series of meetings with some of the student leaders and their advisers to ascertain their views about this proposal. At one of those meetings, the chief secretary, Mr Rameshchandra, was also present. Sarin gave the categorical assurance that the government was willing to release the detenues; it would work out a phased programme for the reinstatement of those government employees who had been dismissed for taking part in the movement; and, lastly, it would gradually withdraw the emergency measures it had adopted as the talks progressed. The government was rudely shaken out of its belief that there would be talks when the AASU leaders made a public statement demanding restoration of the April 2 situation as an essential pre-condition for any dialogue.

But if the government was surprised by this, nobody else was. The AASU is riding a tiger from which it is not easy to dismount. Nobody can afford to carry the charge of betraying the movement as a millstone around his neck for the rest of his life, and with so many leaders in jail, any hint of compromise will not be easy. Further, the movement is already divided between the hawks and the doves. If the AASU, operating from the Cotton College Students Union Hall represents the doves, then three important constituents of the GSP—the Purbanchaliya Loka Parishad led by Nibaran Bora, the Assam Jatiyatabadi Dal led by Girin Barua, and Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad led by Prabin Gogoi—definitely represent the other end of the spectrum. It is these militants who are resisting the resumption of negotiations. The reason is simple. Unlike the students, these people have political ambitions, and would like to use the movement to attain power in the next elections to the State Assembly.

Nibaran Bora has never been able to win an election, although he has tried several times. Originally a socialist, he was senior to Golap Borbora who rose to become the first Janata CM of Assam—a fact which so enraged Nibaran Bora that he promised to bring down Golap Borbora's government in less than six months. But the politicians are not powerful enough to sustain the movement if the AASU withdraws; they do not have the credibility which the students have (Nibaran Bora had contested the last elections on the slogan of economic independence for the north east, but he lost). The politicians therefore will fight hard to ensure that the AASU remains within the fold. The importance of the students was evident when the Gana Sangram Parishad's call for a satyagraha failed in February after the AASU had temporarily suspended the movement.

On the other hand, no AASU leader can afford to be branded as a tool of Mrs Gandhi. The president of AASU has already become the victim of a smear campaign: it is being asked why he has not been arrested when the rest of the

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leaders have been detained. After all, the government clearly knows where exactly he has gone "underground". There is, in fact, a deliberate effort to drag the AASU towards a more militant stance. It is a kind of a vicious circle, and when required, blackmail is clearly being used. How?

On May 14 at 7 p.m., the Gana Sangram Parishad issued a statement asking the people to prepare themselves for what it described as a "massive programme of action" if the government did not start screening and deportation of the "foreigners" by May 15. On the same night, in a separate statement, the AASU asked the people not to take up any programme of detection or deportation of the foreign nationals even if the Central Government did not offer an acceptable solution by the end of the deadline of May 15 set by the AASU. Obviously the GSP and the AASU were not speaking the same language. But the very next day, the AASU fell in line, and issued a declaration that the "people of Assam will have no alternative but to take up the matter of detecting the foreigners in phases". This is how pressure tactics work.

Even then, the tone and tenor of AASU is far less shrill than that of the GSP; the former is far more keen on negotiations. An instance. Reacting to Sarin's call for a dialogue, the AASU said that one condition for the resumption of talks must be that the government would not talk of either 1967 or 1971 as the base year. Significantly, the statement did not insist on its own demand for the acceptance of 1951 as the cut-off year, implying that the negotiations could be resumed if both sides started off on a clean slate. On the other hand, the Gana Sangram Parishad insisted that "the government shall have to accept 1951 as the dateline for the identification of foreigners" before the discussions could be resumed. The two statements clearly reflect the divergent trends within the movement, and highlight the impediments in the way to a peaceful settlement.

But Delhi, after a clumsy effort at using the stick (which failed) has clearly decided to use the carrot now. The "crackdown" was defeated by the Assamese people themselves when in one defiant gesture they marched out onto the streets the day the armed forces marched in. The process of releasing the detained leaders has now begun, and the indications are that the efforts of Messrs Pathak, Islam and Goswami will bear fruit and negotiations will resume. Will both the government and the leaders of the movement be wiser in their discussions the next time around?

How backward is the North East?

By A. N. PRABHU

ALPHABETICALLY, Assam is next only to Andhra Pradesh in the list of Indian states. Economically, it is somewhere at the bottom. It is a paradox of Assam being rich and the Assamese poor. This eastern state along with six other newlyborn states and union territories—Tripura, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh—have rich resources of minerals and raw materials. Only the oil in Assam has been exploited so far.

While politicians made hay when the sun was shining, the people of the north-east grew poorer. Poverty is steep in the region. As the population has increased, so has the percentage of those living below the poverty line. In 1960-61, 16.31 per cent in the rural and 22.63 per cent in the urban areas were below poverty line. In the next decade (1970-71), the percentage increased to 33.09 for rural and 40.30 for urban areas. (Source: Seventh Finance Commission). This says enough about the meagre work done to help the downtrodden.

The only area where development has taken place is oil. Assam's daily production of crude is estimated to be worth about Rs 3 crores a day, or about Rs 90 crores a month: this would mean about Rs 1,000 crores a year. The state's annual budget has been in the region of Rs 300 crores only. Statistics give but a glimpse of the real situation. Yet they do partly indicate the reason for popular feelings: Assam produces about five million tonnes of crude a year. According to Assam Entrepreneurs' Association, which submitted a detailed memorandum to the Prime Minister in February this year, for every tonne of crude oil processed and sold, the Union Government receives a gross amount of about Rs 2,000. Of this, Assam gets only Rs 42 a tonne by way of royalty. The Union Government, however, gets as excise Rs 864 a tonne. This would mean Assam's share of oil revenue every year is Rs 29.4 crores (that is Assam's royalty plus share of excise) and the Centre's is Rs 604.8 crores.

At the present unstable rates, Assam crude is said to be worth 866,775,000 US dollars. Being highly aromatic, Assam crude could fetch even more. The association's estimate of Assam's oil production, based on the 'real value' at world prices, is about Rs 7,000 crores a year.

Meanwhile, large quantities of natural gas, an important bi-product of oil extraction, have been burnt wastefully, thanks to the apathy of Central planners. The Assamese call this "criminal wastage". The crude has been pumped out for more than four decades but no plan has been envisaged to make use of the gas.

The Assamese learnt that oil held the key to success in their talks with the Centre: it could force the Centre to concede their demands. The Assamese also witnessed how the high-paid whitecollar Oil India officials struck work, holding the country to ransom for three days last year. The Oil India strike thus set the precedent for the current agitation.

Assam supplies some 80 per cent of the domestic onshore oil production. Yet there is no downstream production. In Gujarat, Baroda has developed into a petro-chemical centre. Assam has nothing of the kind. It has a fertiliser factory and a small Methanol plant at Namrup and a DMT plant at Bongaigaon. Besides, the polyster fibre plant at Bongaigaon was originally meant to supply fibres for ultimate conversion into fabrics. The idea was to gainfully employ local weavers. But no effort has been made to process the plant's 30,000 tonnes of polyster fibre. To say this is "neglect" would be a gross understatement. The Assamese are suffering only for their humility perhaps. This, despite Assam's shortage of foodgrains which undoubtedly is at the root of the present trouble. It is preposterous that a region so rich in resources is deficient in foodgrains.

The North Eastern Council has under its administration a total geographical area of 2.55 lakh sq. kms. The area under cultivation is only 0.33 lakh sq. kms.—about 12 per cent of the land area. The total production of foodgrains in the region at present is 3.5 million tonnes. Going by the Government of India's yardstick of 474 grammes per day per head as the average food requirement, the region needs a total of 4.6 million tonnes of foodgrains. The region thus shows a deficit of 1.1 million tonnes of foodgrains a year. (Source: NEC publication Number 8). The region also has tremendous potential for generating hydel power. One estimate puts its capacity at 12,000 mw. The total availability of power at the moment is, however, 156.73 mw whereas the estimated peak demand is for 333 mw. The shortfall was 177 mw in 1979-80 (Source: NEC publications). The per capita power consumption in the north eastern region is 25 kwh compared to the all-India average of 120 kwh. Investment in the region has been among the lowest—Rs 13,858 lakhs—a little higher than Himachal Pradesh's Rs 7,128 lakhs (which is another state with high potential for hydel generation).

Income from excise, which is an

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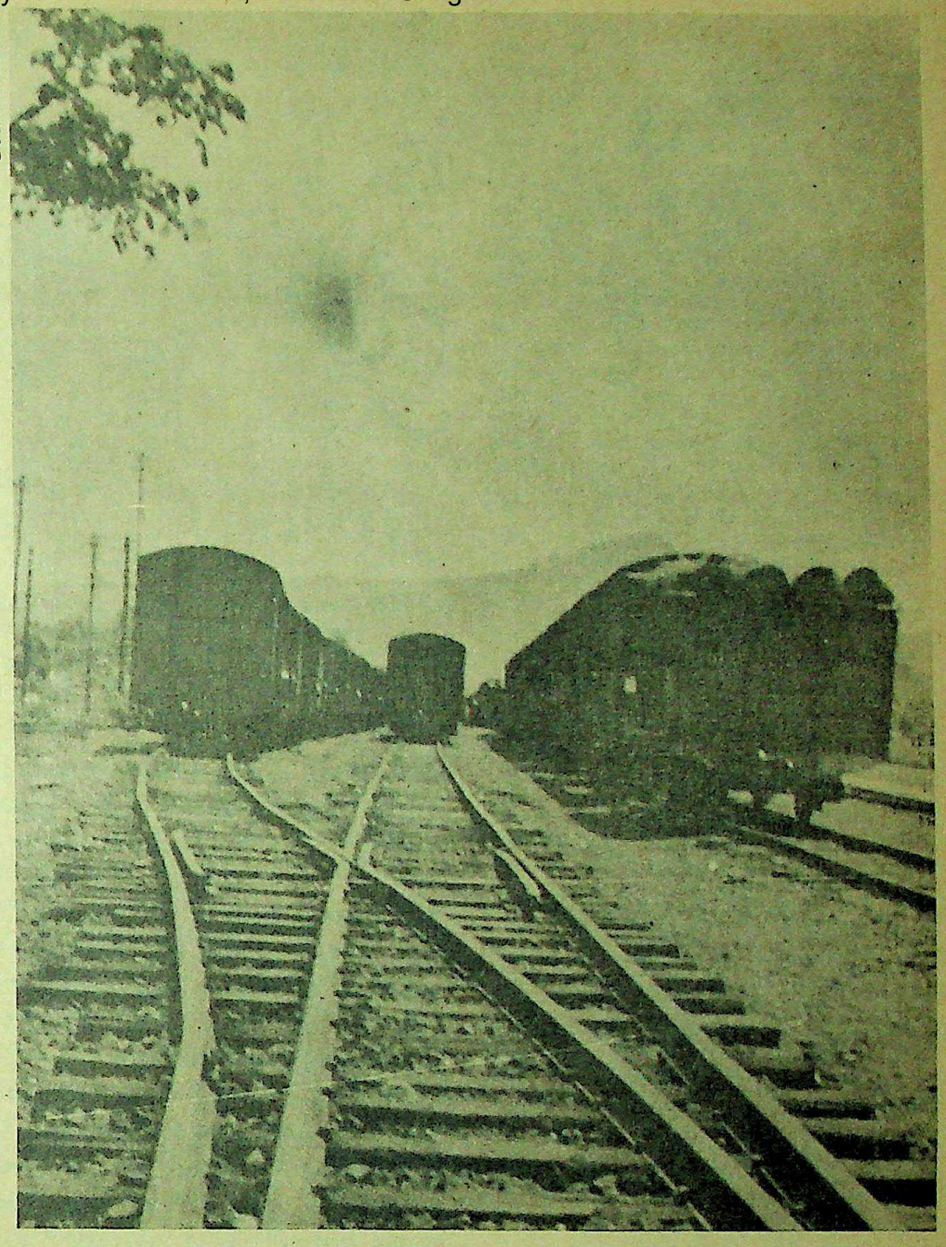
indicator of the state industrial development, is also low. While agriculture has not yet developed appreciably, Assam's excise revenue from items other than potable liquor was Rs 2.67 lakhs against Bihar's Rs 252 lakhs, Himachal Pradesh's Rs 26.87 lakhs and Jammu and Kashmir's Rs 6.03 lakhs. Investment in irrigation not been high either. It was Rs 38 crores in 1978-79 against Andhra Pradesh's Rs 7,875 lakhs, Bihar's Rs 71,082 lakhs, Punjab's Rs 10,571 lakhs, Haryana's Rs 27,624 lakhs and Sikkim's Rs 39 lakhs. Assam's revenue from taxes showed an increase from Rs 12.27 crores in 1960-61 to Rs 61.20 crores in 1976-77. Kerala's on the other hand increased phenomenally from Rs 20.19 crores to Rs 106.49 crores in 1960-61 to Rs 208.46 crores in 1976-77 and Punjab's from Rs 25.66 crores to Rs 201.98 crores (Source: Seventh Finance Commission). The Finance Commission's estimates of comparable per capita state domestic product at current prices shows a small increase in the case of Assam. The following table has been compiled from the Seventh Finance Commission report:

COMPARABLE ESTIMATES OF PER CAPITA EXPENDITURE

	1970-71	Average 73-74 to 75-76
Andhra Pradesh	586	928
Assam	570	791
Bihar	418	645
Gujarat	845	1,134
Haryana	932	1,399
Punjab	1,063	1,586
Maharashtra	811	1,349
Madhya Pradesh	489	779
Uttar Pradesh	493	715
West Bengal	729	1,033
All-India figures	625	940

Transport and communications have been the north-east's major handicap. The region is precariously linked with North Bengal through a narrow neck of road. The result is not only that the region is economically undeveloped but the people have to pay relatively higher prices for consumer goods. Worse, it has encouraged the feeling that the region is cut off from the mainland.

Barring Assam, the entire region has only two sets of railway tracks, more symbolic than of any real value. Tripura has 12 kms of railway track and Nagaland nine kms. To add to the difficulties, there are two gauges. The entire requirement of consumer items—steel, foodgrains, cement, salt and other items—have to be brought from other parts of India. The region is rich in limestone of high quality for making cement. The Mawmluh-Cherra and Bokajan cement units in the region produce only five lakhs tonnes a year. The shortfall has to be made up by bringing cement from as far as Bihar and Orissa. At the most, the railways can carry only 3.5 lakhs tonnes. The region, therefore suffers from perpetual shortage of this vital construction material.



Devi Prasad Sinha

Stranded wagons carrying Assam's produce to the rest of India

Besides oil, the region has commercially exploitable minerals such as limestone and dolomite, fossil fuels such as coal (of which it has an estimated reserve of 1,000 million tonnes), refractory grade silimanite, graphite and fire clays. The value of mineral production in the region amounts only to 7.5 per cent of the value of national production and forms 6.9 per cent of the national income. The major contribution to this is from petroleum production. This alone accounts for 85 per cent of the total mineral production. Which means other minerals have hardly been exploited.

There is a strong case for rapid development of the north-east. The current agitation has driven the point home more sharply than ever. The first thing to do is to link the region with the rest of the country. The Government of India seems to have taken note of the intense feeling of the people: a committee of Ministers acknowledged the region's needs the other day. It noted that almost one-fifth of the total outlay in the entire country for laying new railway tracks and converting gauges has been allocated for improvement of rail communications in the north-east. The outlay for 1980-81 is about Rs 17 crores and half of this will be spent on work in Assam. The work includes the laying of a parallel line on the busy New Bongaigaon-Gauhati route and the construction of six new tracks to serve Assam and other north eastern states. The length of these tracks is about 213 kms and laying them is estimated to cost about Rs 52 crores. Besides, a techno-economic survey which proposed laying new tracks in the Lumding-Badarpur section costing Rs 2.3 crores has been approved.

One tends to be cynical about th government setting up committees which merely "take stock" of the progress made. The general feeling is that they are useless. *It is for the government to prove the cynics wrong.* ■

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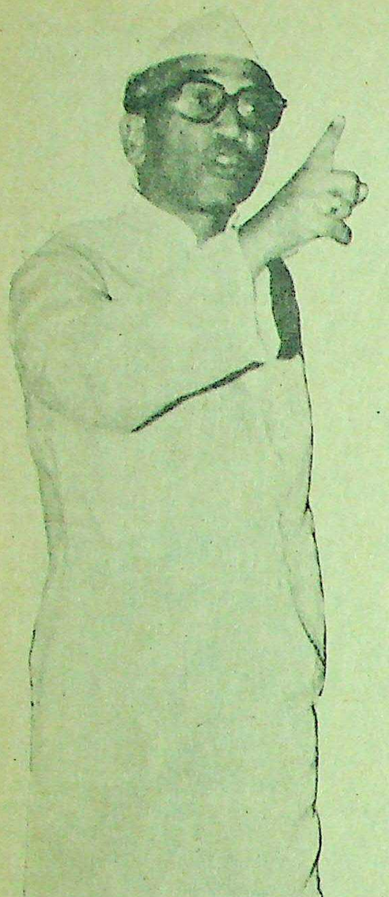

'Mrs Gandhi is Sanjay's rubber stamp'

The news was hardly surprising: it was inevitable that the all-but-public quarrel between Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Congress (I) Secretary General H. N. Bahuguna would end in the latter leaving the former's Party. This time Bahuguna added a touch of difference to his resignation—not merely did he leave the Party, but he also resigned his Parliamentary seat since he had won on the Congress (I) ticket. M. J. AKBAR met him at his house at 5 Sunehri Bagh Road in Delhi on May 21. He was not planning to stay in this spacious Ministerial bungalow much longer; he would move as soon as he got another house. His supporters from UP were dropping in to see him and take instructions on whom to support in the coming Assembly elections. Bahuguna himself was off that night to Allahabad, Lucknow and Kanpur to begin his campaign against Mrs Gandhi.

Q *YOU have changed four Parties in the last four years. Is there no place for H. N. Bahuguna in Party politics?*

A: Since the imposition of the Emergency, Indian politics has been passing through a very uneven phase. When you accuse me of changing Parties, I would only like to tell you that the Congress in which I have worked for 41 years, the Congress of Gandhi and Nehru, the Congress of the freedom struggle, gave us a value system, a grounding in politics. This value system was totally derailed when the Emergency was imposed. Therefore, in 1977, I think it was the call of duty and ideological commitment to have forsaken the Party in the interest of the nation. The change in 1977 was consistent with the basic values of the Congress because democracy, freedom of expression, independence of judiciary, etcetera were restored. Therefore, that battle for enancipation should not be considered a change of Parties, we participated on the right side. But, I do agree, that since the Party which was returned to power was a conglomerate of varied ideas, composed of elements who were also inconsistent with the ideological grounding which we had received in the Congress, such as the Jana Sangh, it would have been wise on my part not to have remained a part of the Janata, not to have become a part of that Government, not to have agreed to the merger of the CFD in the Janata. I have already admitted that. I have said that I owe an apology to the nation for this. The only consideration before me was that a new alternative (the Janata) was trying to take birth, and I would have been accused of sabotage if I had tried to raise the banner of revolt right in the beginning. This happened to be my primary consideration in going along with the stream for some time, and trying not to change the current. My disenchantment, for that matter the nation's disenchantment, with the Janata Party grew very fast. I have earlier stated the reasons in *Sunday*. I tried to correct things. I argued, I pleaded (to change) the Janata's communal character, to make its policies socialist. Nobody in the Janata Party can say that my change was a sudden change.

As Cabinet Minister, I would not have been a dumb, driven cattle.

Now, when I left the Janata I did not join the Lok Dal: that is a com-

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mon misconception. I revived the Congress for Democracy. We had a convention, drew up a 31-point programme, showed it to everybody, including Chaudhury Charan Singh. I met dead ends. The only person who (responded), on her own, was Mrs Indira Gandhi. And when she met me, and talked to me in a language which was not like her normal style. (I have known her all my life, we have been in the same Party for 47 years, she comes from the same town as I. I have known her from childhood), I found that there was a change, an element of repentance for past mistakes, and I thought that that perhaps was the only way that I could help bring the administration of the country back on the rails. I also believed that Mrs Gandhi would provide the healing touch. The administration had been badly shaken, the quality of governance had fallen. Communal riots had overshadowed our whole political life. The nation was losing its very identity. At that point of time I thought that a changed Indira Gandhi, who approached me on her own, where I was approaching everybody else...Having failed to see salvation anywhere else, I fell into this, well, trap, in good faith. I believe that human beings do change.

Q: You never suspected that you were being used?

A: I did, but Mrs Gandhi said, 'I have come to you only because I flet that we had done a wrong to you'.

Q: Were these her very words?

A: These are her very words. And she asked me, 'Did I go to anyone else?' This made me feel that she was being very honest. The way she called me, accepted 30 of the CFD's 31 points, included them in the manifesto, told everybody 'We are including these points in the manifesto and Mr Bahuguna and Mr Narasimha Rao will join them up'...Well, I couldn't bargain for anything more. After all, a political agreement is not written on stamped paper. I thought Mrs Gandhi had begun collecting the pieces, Indian politics had become so fragmented by then, and, I am sorry to say, continues to be so...This long letter of mine (sent before the resignation) to Mrs Gandhi shows the aberrations that have crept into her politics.

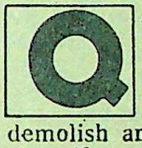
I first wrote to Mrs Gandhi on January 7, even before she had constituted her government—nobody can say that I did this because she did not make me a Minister, there was no ministry then—outlining what should be done. I talked of national consensus. I talked of applying the healing touch. I talked of assuring the administration that there would be no victimisation. I talked of looking into the north-east. My point is: what is a political Party and what should politicians do in this country? Share the booty quietly, accept the aberrations, or point your finger out, even at the risk of being pointed back at?

Q: Mrs Gandhi, in her reply to you, has implied that you would not have created problems for her if she had made you a Minister.

A: Then why didn't she do it? It was easy enough for her. She knew very well that my being inside the Cabinet means trouble for her. She didn't take me because she knew that it would be difficult for her to carry me along. I would not have been a dumb, driven cattle, I am a human being.

Q: Are you suggesting that the other Ministers in Mrs Gandhi's present Cabinet are dumb, driven cattle?

A: I am sorry, I won't say that, they are very good people, but at the moment they have assumed that posture. They are honourable people, but they have assumed that posture (of being dumb, driven cattle). I have been writing to Mrs Gandhi continuously. I raised almost all questions, from the simple removal of the ban on textbooks imposed by the Janata, to the creation of a peacekeeping force, onto to a commission to find out the conditions of those living below the poverty line. But all this went unheeded. She tells me I keep busy thinking about myself. What else is she doing? (getting excited) Changing officers, punishing officers, promoting officers, rewarding officers, rewarding people who have stood by her: her only test is, who is with her, her test is not who has served the nation, or who has the capacity to serve the nation best. Her only worry is who is with her.



ARE you trying to imply that a structure for dictatorship is being created?

A: This country will demolish any such structure in no time if anybody tries to create one, but these are the trends, and they should be checked well in time. Therefore, I went on raising my voice. Anybody should see that if I was interested in the loaves and fishes of office, then the way to it did not lie in the manner I behaved from January onwards. Raising questions, raising policy issues, raising objections, speaking out in public. In the Hindi newpaper *Hindustan*, in mid-January, I gave a interview, and one question was what would happen to the government servants who had dealt with Maruti or the Shah commission. I said that the Congress culture is that no government servant shall be punished if he was doing his duty at the behest of the outgoing government. But Mrs Gandhi did not heed that. From N. K. Sngh to R. C. Sharma is a long story. The number of persons sent out and sent in is not something small. You cannot have personalised administration, it should be impersonal, it should be objective, to maintain the morale of the administration.

Now, I have made a public statement that the Congress culture is opposed to such a thing and I hoped that this government would not do such a thing. Do you think Mrs Gandhi did not know what I was saying. I was saying this even at public meetings. All through my election campaign (for the 1980 Parliament) I spoke against the Emergency. Wherever I went I said that the Emergency was a bad thing, and I want to tell you this again. I never gave up my posture with regard to Mrs Gandhi, I merely said that she wanted me to join her, she says she is a changed person,· I took the people into full confidence all around the country. But the Press was so angry with me at that time that this went largely unreported except in a few places. Therefore, you cannot say that this eruption of mine is based on anger arising out of personal ambition, that is less than fair. You might ask, why didn't I say all this earlier. If I had resigned just after the Cabinet had been formed, people would have turned around and said that just because I did not get a place in the Cabinet I was behaving in this fashion. Even after I sent in my resignation from the Party posts, I waited for nine days, hoping that she would call me in front of a working committee meeting and ask me to substantiate the charges. I waited and waited, I gave her full nine days. I have patience. But these nine days have been considered a loss by my friends.

Q: You mean you could have begun campaigning against Mrs Gandhi earlier?

A: I am not going in for narrow political gains in the Assembly elections. That's not my idea, that's not my purpose. My purpose is to raise the political climate of this country to a level from where nobody will be able to harm its basic structure.

Q: Have you found any, what might be called 'Emergency' tendencies, in the last few months?

A: The way the administration is being demoralised by supersessions, promotions, demotions, transfers, and the way the (administrative) apparatus is being freely used for personal purposes is a bad sign, a bad beginning.

Q: You have said that Sanjay Gandhi is the real boss of Congress (I). What do you mean by that?

A: He makes all the decisions. Mrs Gandhi is merely a rubber stamp. I have known this from within. Though I have never met him after the elections—except once, when I went to Mrs Gandhi's house to congratulate her on January 7 or 8 I bumped into him, and I congratulated him on his victory and he congratulated me: except for those few sentences, I have not seen him, I have not talked to him. But I can watch things happening. Even when Mrs Gandhi does not know anything, orders are made, issued.

Q: Can you give any example?

A: Well, this happened before everybody. During the Parliamentary election campaign, Sanjay Gandhi got Virbahadur Singh of UP nominated to the central parliamentary board, as a permanent invitee, like Mr Gundu Rao. After the elections were over, Mr Virbahadur Singh came to attend a CPB meeting. So, 12 or 13 of us were sitting, including Mrs Gandhi. Mr Virbahadur came a little late. Mrs Gandhi herself said, *"Aap andar kyon aa rahe hain, aap rukiye bahar zara. Aapko kuch kahna hai to baad mein kahiye* (Why are you coming inside, there is a meeting going on. If you have anything to say, tell

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me afterwards)". Then I quietly whispered to her, "I think he has been appointed as a special invitee to the CPB. I haven't seen any order from you, but I saw it in the Press." Then Mrs Gandhi told him, *"Accha, accha, baithiye* (Okay, okay, sit down)." I made discreet enquiries about the appointment and found out that Mr Sanjay Gandhi had told Mr Antulay that he should be made a special invitee. Mrs Gandhi knew nothing about it. Then, look at the manner in which the Ministers are taking instructions from Mr Sanjay Gandhi, or the two secretaries of the Congress (I), Mr Buta Singh and Mr Antulay, take orders from him.

Q: Are you suggesting that what happened during the Emergency is happening again?

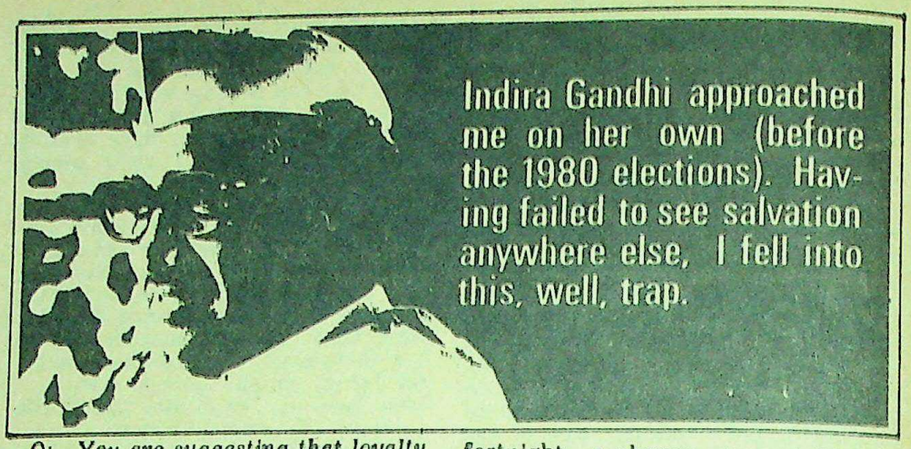
A: I am saying that what happened during the Emergency was bad enough. What is happening now is the beginning of a bad type of situation unless it is checked. I think my resignation may shake Mrs Gandhi, I hope Mrs Gandhi will wake up and realise the situation before it is too late for her to correct it.

Q: Do you really think that your resignation will shake her?

A: I hope so. Shake means make her realise that there are people who can raise their voice. Perhaps she was taking everybody for granted, she will not do that now. I hope that some respectability will revert back to the Congress leaders.

Q: Do you think that the move you have made will have a snowball effect among the Congress leadership?

A: That I can't say. Rank and file, yes. I have already received telegrams, letters from almost every district of UP. Leading Congress (I) people now say that they would like to strengthen my hands. I haven't counted, but yesterday (the day Bahuguna resigned) alone about 300 messages came. I have been receiving telephone calls from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, saying, 'Thank you very much. Nobody could have done this. This is a new chapter you are adding to Parliamentary procedure.'



Q: YOU have made another serious allegation that smugglers, hijackers have been given Congress (I) tickets in the Assembly polls. Would you care to substantiate this?

A: Well, Mrs Gandhi, in her reply to me, has not said no to this charge.

Q: Would you like to identity anyone?

A: I would not like to name people. It's not fair, but who does not know who the hijackers are? Who does not know who the smugglers are? People know it. People who were arrested under COFEPOSA, two of them in UP, a person who is a leading smuggler in Bihar and has many cases and convictions to his credit, has been given the Congress (I) ticket. You know what COFEPOSA means? It means that the Government of India, not the state government, is suggesting detention.

Q: You are suggesting that loyalty overrides all other considerations.

A: Personal, personal, it's all personal. They want the whole apparatus of state to be run as a personal business.

Q: Can you effectively challenge Mrs Gandhi by remaining outside all Parties?

A: Certainly. I need not join a political Party. But an apparatus will emerge, and I am more than sure that Congressmen—I have great faith in Congressmen—will rise to the occasion.

Q: Will your friend, the Shahi Imam, campaign against the Congress (I) in this Assembly elections?

A: Once again I will say that we have not done it for the marginal purpose of a few seats in the Assembly elections. Otherwise I would have resigned earlier and started campaigning long back.

Q: How, do you see the future of the nation?

A: The eighties are going to be a very, very difficult period. The economic situation is going to be difficult, the north-east is already in the doldrums, the internal administrative machine is passing through the worst phase in its life. The apparatus of state is already being damaged. In view of the drought, the high price of energy, the international tensions, the spread of armaments and the movement of large fleets and armies, all this is going to cause a very difficult time ahead. It will require political genius to meet the challenge of the times. I am afraid that the present outfit with which Mrs Gandhi wants to manage the affairs of state is too poor to foot the bill. It requires a great deal of comprehension, understanding, goodwill, and, above all, objectivity, which is totally lacking. I wish well of Mrs Gandhi, maybe she will change. But unless she changes I see grave times. There will be social tensions, economic tensions. Aren't you seeing the growing number of atrocities on Harijans everywhere? Just recently in UP, in Almora and Hathras, we have seen this. Every day this is happening in spite of Mrs Gandhi's claim that her government believes in the protection of the weak. Now, how long can she say that the Janata had spoilt things? Well, that's why she came, because the Janata had spoilt things. I am not boasting; but I became Chief Minister of UP, and within a fortnight a change was visible to everybody. You can ask the administrators, you can ask the common man whether or not a change was visible. How long can we continue in this darkness, and hear that in the last three years the Janata ruined everything? Is it that the work of 30 years before the Janata came was so fragile that the whole thing collapsed in three years? And even if it was broken in three years, why couldn't it be rebuilt in three weeks? We could have started so many things. For instance, a national wage structure for teachers: a committee could have been set up to go into this. This is only one small example. But nothing was started. How much time does Mrs Gandhi need? How much is she asking for? This country will hardly give ten months.

Q: How long do you think Mrs Gandhi will last?

A: You can see my interview given to *Hindustan* in mid-January. I said, 100 days will prove whether or not this government has acquired a sense of direction and purpose. I am sorry to say that I have come to the conclusion that this government has no (direction or purpose). There will be trouble for Mrs Gandhi if she does not sort out things within a year. I will tell you something. Before the Shahi Imam agreed to campaign for Mrs Gandhi during the last elections, he took it in writing from me that if something was not done within 100 days, he would leave. I wish Mrs Gandhi well, she is the Prime Minister of the country. I wish her government a sense of direction, the healing touch this country needs it.

Q: Do you thik that if Mrs Gandhi gets enough legislators in the Rajya Sabha she will try to change the Constitution?

A: I don't know. She is becoming very unpredictable.

Q: Unpredictable?

A: She is only doing what suits her in the short term. Subjectivity is the primary consideration. Personal outlook, personal gains, personal loss (no commitment) to any cause, not to any ideas.

Q: Loyalty also to Sanjay Gandhi?

A: They have become inseparable now. The mother means the son, and the son means the mother.

Q: Will you contest the seat you have just resigned, when the election comes around?

A: Wait and see.

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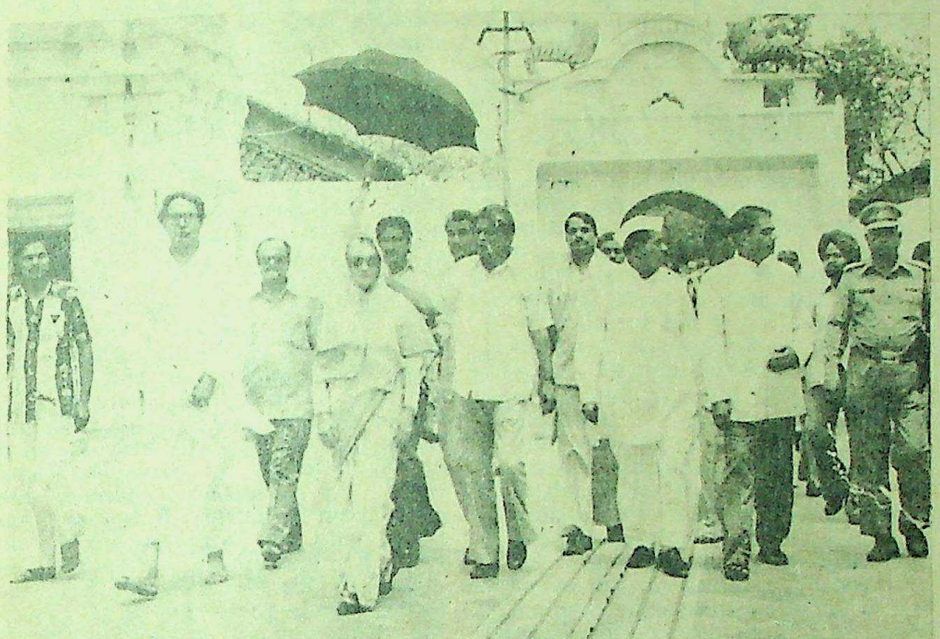
Can anyone stop the Congress(I)?

By M. J. AKBAR



Mrs Gandhi in Rajiv Lochan temple of Raipur district with V. C. Shukla.

TWENTY-three kilometers to the west of Lucknow is Malihabad, a small town which has played a disproportionately large role in the history and culture of Awadh. Burqa-clad women and fair faced men with bristling martial moustaches, indicate the character of this town. This is Pathan territory, prosperous fields, gardens of the delicious kalam mango, and this land has provided the commanders and soldiers to a succession of armies. (The Hindi film *Junoon* was partly shot in one of the oldest *haveli*s of Malihabad and some of the elderly family women were upset that in a house where once tigers roared, the sounds of dancers—*nachaniyas*—was now being heard.) Baijnath Kureel, a senior and respected member of the Congress (I), is contesting from here and his victory is considered all but certain. Apart from the personal respect which Mr Kureel commands, the fact that his main opponent is from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is enough to remove any doubt among the Muslims about whom they should vote for. For them this is a classic Congress constituency represented by a national Congressman.

The only surprise in the Assembly election of 1980 is why all the Congress (I) candidates in UP cannot be as sanguine as Mr Kureel is about his victory. The opposition, which seemed crushed by late April has suddenly revived by the last week of the campaign. Why isn't Mrs Gandhi getting a two-thirds majority in all the nine states which are going to the polls? Why have doubts begun to arise particularly about four states —UP, Punjab, Orissa and Tamil Nadu? It is hard to believe that Mrs Gandhi will not win, but even Congress (I) campaign managers are not as confident as they were when the nominations were being filed.

This is the Summer of Apathy. There is a marked disillusionment among the people, particularly since so much was expected of 'The Hope of 1980' after the despair of the Janata. For the people, all that seems to have happened after the return of Mrs Gandhi is that prices have continued to go up while the administration has continued to dither.

The size of all political meetings including Mrs Gandhi's has been astonishingly small. The blazing summer sun was not enough reason for the poor crowds. Only in the last phase of electioneering was something akin to excitement visible. Tamil Nadu perhaps has been the most active: loudspeakers have been blaring out songs pregnant with political hints and films with blatant political messages have been showing on Madras screens for most of May. When Mrs Gandhi began her month-long election tour from the 'safe' state of Madhya Pradesh, both Congress and opposition leaders were astonished by the poor response she got. In fact, it was this more than anything else which put heart into a broken and disintegrating opposition. Coupled with this was the obvious anger among vast numbers of Congressman over the distribution of tickets. A whole new class of legislators was being created and the traditional Congressmen, who formed the backbone of the Party, suddenly found themselves with nothing in hand and nothing to look forward to. Mr H. N. Bahuguna was only the most striking example of a widespread phenomenon within the Congress (I). And the Congress (I) also realised that it would have to begin paying the price of being a ruling Party. Congressmen were regretting towards the end of May that President's Rule had been imposed. They no longer had any clear targets; there was no longer a Banarasi Das in UP or a Ram Sundar Das in Bihar or an MGR in Tamil Nadu to blame for all the states' ills —drought relief, price rise, diesel shortage, law and order. Instead there was a Governor and an administration which the people clearly identified with the Congress (I).

Of course the ruling Party benefited from President's Rule, particularly through reorganisation of the state machinery. UP has seen thousands of transfers of everyone from constables to gazetted officers in a government effort to make the administration more pliable to the Congress (I) needs. And during the elections the help of the administration can be invaluable for any Party. The Governor of Uttar Pradesh has even gone on record with an astonishingly partisan statement in favour of the Congress (I). He said that he had doubts about whether a viable coalition government (which is the very best that the opposition can hope for) could be formed. In Punjab the stories of Garcha, the unfortunate MP involved in the Poornima case, were making the rounds and being exploited by the Akalis. They had even created a slogan out of this: *"Congress ki yehi pahchan; Bagal mein larki, haath mein jaam* (This is how you recognise the Congress—a woman beside you and bottle in hand)".

But the most effective weapon in the hands of the opposition remained prices, which was hardly surprising. Mrs Gandhi's victory was partly due to rising prices, and people expected her to control them. Instead, sugar disappeared during the crucial marriage season. The verse with which the Lok Dal wooed the women in the north was *"Maar gaya mahangai. Bahena; Bik gaya mera saara gahana; Ab mat sun Indiraka kahena* (Rising prices has killed my sister; All my jewellery has been sold; Don't listen to Indira anymore)". In Maharashtra a Congress MP found that the audience which would wait for hours

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during the last campaign Digitized by Sarayu Foundation Trust, Delhi and eGangotri ing away in 15 minutes.

If one were asked to name the safest state for Mrs Gandhi one would have to name Gujarat. The Congress (I) should gain comfortable victories in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh (although Nanaji Deshmukh insisted to this writer that the BJP would win in MP). One state in which Mrs Gandhi should do better than conventionally expected is Bihar. Not only has the choice of the Congress (I) candidates been comparatively less controversial but the opposition is genuinely divided. In theory the total opposition is divided into nine or ten groups but in practice this is hardly the case. In Punjab, the fight is between Congress (I) and the Akali-CPI-CPI (M) alliance with the BJP being a factor only in a few constituencies and nobody else making any significant difference. In Maharashtra, it is again a triangular contest with the Congress (I), the Congress (U), the BJP and the Janata Party making different triangles in different constituencies. And so on. Even in UP, apart from the 80 odd seats where the BJP has a presence, the contest is a straight one between the Congress (I) and the Lok Dal. No one disputes the fact that not only is the Lok Dal an important force in UP but it is going to do much better than the forecasts of many commentators would indicate. But in Bihar, not only is the opposition split but each splinter has its own following.

Let us compare the opposition in UP and Bihar. In UP neither the Congress (U) nor the CPI can make any real difference but in Bihar the CPI is strong enough for the joke to gain currency that the CPI should be renamed the CPB (Communist Party of Bihar). Similarly the Congress (U) under Ram Lakhan Yadav cannot be sneezed at. After all the Party has four MPs with important regional leaders like Abdul Gafoor and Dharam Bir Sinha. While the Lok Dal is a credible force in UP and can, with some legitimacy, claim to be the nucleus around which the opposition can form a coalition, the Lok Dal in Bihar can hardly make such a claim. Its individual strength, will in fact be genuinely tested in this election. The Janata Party is dead in UP but in Bihar, Satyendra Narain Singh has not yet allowed it to die. Lastly there is no H. N. Bahuguna in Bihar. Bihar is so confused that it is difficult to see the only Party which can promise an uncomplicated Government, the Congress (I) losing, despite the last minute efforts at unity by the Lok Dal, Janata and Congress (U). Indeed, if the Congress (I) loses in Bihar its fortunes will have declined at an unheard of pace. In Tamil Nadu the traditional enemies are once again in battle. It is clear that MGR, with the sympathy emanating from his martyrdom after the dismissal of his Government, has the largest single vote. But is his following strong enough in electoral terms to challenge and defeat the combined vote of the Congress(I) and the DMK? According to one Congress (I) theorist MGR might walk off with as much as 40 per cent of the votes but he will lose the battle for seats as the 25 per cent of the Congress (I) votes added to the 25 per cent DMK votes will give the alliance a clear lead. Soon enough we will see which theories were valid.

The opposition in Orissa bases its confidence on history. In the elections of 1971 the people of Orissa on the same day at the same general election gave Mrs Gandhi a handsome majority in the Lok Sabha but simultaneously defeated her in the Assembly polls. Both Biju Patnaik and Nandini Satpathy are contesting in the Assembly elections and projecting themselves as future CMs. Are they finished or can they still convert their personalities into state-level votes? And just in case there is no clear majority for the Congress(I), will Nandini Satpathy take her band of MLAs and lead a Congress (I) Ministry? Of course, there might in the end be no need to answer most of these questions. The Congress(I) could form Governments without any help everywhere. Certainly one month ago nobody expected the opposition to prevent a clean sweep by Mrs Gandhi. The only news is that it might be unwise to declare victory before the returning officers, in the hundreds of constituencies, officially announce the results. ■

Can he tilt the U.P. balance?

Bahar chahe to ley jaaye ham se rang-e-hayat
Hamara khoon-e-jigar hai har ik chaman ke liye.
(Urdu couplet on a board outside the entrance to Mr H. N. Bahuguna's house in Delhi)

SEVEN p.m., May 23, Kanpur. A stage has been erected at one intersection of a busy chowk, and a huge larger-than-life plywood cutout of a striding Bahuguna dominates the scene. A large crowd is waiting in silence. By seven thirty, the star of the evening comes: he is literally carried onto the stage on the shoulders of enthusiastic admirers. H. N. Bahuguna has come to explain to the people of Kanpur why he left the Party he had joined six months ago. And the crux of his message was: vote for whoever you like, but don't vote for Mrs Gandhi. The people listened with rapt attention. We will only know by June 1 whether his message has made its impact on the people or not: after all, Bahuguna's appeal had one drawback; he had no specific Party to offer as an alternative to the Congress (I).

A city like Kanpur, with a strong Muslim population, and a large working class, is a good place to test the impact that Bahuguna can make on the coming Assembly polls in UP. His support is largely among Muslims, the people of the hill areas, and sections of the urban population. But in a situation where the gap between the Congress (I) vote and the opposition (led by Chaudhary Charan Singh's Lok Dal) vote in a couple of percentage points, any shift in the voting could mean the difference between a narrow victory and a narrow defeat.

The 1974 Assembly elections in UP are still remembered with a variety of emotions, ranging from awe to disgust. The Congress was in poor shape, but Chief Minister Bahuguna was in charge of the Party's campaign. In what is considered a miracle of many kinds, Bahuguna managed to get the Congress 213 seats — less than a majority, but enough to form a government with a handful of defectors. Can Bahuguna do for the opposition what it did for the ruling Party in 1974 — that is, tip the nearly balanced scales?

There is no doubt about one thing Bahuguna's bitterness against the Congress (I). On May 21, he began his campaign against Mrs Gandhi from a town which is called home by both Bahuguna and Mrs Gandhi: Allahabad. He then went to Lucknow, where he addressed a meeting on the evening of May 21 — the same evening Mrs Gandhi held two roadside meetings in the city (this was the first time she was holding street-corner meetings in Lucknow; on every previous occasion she addressed the crowds at more spacious locations). Bahuguna then moved to Kanpur, and from there, via Delhi to Garhwal, from where he won the seat in Parliament. After Garhwal, he would return to the plains, and finally end his efforts with a last meeting in Patna. But will this be sufficient?

Mr Bahuguna may have changed sides four times in the last four years, but there has been one element of consistency in all this — each time, he has ended up on the winning side, whether the odds seemed stacked for him or against him. Has he joined the winning side again? It might not seem so at the moment. But it would be foolish to underestimate him. His secretary, Rahman, told me that he intended to put up another couplet on the door, along with the one quoted at the beginning when Bahuguna moves on to his next, non-ministerial, house in Delhi. This couplet will go like this:

Kuch aur bhi hain meri zindagi ki tasweerein
Main woh nahin jo mere doston ne samjha hai.

M. J. AKBAR

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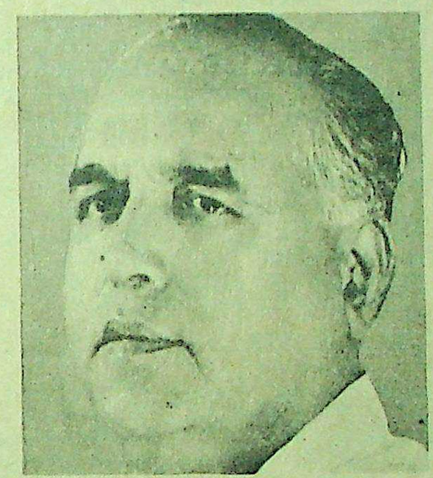
The birth of a new lobby

MR Bahl is an affluent restaurateur and runs one of the best eating houses in south Bombay. He is contesting the elections as the Congress (I) candidate from the Colaba constituency. Mr Bahl represents the new lobby that 1, Safdarjung Road wants to strengthen in Bombay, the Mecca of money, the treasure island of the country's political money-hunters. In the last few years the business community though primarily siding with the Congress (I), had become an unreliable ally. In fact, in 1977 business houses were divided, with the Marwaris financing the Congress (I) and the more traditional business houses siding with the right-wing Parties. This was accentuated by the victory of the Janata in 1977, and continued in the 1980 Parliamentary elections. When business men realised that the Janata's days were numbered, they hedged their bets. While their predilections remained basically where they were, they went out of their way to contribute to the Congress (I) coffers.

Since businessmen have become unreliable, most of them being fair-weather friends, 1, Safdarjung Road has clearly decided on a lobby of its own, namely the hotel and tourism lobby. This is where Mr Bahl becomes very important.

The hotel lobby has always been pampered by the government. In fact, Mr Oberoi got his second tower sanctioned in Bombay only through the influence of the Congress (I) in the Bombay Municipal Corporation. It is said that during the Emergency, there was a proposal to bring down prices of eatables by 12.5 per cent in the hotels. It was put to practice in all the grade two and grade three hotels and restaurants, but the five star hotels refused to toe the line. They lobbied ceaselessly to be kept out of the purview of the 12.5 per cent cut, and reportedly succeeded after donating the proceeds of three days' sales to the Chief Minister's fund and the Prime Minister's fund. While the hotel lobby is in a position to render enormous favours, from rooms to food, it is also a milch cow. How useful it is to have the hotel lobby on one's side becomes obvious when one reads how the political lobby, whether for tickets or change of Chief Ministers, meets in hotel suites. In Bombay, suites at the Ritz and the Nataraj serve as shamianas for the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress variety of politicians. The Taj suite is used by the likes of Mr Devaraj Urs and Rajni Patel. As a fund collection source it is a bottomless treasury. For instance, it is said that the Sharad Pawar Cabinet had taken a decision to restrict the distribution of licences for new bars in the city and suburbs. But according to several hoteliers, these licences could be had for Rs two lakhs and there were about 20 licences given during Mr Pawar's regime.

The coming days will see the hotel lobby growing stronger under the patronage of the Congress (I) which is expected to sweep the polls in Maharashtra. Mr Bahl's main rival is former MLA Ranjit Bhanu of the Janata (JP) and the other is the BJP's Harish Jagtiani, son-in-law of the top tax consultant. Mr Bahl is supported ironically by another Janata restaurateur Mr Manmohan Singh Bedi who probably has the country's one and only 300-seater restaurant in Bombay. One can see



Vasantdada Patil

how Party interests take a back seat when property interests are at stake. Mr Bhanu is depending on the votes of the hotel workers who number about 15,000 in the Colaba constituency.

The sugar lobby will be fighting an interesting battle in Mr Sharad Pawar's constituency, Baramati. His Congress (I) rival is Mr Vinayakrao Chopade, who belongs to the shepherd community. Chairman of the Meera Cooperative Sugar Factory, Mr Chopade has not only the support of the sitting MP, Mr Shankar Rao Patil, who won by 17,000 votes in this Assembly Constituency but also the support of the Janata sugar baron Mr Sambajirao Kakade. Mr Kakade is a bitter rival of Mr Pawar and added to his many grouses against Mr Pawar is the fact that the latter supported Mr Mohan Dharia from the Baramati parliamentary constituency in the last parliamentary elections against Mr Kakade who was the Janata candidate.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

Dry Gujarat's days are numbered

IRRESPECTIVE of Party labels, dry laws have always been followed religiously in Gujarat, one of the last bastions of the policy of total prohibition. But the spell is breaking now, with the Congress(I) tribal leader, Mr Jhinabhai Darji, openly championing liberalisation. Never before in the home State of the puritanical Prime Minister Morarji Desai, has it been a poll issue. Even now other Congress(I) leaders, including Mr Madhavsingh Solanki, aspirant to Chief Ministership, are uneasy about publicly declaraing the prohibition policy that they will follow if the Party is returned to power. Privately, most leaders confess that strict prohibition laws have failed. This is constantly underscored by the recurring tragedies caused by illicit and poisonous liquor drinking by the poor.

Abstemious to a fault, Gujaratis have been in the past quarter century raised on the belief that drinking was bad, not only for one's health but also for one's soul. So that while lone voices of dissent were heard here and there, none dared to make it a political issue — not even the daredevil politician, Chimanbhai Patel!

Jhinabhai, hailing from the tribal belt of south Gujarat from where Mrs Gandhi set off on a political comeback trail, is a sort of maverick in Gujarat politics. He is credited with the political theory that the Congress(I) needed the backing only of the poor—comprising Kshatriyas, Harijans, Adivasis and Muslims (KHAM) to make a clean sweep. He now wants prohibition to be liberalised and though his colleagues are fighting shy of saying it openly, in the event of the Congress(I) coming to power, Gujarat will soon have a relaxed policy, more or less on the lines of Maharashtra.

The dry laws have been in force for a long time in the state and no one knows for sure how much the exchequer is losing in revennue. It could be anywhere between Rs. 10 and 30 crores. Way back in 1969, the Gandhi centenry year, the state Government had asked economists at the prestigious Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research to look at the economic impact of prohibition on the slumdwellers in Ahmedabad. Their finding was that it has had no impact on their poverty. The report incidentally has never been published.

TUSHAR BHATT, Ahmedabad

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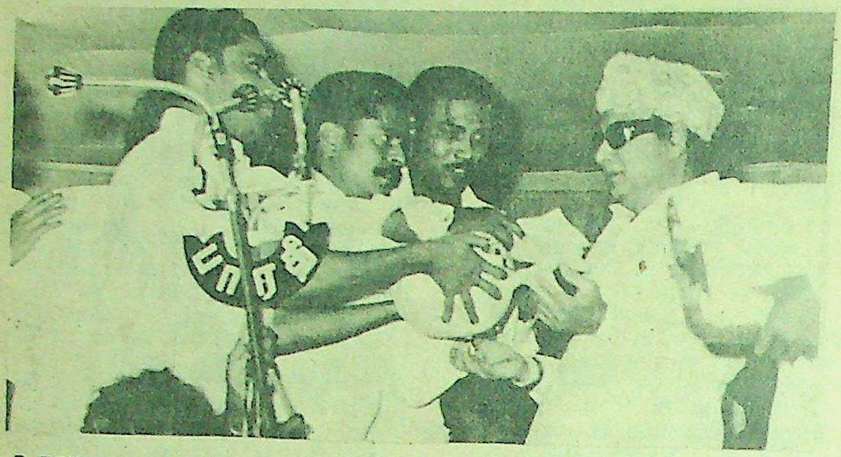
MGR without an answer



MGR is a little sore that his political film *Idudhan en Badil* (This is my answer) may not be completed before the elections. But the songs from the film are being used everywhere. Songs which praise Annadurai's sagacity, extol his humanity and bemoan the betrayers who discredited Anna (for betrayers read Messrs Karunanidhi and company).

If the DMK was the first to launch the poll campaign, its rival AIADMK was not far behind. The DMK is contesting 110 seats in conjunction with its ally the Congress (I) which is also contesting 110 seats. The AIADMK is contesting 172 seats and the remaining 62 seats are being shared between the two Communist Parties, the Gandhi Kamraj National Congress, the Lok Dal and the Congress. There is jubilation in the DMK camp that Mrs Gandhi has confirmed that Karunanidhi will indeed become the next Chief Minister if their "progressive alliance" wins in the election. But senior DMK leaders are apprehensive about the outcome of the elections because they know that Karunanidhi does not today have the same charisma that he possessed in 1971. And since the DMK is contesting only 109 seats, Karunanidhi's dependence on the Congress (I) is inevitable.

But MGR is not worried. In fact, he is convinced of his personal charisma. Of late the rural masses have flocked to listen to him. Naturally he has been thinking about victory: "If we win a majority and form a Government, we won't mind working in cooperation with Mrs Gandhi at the Centre. The January election (to the Lok Sabha) was more of a vote for Mrs Gandhi to establish a stable Government at the Centre. The May state Assembly election will be a vote for a stable and corruption-free Government at the state level and surely the people will choose the AIADMK and its allies." Though MGR's Tamil is no match for Karunanidhi's hard-hitting alliterative prose, he has nevertheless managed to muster a group of writers who have come out with carping criticism of the DMK leader. Very little criticism, however, has been directed against Mrs Gandhi. When MGR's electoral partners like the CPI (M) and the CPI criticise Mrs Gandhi, the film actor-politician is quite embarrassed. This has had an effect. The CPI (M) leader, P. Ramamurthy, has recently remarked that his Party's support to MGR is not unconditional and may not last forever.

ARTHUR PAIS, Madras

Disqualified by luck

THE withdrawal of one candidate from 1,400 makes no headline news. But the matter was different in Ladnun constituency of Rajasthan. When the returning officer of Ladnun Assembly constituency, after the publication of the list of withdrawals, started allotting symbols to candidates, Deepankar who had filed his nomination papers as the Congress(I) candidate was surprised to find that he had not been allotted the hand symbol. He was informed that he would not be given the symbol since he had already withdrawn from the elections. But Deepankar would not agree since he "had withdrawan only one of the two nomination papers filed by him". The returning officer observed that the rules provided only for withdrawal of candidature and not of nomination paper. Thus Deepankar was no longer an eligible candidate. So the question of allotment of any symbol to him did not arise. The officer also added that the list of withdrawals, which contained Deepankar's name, had already been published to which no one had raised any objection, not even Deepankar, himself.

This caused a flutter in the Congress(I) camp. Deepankar and others made a desperate bid to have the mistake remedied but the returning officer would not budge. When the news reached the state election department in Jaipur, there was all-round panic. After all, it concerned a candidate of the ruling Party. Immediately, a high official from the election department talked to the returning officer on the phone. The official advised that the intention behind Deepankar's withdrawal of one set of nomination papers did not mean that he was withdrawing his candidature. The returning officer quoting rules pleaded his helplessness since he could not heed the advice which was contrary to law. A meeting of high officials of the election department followed and later on the district election officer was asked to stop printing of ballot papers till the matter was finally settled. The printing of ballot papers is generally started immediately after the symbols are allotted. The postal ballots are also despatched within 48 hours of the allotment of symbols. When the district electoral officer drew the officer's attention to this, he was told that since the rule under question was only an executive order it was not binding and could be done away with.

Subsequently, the relevant papers were called for from Jaipur. Apparently, not satisfied with the papers, the chief electoral officer summoned the returning officer to Jaipur with the original papers for a thorough scrutiny by the departmental authorities. Meanwhile, the election commission also asked for the necessary papers. However, attempts to rescind the withdrawal ultimately proved abortive. In the confused situation the postal ballots could not be despatched till three days after the deadline.

The extraordinary enthusiasm shown by the chief electoral officer in Jaipur to save the Congress (I) nominee has attracted criticism. According to legal experts, any decision taken by the returning officer can be challenged only through an election petition and that too after the results.

MILAPCHAND DANDIYA, Jaipur

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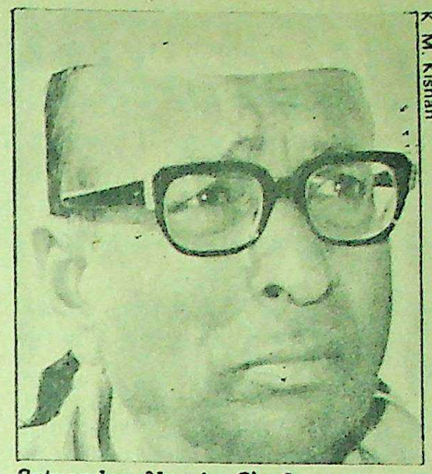
Caste feud over new Bihar CM

THE latest election joke doing the rounds in Patna is that Sanjay Gandhi is contesting the Assembly elections from the city itself. How? All the four seats in Patna city have been allotted to unknown Sanjayites. This has only heightened the underlying tensions between the Rajputs and the Brahmins who are vying with each other to curry favour with either Mrs Gandhi or her son. The Congress(I) in the state has been divided into warring camps.

The question uppermost in everybody's mind is: if the Congress(I) comes to power, who will be the next Chief Minister? If a choice is to be made from within the state, Dr. Jagannath Mishra, the Emergency Chief Minister and the Legislature Party chief appears to be the most likely candidate. He is believed to be in the good books of both Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi and has thus acquired for his supporters the lion's share of Party tickets. Not only was his opinion sought by the Prime Minister during the removal of the Janata appointed Chief Secretary, Mr L. Dayal, he also succeeded in persuading Mrs Gandhi to retain the present inspector-general of Police, Mr S. K. Chatterjee in favour of Mr Fazal Ahmad, a replacement suggested by the Rajput lobby within the Congress(I). Dr. Mishra's main rival appears to be Mr Kedar Pandey, the Bihar PCC(I) president. The fact that Mr Pandey does not enjoy the confidence of Mr Sanjay Gandhi places him second in the running.

In the event of the mantle falling on the shoulder of a state politician now at the Centre, the best rated are Mr Sitaram Kesari and Mr Bhisma Narain Singh. It is at this point that the Brahmin and Rajput rivalry comes into prominence. The Rajputs who support Mr Bhisma Narain Singh are trying to isolate the Brahmins. Meanwhile they are trying to win over Mr Sanjay Gandhi with the help of Mr Sanjay Singh, the Congress(I) leader from UP who is taking an avid interest in the affairs of Bihar. The objective of the Rajput camp is naturally to send as many of their own community to the Assembly as possible.



K. M. Kishan

Satyendra Narain Singh

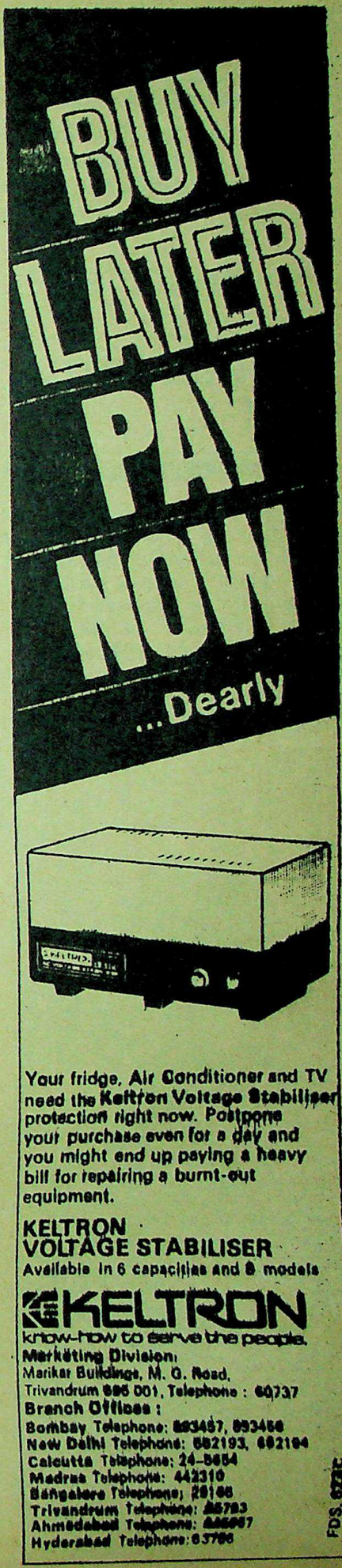
Dr Jagannath Mishra

K. M. Kishan

But it may be difficult for the Congress(I) to get the required number of seats to form a Government. That is what the opposition wants and has been waiting for. The opposition lobby headed by the Janata chief, Mr Satyendra Narain Singh, may join hands with the Rajput faction in the Congress(I) to put up a Rajput CM. If their strategy succeeds then the new Chief Minister might be Mr Bhisma Narain Singh. However, from the point of view of Mrs Gandhi Mr Singh's prospects do not appear to be very bright. He has already been relieved of his communication portfolio in favour of Mr. C. M. Stephen. His name has also been left out of the state drought relief committee. Mr Sitaram Kesari, on the other hand, is the man closest to Sanjay Gandhi in Bihar and was the only leader from the state to shape the final list of Bihar Congress(I) candidates. The fact that he belongs to the backward community may work in his favour.

If the pipe-dream of the opposition of forming a government comes true then they will have to unite to form a government. In that case the Janata chief, Mr Satyendra Narain Singh, MP, Mr Karpoori Thakur of the Lok Dal and Mr Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav of the Congress(U) will fight it out among themselves for the Chief Ministership. The three Party leaders failed to reach a poll accord because they could not sort out the question of Chief Ministership among themselves.

ARUN RANJAN, Patna



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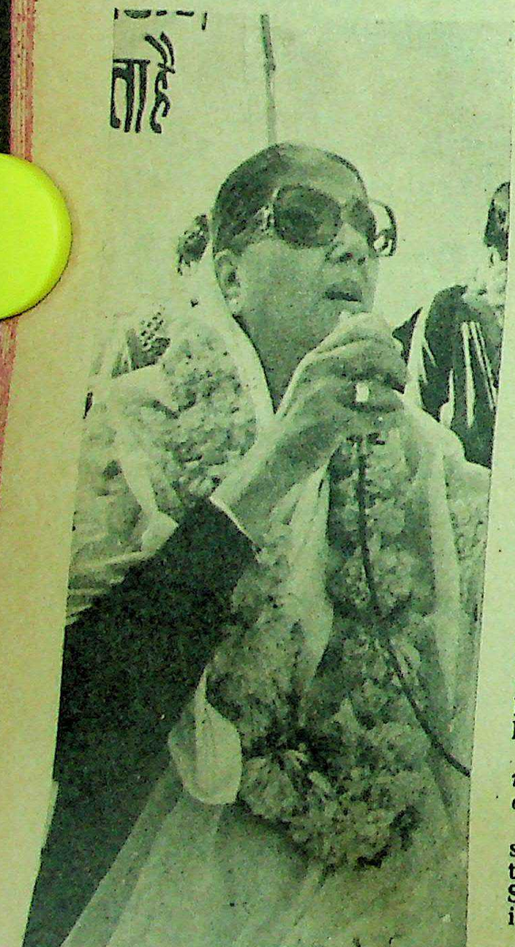
Mother and son

In the Madhya Bharat region of MP royalty still sways the masses and what better way to reflect current political realities than for partisan politics to enter and split the Scindia royal family. Rajmata Vijaya Raje leads theBharatiya Janata Party campaign while son Madhavrao is in the Congress(I).AJOY BOSE spoke to both

"He deserted me when I needed him most"

Mrs Vijaya Raje Scindia, Rajmata of Gwalior, is undeterred by her ignominous defeat in the last Lok Sabha elections. She is campaigning furiously in Madhya Pradesh for the Bharatiya Janata Party. Among her major political opponents in the State is her own son Madhavrao Scindia, who is campaigning for the Congress(I).



Ashok Bose

Q: *What does it feel like, having your son as your main political opponent in the state?*

A: What can I do? He does not listen to me any more. He thinks he is being very clever. Once Mrs Gandhi gives him a few slaps, he will learn. Then he will come back to me.

Q: Your son says that he has joined the Indira Congress because he considers Mrs Gandhi the most progressive force in the country. Please comment.

A: It's just the opposite. Mrs Gandhi is not progressive. She is just the opposite. Does he consider the Emergency progressive? She is a dictator of the worst kind. How can my son say that she is progressive?

Q: Has your personal relationship with your son deteriorated ever since he joined the Congress?

A: I am not a hypocrite. I can say that our relationship remains cordial. Naturally it has deteriorated. How can it remain the same after he has done such a thing to me?

Q: Your son is very hurt that while he has not criticised you in public, you have done so.

A: He is hurt! Has he ever stopped to think how I feel? At the time I needed him most, he deserted me. Children never stop to consider the feelings of their parents. They only think of their own feelings. How can I avoid criticising him if he is my main political opponent in the state? It's just not possible.

Q: Do you think that a divided Scindia family is going to affect the Assembly elections?

A: It will to a certain extent, definitely. But at every public meeting I try to explain why the division took place. I am sure that the people will be convinced and vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Q: But they did not during the mid-term polls.

A: These last four months have proved that Mrs Gandhi is not able to do anything but make empty promises. I think that the people have learned a lesson and will not vote for her again.

Q: Do you feel that Bharatiya Janata Party is more coherent than the old Janata Party?

A: Oh yes. Now we are of the same ideology. It is like (the situation) in 1967 when I was in the Jana Sangh. We all think the same way so it is much easier to function.

Q: What do you think are the election prospects in Madhya Pradesh?

A: It will be a tough fight but I think we will ultimately triumph.

"I will accept whatever Mrs Gandhi decides"

Although he joined the Congress(I) only a few months back, Madhavrao Scindia in his short career in the Party has already overshadowed old Congress heavyweights in the State like P. C. Sethi and V. C. Shukla. For instance, in the coming State Assembly elections, his candidates have got precedence particularly in the Gwalior division over most other State leaders. Young and dapper, the Oxford-educated 36-year-old ex-Maharaja has been travelling in an imported helicopter over the rugged terrain of the Gwalior division to garner support for the Congress(I) in the Assembly elections.

Q: *The Scindia family has always had a decisive influence over Assembly elections in the Gwalior division. Now, for the first time, the house of Scindia is divided. Do you think your mother's opposition to you will pose a serious challenge to the election prospects of the Indira Congress in this region?*

A: Firstly, I don't think old feudal glory is enough to win the support of people anymore. My mother may have that illusion. I don't. What people are bothered about today is getting things done. And I think I can claim with some pride that I have got a number of things done for this region including a number of agricultural and industrial projects in just the last three months.

Q: But surely you are taking advantage of being the former maharaja of the area?

A: There is no doubt that my family background gives me an advantage. I am also proud of the Scindia tradition. But, I personally would like to detach myself as much possible from my family and be recognised for my own merits.

Q: Don't you find it difficult to explain why you have joined a Party which was directly responsible for

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Madhavrao Scindia before his helicopter, Gwalior palace in the background

sending your own mother to jail?

A: The point here is to not see one's political attitudes on a purely personal level. I don't agree with the arrest of my mother during the Emergency. But I don't think that makes it impossible to be with the Congress Party. I think that Mrs Gandhi is the main progressive force in the country and I think she is the only person who can solve the many problems facing India. Whatever may have happened to me personally or to my family is subsidiary to this. And I am not the only one. There are many like me. For instance I know of this loyal Congress worker in Gwalior who spent the whole 19 months of the Emergency behind bars. There was obviously some stupid mistake. But he is still with Mrs Gandhi. I think it is the people who cringed and bowed during the Emergency and wrote letters of apology to the government are the ones who are now opposing Mrs Gandhi. It was a difficult decision for me to join the Congress Party but I know I have done right to see things politically first and then personally.

Q: Your mother has been very bitter about your joining the Indira Congress. Has your personal relationship deteriorated with her after you became her political opponent?

A: As far as I am concerned, I don't see why different political beliefs should influence personal relations. That is why I have never criticised my mother on a public platform. She on the other hand, at every public meeting, comes out personally against me. In the last mid-term polls, I deliberately avoided going to Rae Bareli and campaigning. My mother spent one full day in my constituency abusing me. This in spite of the fact I had earlier told her that we should avoid each other's constituencies. Anyway, even in these Assembly elections, I won't talk about her. Let her talk against me. It is her wish.

Q: Coming to the bitterness you have caused inside the Congress (I) in Madhya Pradesh, there are a number of old Congress leaders and workers who allege that you have been overnight given precedence over them particularly in the matter of distribution of Assembly seat tickets?

A: There is bound to be some heartburn after the distribution of election tickets. Some people will have to be rejected and they will naturally resent it. I think tempers will cool down soon and they will learn to accept the Party leadership's decision.

Q: But there is a rebel Congress candidate in almost every constituency in the Gwalior and Chambal divisions.

A: It's unfortunate that this has happened. I am travelling all over and trying to explain that Congressmen should remain united and fight the opposition. I think I will succeed.

Q: People are also charging you, with giving a large number of tickets to your own staff or as they describe it mahal kae chamche?

A: You must have heard this from opposition politicians.

Q: No, ordinary people told me this.

A: Then they must have been misled. The only staff member of mine who has been given a ticket is Mahendra Singh. But he too is a former MLA. I think all this talk of *mahal kae chamche* is just propaganda by the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Q: According to what the people say, you have been given as many as 20 tickets out of 34 in this division, out of which eight have gone to your own staff members?

A: I wish it were true. I have got only nine tickets out of 34; with the exception of Mahendra Singh, none are my staff members.

Q: Do you think this feeling among the people is likely to erode your chances in the Assembly elections?

A: Well, to a certain extent, it will but I hope to convince the people to vote for us.

Q: So you think it will be smooth sailing for you in the Assembly elections?

A: No, no. In the Gwalior and Chambal divisions, it will be a tough fight. This is the main citadel of the opposition forces in the state. In the 1977 Assembly elections, the Congress won only two out of 34 seats, one by 86 votes and the other by 2,000 votes. But in spite of this, I am confident we will win.

Q: Most people who had joined the Congress just before the mid-term polls have been relegated to secondary positions by Mrs Gandhi. How have you been the exception?

A: Well that's a difficult question to answer. But all I can say is that Mrs Gandhi must have been convinced of my sincerity for doing something for this region.

Q: Some people say that you are strongly tipped to be the next Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Will you accept the Chief Ministership?

A: I will accept whatever Mrs Gandhi decides.

Q: You say that you want to move away from old feudal traditions. How do you then tolerate people touching your feet all the time as the maharaja?

A: You know, it is a difficult thing to break old feudal norms and loyalties. I feel distinctly uncomfortable when people touch my feet but if I tell them not to, they will consider it an affront because they think it is traditional. One should make the transition slowly, not hurriedly. I am trying slowly to get over this maharaja business. I know it will be difficult, but it can be done. ■

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Sham shaadi

How about getting foreign tourists to "participate" in an Indian wedding? This experiment was tried recently in the pink city of Jaipur and, according to Prakash Bhandari, worked famously with a group of French tourists. It was Denzil Coelho's idea; an Indian based in Paris, he was conducting the group on an Indian tour. Coelho decided that instead of witnessing a typical Rajasthani wedding with all its paraphernalia, the tourists should satisfy their curiosity by actually participating in one. He wrote to Udesh Sharma, the general manager of the hotel in Jaipur where the tourists were expected to stay, asking him to prepare for a "mock marriage". Taken aback, Sharma wrote to Coelho's employees in Bombay requesting them to confirm the contents of Coelho's letter. They did and half amused and half surprised, Sharma began preparing for the "marriage" like the conventional father of a Rajasthani bride.

It was an unusual experience for Sharma, but he was determined to stage a grand performance. An elephant was engaged for the *dulha*, horses for the *baratis*.

Kamal Jutka

Musicians were hired. A *mandap*, made of pure silver, was erected and the hotel's foyer was decorated with colourful bulbs and flowers. When the French tourists arrived, they were asked to select the bride and groom from among themselves. Maurice Avrillon was chosen as the groom; Mrs Simone Lambert as the bride. Neither Mrs Avrillon nor Mr Lambert —wife and husband of the "groom" and "bride" respectively — objected to the "marriage." The other tourists were to be a part of the *barat*—the men dressed in *churidar pyjama*, *sherwani* and *safa* (turban) and the women in *lahenga* with *dopattas*. A local make-up man provided beards and moustaches for the men; the hotel beautician helped the women to dress for the occasion. An assistant manager of the hotel, Rajendra Goswami, was chosen to perform the *Kanyadan*. Though he looked younger than the bride, Mrs Lambert, Goswami agreed to play the part of her father.

The procession preceeding the actual ceremony was a spectacle. Mr Avrillon, the groom, rode on the elephant like a Rajput prince, grinning from ear to ear. The *baratis* danced and sang to the music of the *shehnai*. Mr Lambert danced too, unperturbed by the fact that his wife was soon to be "married" to another man. Mrs Lambert played the part of a coy bride well enough except when, unable to resist the temptation, she ran up to the elephant and insisted on riding with the groom. Goswami, as her father, rose to the occasion and tried to dissuade her, but the bride was a rebel who eventually had her way. Once on the elephant, she threw convention to the winds and kissed the groom smack on his lips.

The *pheras* around the fire were conducted by two pundits while Coelho explained the various *mantras* to the tourists. After the "marriage" was solemnised, the bride, groom and *baratis* were treated to a colourful Rajasthani dance. The last word was Goswami's: he cautioned everyone — albeit lightheartedly — that no dowry had been involved.

County bounty

When Sunil Gavaskar signed for Somerset, not all his admirers in India were happy: the majority felt that county cricket was hardly his cup of tea. Amidst a great deal of scepticism, on May 9 this year, Gavaskar joined his Somerset colleagues who had already had two weeks of rigorous cricket in the Schweppes County Championships. The next day, with his skipper, Brian Rose, he shattered yet another record in a 55-over Benson and Hedges match against Kent. Though Kent is no longer a formidable force on the county circuit, it still boasts of Asif Iqbal, Bob Woolmer, Derek Underwood and Chris Tavare. Gavaskar scored a chanceless 90 with 12 hits to the

Vimal Saxena

fence while Brian Rose, at the other end, slammed an unbeaten 137—the last 36 runs with six mighty sixes. Somerset emerged triumphant but the tables were turned the very next day when the two counties played a 40-over John Player League game. Gavaskar scored 40 in roughly 46 minutes but Kent won by a 13-run margin. Then, on May 17, Gavaskar got his first county ton—123 against Middlesex, with three sixes and 12 fours. It was a display of immaculate batting, a blend of caution and ruthless aggression. Somerset lost the match by one run, but the Indian star was the hero of the day. It has been a good start for him this summer.

Capital punishment

So you're suffering from insomnia because mosquitoes are buzzing around your ears. Well, if you are a resident of Delhi you need not lose any sleep over it—literally, that is. Don't worry about any of those mosquito repellants and creams; just reach for the nearest telephone and dial the number 344284. Provided your telephone is in working order, you will get through to the central control room of the malaria department of the municipal corporation. Since the mosquito problem is grave in the capital, the department is meant to provide instant relief to harassed residents of the city.

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The French disconnection

Javanta Das

There was this recent incident when Rekha and Moushumi were both on the sets of *Daasi*. A French television crew that was hovering around was focussing its camera lenses on Moushumi and virtually ignoring Rekha. The reason, it seems, was that someone had warned them about the star's temper, her tantrums and her recent boycott of the Press. Initially all went well but there soon came a stage in the proceedings when Rekha could take no more. She approached one of the members of the French team and said that they could film her while she was rehearsing. And she added by way of caution that they were on no account to disturb her while a shot was in progress. But nothing happened. The Frenchman failed to react and Rekha could not understand why he seemed to be paying no attention to her advice. Then some kind soul went up to the disappointed actress and explained that the Frenchman did not understand a word of English.

East Bengal's Ayatollah

Pritimoy Chakraborty

P. K. Banerjee (back to camera)

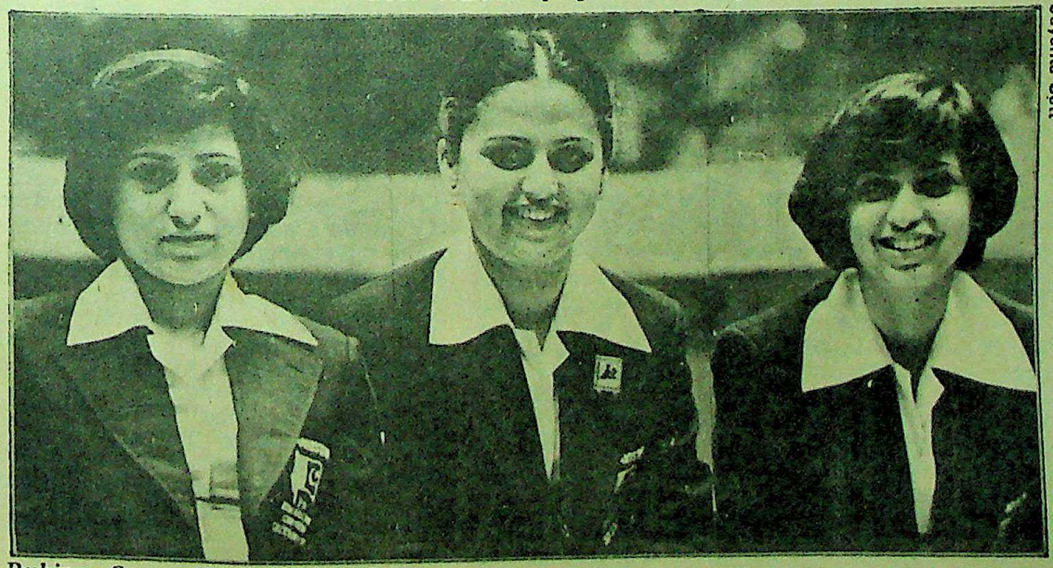
While the team events during the Asian Table Tennis Championship progressed, one of the most conspicuous people in the Press box was East Bengal's football coach, P. K. Banerjee. One of the claims he made was that he could deal better with Muslims than Ayatollah Khomeini. And how exactly could he prove that, asked a listener. "The people of his (Khomeini's) country speak only one language. But in my team alone, the Muslims speak in four different languages. Nasir Ahmad in Bengali. Habib and Latifuddin in Hyderabadi Urdu. Najeeb in Malayam and the three Iranians, Majid, Jamshed and Khabbazi in Farsi. But in spite of that I've been able to tackle them."

Thrice blessed

If there had been a beauty contest among the women participants at the fifth Asian Table Tennis Championship which ended at Calcutta on May 18, the honours would have been cornered by three stunningly pretty sisters from Pakistan. With their bewitching looks and charming ways alone, Rubina Shakoor and her two sisters, Seema and Nazo won the hearts of everyone privileged enough to enter the arena. Clad modestly in their traditional *salwar* and *kameez*, the three set many a heart aflutter.

S. N. M. Abdi had the time of his life trying to meet them—separately; such was their demand. But it was worth it once they began talking. "Our Abbu (father), Syed Shakoor Ahmed played hockey for India before Partition and our Ammi (mother) is a good badminton player. We are six sisters. Three of them have got married but earlier on they were reasonably good table tennis players. The three of us have represented Pakistan in a number of international tournaments but we have never enjoyed ourselves as much as we did in Calcutta", they said.

What did they like most about India? Cherubic Seema replied: "Oh, the rasgollas and Indians—I mean your hospitality and courtesy". Rubina, the eldest sister was enamoured of Banarasi sarees of which she bought a few as gifts for people at home. Their favourite Indian actor? Amitabh Bachchan, of course! The best Indian movie they saw in Calcutta? *Khubsoorat*—"Rekha was really wonderful". Any complaints? "Yes", said Seema, Rubina and Nazo. "The Bangla *bandh* upset our sightseeing programme. Can you believe that we are returning to Pakistan without really seeing anything besides your fabulous Park Hotel?" Nazo's favourite couplet: *Sare Jahan se achcha Hindostan hamara/Hum bulbulen hain iski, yeh gulsitan hamara.* (Our Hindusthan is better than the entire world. This country is a garden and we are its nightingales.) Oh, yes, nightingales the three certainly were. On May 19, the sisters flew home.



Jayanta Sett

Rubina, Seema and Nazo Shakoor

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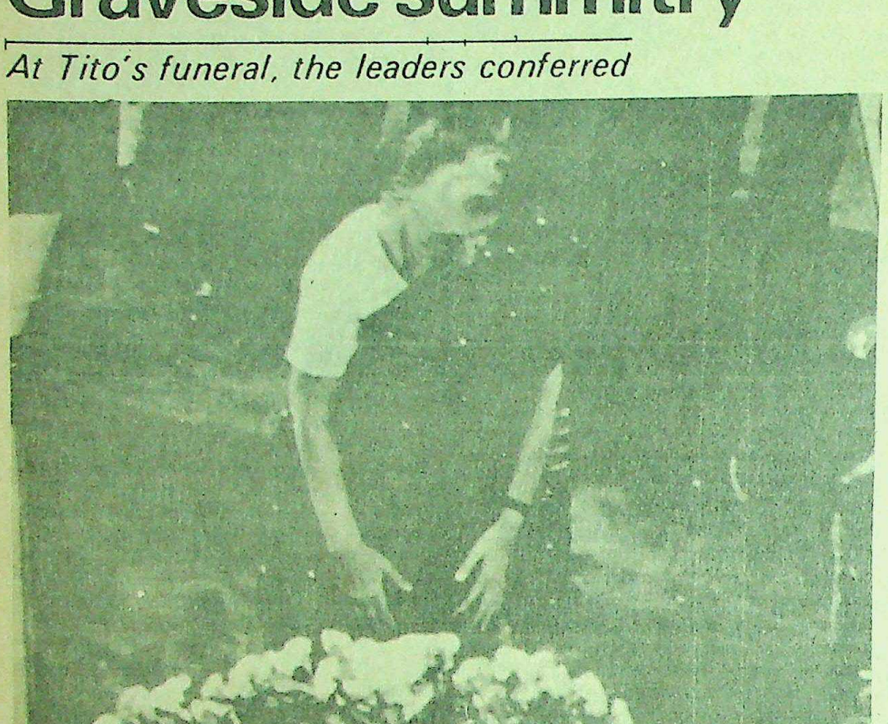
Graveside summitry

At Tito's funeral, the leaders conferred



Mrs Gandhi lays a wreath in front of Tito's casket

ON May 8, thousands of mourners gathered solemnly at the Federal Assembly building, adjoining the Marx and Engels Square of Yugoslavia's capital Belgrade as eight military officers carried the pale oak coffin of Marshal Josip Broz Tito and placed it on an open gun carriage covered with the blue, red and white Yugoslav flag. In the distance could be heard the booming sound of cannons firing the 21 gun salutes. As the military band struck up the dirge, Yugoslav Air Force aircraft flew overhead and the jeep drawing the carriage, slowly moved forward. After about two hours the cortege reached the garden of Marshal Tito's estate overlooking Belgrade. The coffin was then placed in a white marble vault bearing a stark inscription: "Josip Broz Tito, 1892-1980". The body of the Croatian peasant's son was finally brought to rest in a garden he loved. Many cried as the cortege passed them and as the body was finally laid to rest. He had died three days before his eightyeighth birthday.

The funernal was one of the biggest gatherings of world leaders in history and was attended by 155 delegations which included four kings, 32 Heads of State, 20 Prime Ministers accompanied by 49 Foreign Ministers and a large number of high-ranking officials from more than 100 countries. But for the large number of leaders, the great gathering presented an unusual opportunity for private conversation without the buildup and expectations that precede more formal summits. In short, the scene was one of a hundred mini summits.

Seven hours and forty-five minutes after she had taken off from India, Mrs Indira Gandhi landed at Belgrade on May 7, to attend the funeral. As the door of the chartered Air India aircraft opened and Mrs Gandhi stepped out, she was received by the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia and escorted to the Belgrade Intercontinental Hotel, where she stayed during her visit. For that matter, leaders from all over the world who had come to pay their last respects to Tito, had been accommodated there. Only Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and Japanese Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira decided to stay at their respective embassies.

Even before Tito's death, Mrs Gandhi had indicated to the Yugoslav leadership that she would attend the funeral. After Tito's death, once Mrs Gandhi's visit had been finalised, many leaders expressed their desire to meet her in Yugoslavia. Chairman Hua Guofeng of China, Leonid Brezhnev, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Zambian President Kaunda were some of them. The embassies of the respective countries made the preliminary arrangements and the details were worked out in Belgrade. Mrs Gandhi on her part said she would like to meet Mrs Jovanka Tito, Marshal Tito's widow.

After checking into the hotel, Mrs Gandhi left immediately to meet the Yugoslav leadership. The meeting originally had been fixed for the morning of May 8, but had been preponed by the Yugoslav leaders. With this meeting began Mrs Gandhi's hectic schedule, in the course of which she would confer with some of the most prominent world leaders. At the huge presidential building she was received by President Lazar Kolisevski, along with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. In a 70-minute meeting the leaders discussed the future of the Non-Aligned Movement after Tito, Brezhnev's discussion with the Yugoslav leaders and Afghanistan. Of particular importance was the discussion on the divisions within the non-aligned ranks. It was stressed that non-aligned countries should take the initiative in world affairs.

After that Mrs Gandhi returned to her hotel to meet Chancellor Schmidt of West Germany. Detente, fear of induction of arms to Pakistan, German fears of the USSR's missile programme and oil prices figured in the discussion. Mrs Gandhi initiated talks on the North-South dialogue while the German Chancellor pointed out that a general all-country discussion was of little use and that bilateral discussion would be more helpful.

The next day, she met Britain's Margaret Thatcher for breakfast. Since neither actually eats anything for breakfast they drank tea instead and discussed the domestic situation in India and Britain, as well as the situation in Afghanistan. At 10.00 am Mrs Gandhi met President Kaunda at the hotel but they decided to hold their discussions that night. After Kaunda left, she was informed that Lillian Carter had arrived so Mrs Gandhi personally escorted Mrs Carter back to her own room. It was of course an informal and personal meeting, where largely domestic matters were discussed.

BEFORE leaving for the Assembly Building to lay a wreath on Tito's coffin, she met Brezhnev and told the Soviet leader about the growing anxiety among non-aligned nations over the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The talks lasted for 45 minutes and an Indian spokesman said, "Mr Brezhnev replied that he too was keen on a settlement and suggested that Afghanistan and Pakistan speak to each other. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko was also present at the meeting. Mrs Gandhi insisted that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan was being used by the US to erode the non-aligned movement. Mr Brezhnev replied that the Soviet Union attached importance to the non-aligned movement and wanted India to play its role.

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After the meeting Mrs Gandhi proceeded to the Assembly Building. Later in the day Mrs Gandhi met the Rumanian President, Ceaucescu, and once again the non-aligned movement was discussed. She was then visited by Mrs Bandarnayake of Sri Lanka and she then called on Jovanka Tito and talked with her for about half an hour. Mrs Gandhi also met Mario Suarez and the Cuban Vice President.

The other important meeting she had that day was with Chairman Hua Guofeng of China. For the first time since Nehru met Chou En Lai in 1960, the leaders of the world's two most populous countries held a discussion. Both leaders desired the strengthening of relations between the two countries. Chairman Hua said that he wanted to see India as a strong nation and wanted her to play a greater role in the non-aligned movement. He called on Mrs Gandhi to forget the past and to look forward to the future. Mrs Gandhi said that though she wanted good relations between the two nations, it would not be at the cost of relations with other nations. Relations between the two countries will of course depend on the Indian approach to the problem in Aksai Chin, the remote area of North-East Kashmir retained by China after the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict. India insists on a settlement before relations are normalised, while China for the moment wants to shelve the issue.

The last meeting Mrs Gandhi had was an informal discussion with Kaunda, Nyerere and the President of Guinea. The discussion which began at 10 pm carried on until 12.15 am. The leaders discussed the problems facing the non-aligned movement, the way in which unpleasantness had been avoided at Havana and the non-aligned movement without Tito, who had provided the European link. Kaunda in fact, asked what would happen to the non-aligned movement now that all the founding fathers — Nasser, Nehru, Sukarno, and Tito — were no longer alive. It was decided that the non-aligned countries should take the initiative.

One issue which Mrs Gandhi discussed virtually with all leaders was the future of non-alignment after Tito. After all, Tito had lent great weight to the Non-Aligned Movement. It was at the Havana Summit that Tito decided to fight against the theory that non-aligned nations were natural allies of the Communist Bloc. Now with Tito, one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement, gone the question which naturally arises is who will take over the leadership. And this perhaps was uppermost in the minds of leaders of the non-aligned nations, including Mrs Gandhi. It may not be possible for countries with Soviet leanings to play this role. Therefore, what remains to be seen is how far and for how long the Non-Aligned Movement stays clear of the power blocs and maintains its own independent identity.

SAUMITRA BANERJEE

Bride beheaded

The real culprit will get away

THIS is not fiction. Not even the proverbial triangular mix-up. It is a tragedy that befell a Hyderabad family on May 9 when a father butchered to death his 17-year-old daughter, Jagdamba, who was in her bridal attire. The father, Yelliah, who owned a garage, had arranged his daughter's marriage with Shankar, a railway clerk. What Yelliah did not know was that his daughter was deeply in love with Prakash who lived near by. Both the families lived in the Ashok Bazar locality.

The date for Jagdamba's marriage with Shankar had been fixed. Yelliah had left no stone unturned to make it a grand affair. He had even sold property worth Rs 40,000 to finance the marriage. A day before the *mahurat*, Jagdamba mustered enough courage and sent a note to Shankar, her prospective husband, saying that she was in love with Prakash and that Shankar should not agree to the marriage. Shankar immediately dashed to Jagdamba's home to verify the authenticity of the note. The would-be bride confirmed her message, much to the shock of her parents and Shankar promptly gave up the idea of marrying Jagdamba. Jagdamba's father was naturally furious. Neighbours and family friends suggested that Jagdamba should marry Prakash. There was a small hurdle, though. The girl belonged to the Munnurukapu community while her lover was a Mutharasu. The elders took it upon themselves to iron out this caste complication.

As a result of their efforts the marriage atmosphere was hastily revived. Preparations for the *mahurat* once again began in earnest. Everybody seemed to have forgotten the brief, unsavoury interlude. The bride's family was particularly joyful. Then tragedy caught everybody unprepared. On May 9, the day of the *mahurat*, the *mandap* was tastefully decorated and music added to the atmosphere of festivity. Inside the house, Jagdamba was going through the traditional rituals surrounded by her friends and female relatives. But there was no sign of the bridegroom's party. A nervous Yelliah sent word to Prakash's home. The man returned and informed Yelliah that Prakash was untraceable since the previous night.

For Yelliah it was the unkindest cut of all. Unable to control his emotions, he rushed into Jagdamba's room and ordered everybody out. Then, dragging his teenage daughter by her plait, he proceeded towards the adjacent bathroom where Yelliah's eyes fell on a chopping knife. He first dealt a blow on his daughter's head and with the second blow he literally beheaded her. Completely drenched in Jagdamba's blood and with the knife in one hand, Yelliah set off towards the Fazalgunj police station where he surrendered himself.

The assembled guests and elders were furious at Prakash's disappearance and the dubious role of his parents. Angered by Jagdamba's gory death and the role played by Prakash in the tragic development, a few hot-heads raided Prakash's house. Soon after, Prakash's father was taken into protective custody by the police but Prakash himself remained untraceable.

The police say that the case is simple enough with hardly any scope for investigation. In the eyes of the law, Yelliah is a murderer though there is universal sympathy for him and his family. When Yelliah's lawyer moved a bail petition in the court, the prosecution did not oppose it. Why Prakash jilted his "beloved" however remains a mystery.

KALYANI SHANKER, Hyderabad

Real money vs real Janata

IN front of Mr S. L. Shakdher, the Election Commissioner, all the various leaders of the different shades of the original Janata Party claim to be the "real" Janata: everyone seems to want the symbol of the *haldhar kisan*. But the desire to be known as the "real Janata" has become less keen of late, and for a good reason. Because the history of the Janata Party is littered with IOUs. During the hectic months when the Janata was ordering fancy advertising campaigns, it was also adding up its bills. If the Party had won, of course, payment would have been no problem. But it got demolished. And the "real Janata" still has to pay at least Rs 17 lakhs to an army of publicists, printers, hoarding contractors and newspapers, in return for services rendered in 1979.

Meanwhile, in Delhi, when Babu Jagjivan Ram defected once again, first to form his private version of the "real Janata", the Janata (J) he not only took his presence out of the Janata Party but also two typewriters belonging to the Janata Parliamentary Party. On March 11, Madhu Dandavate wrote to Babuji requesting him to return the property of the "real" Janata. But Babuji obviously had different ideas about the problem; the typewriters, worth about Rs 7,000, remain in his custody.

ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA, Bombay

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Children missing for 27 months

Parents have in vain pleaded before three PMs

THE three-wheeler sped away noisily on the afternoon of January 13, 1978. Its occupants were three young brothers — Satish (8) Praveen alias Beenu (5), Susheel alias Banti (2) and the driver, Raj Kumar. No one suspected anything. The children did not raise an alarm since they knew their driver well; in fact they called him 'uncle'. Unti a few days ago, Raj Kumar was a regular visitor to the children's home and for eight long years he had been their neighbour and a sub-tenant of Mr Kirpa, a scrapdealer and the children's father. They never returned

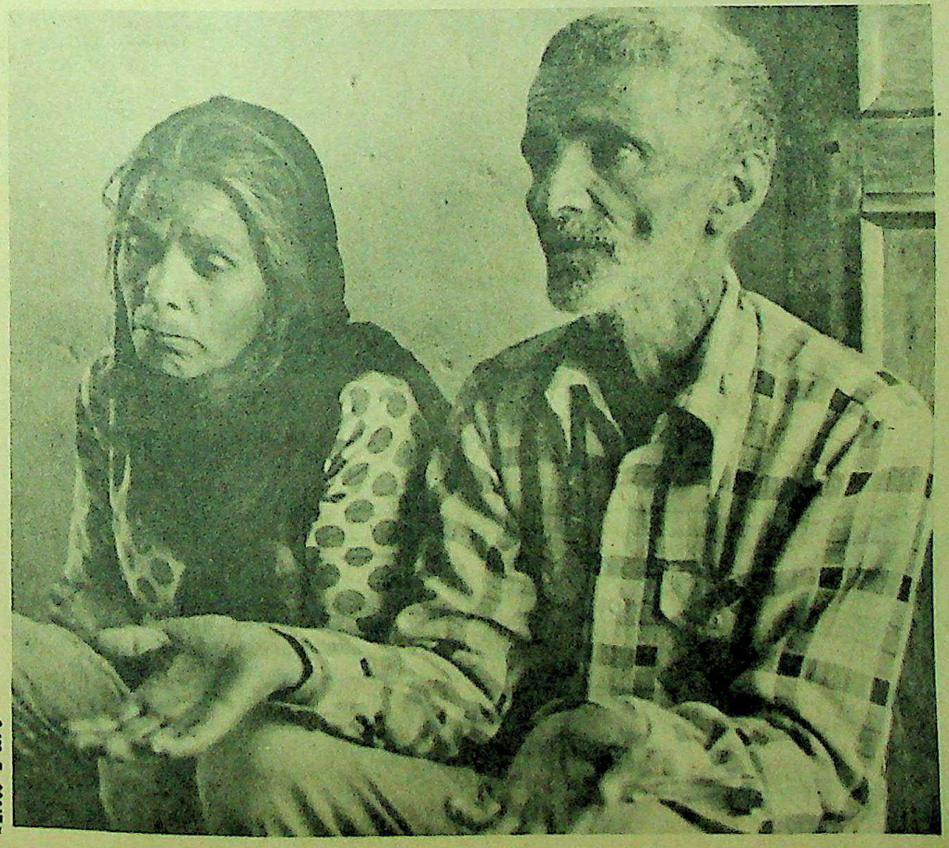
On that fateful day, Kirpa was on his usual rounds and his wife Sharda was busy with the visiting estate officials of Chandigarh; they had come to check the records following a complaint against the new landlord Munshi, who had purchased House 2606 in Sector 22C for Rs 60,000. The complaint was about Munshi's ability to pay the amount. On a request from the old landlord, Munshi had permitted Kirpa to retain the *barsati* on the second floor without charging an additional paisa. However, Munshi did not want Raj Kumar, a sub-tenant of Kirpa to stay. A misunderstanding cropped up as Raj Kumar thought he had been thrown out at Kirpa's instance. According to four-year-old Guddi, sister of the kidnapped brothers, Raj Kumar had promised to buy sweets for the children and taken them to the market in his three-wheeler.

The police hunted for Raj Kumar in Ludhiana, Amritsar, Srinagar and elsewhere. But he was not to be found. This intriguing case was eventually handed over to Inspector Des Raj. Des Raj was perhaps the only investigating officer who inspired confidence in the kidnapped children's parents. As a matter of fact, Des Raj asked the relatives of the alleged kidnapper to hand over Raj Kumar 'within a week'. Kumar's folks agreed to do so and gave an undertaking in writing to this effect.

Soon enough, the situation took an interesting turn. Raj Kumar's brother-in-law, incidentally, his namesake, who claimed to be an office-bearer of the Amritsar City Janata Party, allegedly tried to influence the police investigation. But he failed before the never-say-die Des Raj. Des Raj was, however, transferred to Haryana under the orders of SSP, Chandigarh.

According to Kirpa, after Raj's transfer the police lost all interest in the case. "We have spent Rs 8,70 We sold our utensils. We have now lost all hope. Some newspapermen came to us. They say they have published a few stories. But who is bothered?" Among the three kidnapped brothers, only Satish attended school.

The grief-stricken parents, Kirpa and Sharda



Anil Puri

Kirpa and Sharda told this correspondent: "Twentyseven months have passed but nothing has come out. The local police were cool even when they were informed of the exact hideout of the accused. They even called us fools...We have written to the three Prime Ministers on different occasions but failed to draw sympathy from them. Perhaps they were too busy handling far more important issues or maybe because we are poor people". Sharda went on: "Once we went to meet the Chief Commissioner (CC) of Chandigarh Union Territory. But his personal staff refused to let us in. Then a newspaper reporter, Mr Bhanot, took our *darkhasat* (application) and handed it to CC".

"On January 17 last year, Kumar returned home and stayed with his family for three days. We informed the police, including the Inspector General and requested them to raid the premises where Kumar was believed to be staying. But nobody paid any heed. We gave the police several other tips and also the list of people who had seen the children and met Raj Kumar in Srinagar, Sirsa, Delhi Amritsar, Ludhiana and elsewhere. We have even given them (the police) the names of persons who were in constant touch with him (Raj Kumar) and were delivering threatening letters to us. But the police are still keeping mum. Perhaps they are only meant to serve the rich", Kirpa said wiping his tears. Sharda sadly complained that they were living on the good wishes of the authorities. "When we last met the Chief Commissioner he said: '*Agar kismat main hoga to mil jayenge*' (If fate so wills, the children will be found)".

The living quarters of the Kirpas measures eight feet by eight feet. In this tiny room live the remaining five members of the family—parents, two daughters and a son. One of the daughters is married. She lives close by with her husband. Curiously, Raj Kumar hasn't stopped writng to the Kirpa family. His letters to Sharda are passionate and couched in polite language. Reading his letters to Sharda one gets the impression that Raj Kumar shares a romantic relationship with the mother of the kidnapped children.

The police have refused to believe Kirpa's allegations. "We can understand the cries of frustrated parents. But was it a simple case of crime?", the investigating police inspector Pandit Jai Narain asked. Narain told this correspondent that he was planning to visit Srinagar soon and that he would conduct a search in the orphanages in the region. It is possible that Raj Kumar might have dumped the children in an orphanage.

A CORRESPONDENT.
Chandigarh

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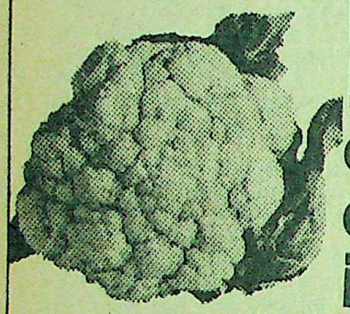
Leonard chills lemonade in London



Leonard keeps cauliflower crisp in Cochin

Leonard keeps Bina smiling in Bombay

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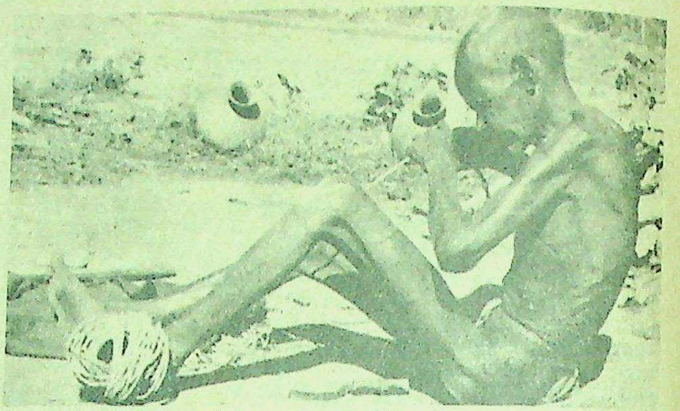
Adivasis duped

Racketeers corner forest land



An adivasi engaged in rope-making

SEMI-CLAD, semi-starved tribals, living in makeshift leafhuts and barely eking out an existence deposited Rs 11.40 lakhs, for something that they have never possessed and probably will never set their eyes on. It all happened in the Panchpir subdivision of Mayurbhanj district, Orissa, where under the garb of the "Land to the Landless" scheme, racketeers and fortune-seekers acquired for themselves valuable 'reserved forest' land.

The racketeers collected applications from the landless tribals and deposited Rs 11.40 lakhs as 'forest royalty' on their behalf. This, however, was no act of benevolence. With an eye on the enormous profits that could be reaped from the 15,321 acres of richly endowed forest land, the racketeers acquired sale deeds of the same land with the signatures of prospective adivasi owners on them. Thus even before the adivasis had an inkling of what was going on, rich 'forest land' meant for them had passed on to the hands of fortune seekers engaged in clandestine timber operations, who had lost no time in taking advantage of the illiterate tribals. Not all the land was, however, timber land. In most cases the land settled in the names of the tribals was unfit for agriculture.

It is not merely the adivasis alone, but the Government which is also being robbed of its land. Strangely the government seems to be unaware of the goings-on. Politicians and senior bureaucrats were impressed at the efficiency with which the tahsildars and revenue officers managed to distribute surplus land, which was reflected in the ever mounting official figures. Indeed, the scheme was proclaimed as a vote-catching gimmick and the achievements in implementing the programme were cited to exploit the tribal vote bank. Not everybody, however, could overlook the real consequences of the scheme: the damage that was being done to the rich timber of the reserve forest area. Puny attempts were made by some honest forest officers to save the forests from organised conspiracy and fraud, but these were promptly suppressed by government officials.

The indiscriminate grant of lease of the 'protected forest' lands has had farreaching consequences. The leasing iut of 'protected forests' has led to the loss of 'buffer' stock of wood used for consumption—and has caused the local people to use the wood from reserve forests to satisfy their daily needs. In an attempt to protect the forests of the district, it has been suggested that the surplus woodlands should be maintained as intermediate forests and the reserve forests, which are state property, should be declared 'lease banned'. It has further been suggested that all the previous cases of the lease of protected forest lands in the names of the landless adivasis should be reviewed, and in appropriate cases, leases already granted should be declared void and be vested back in the government. The Government is yet to step in to put an end to the racket. Meanwhile, the adivasis remain as poor as ever, while the fortune hunters lose no time in making what money they can.

AMARENDRA BOSE, Mayurbhanj

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Sanjay may dominate after polls

Power and Politics

By BARUN SENGUPTA

SOME pundits in Delhi still have their doubts, but I personally think, it will not be difficult for the Congress(I) to form a government in each of the nine states, either independently or in collaboration with some regional Parties. Indeed, in eight states Congress(I) Chief Ministers should come through while the Chief Ministership in the remaining state will go to the DMK. How long Mr Karunanidhi will be able to retain his Chief Ministership is a different matter, but there is little doubt that he will fulfil his life's ambition once again. In the eight other states, even if the Congress(I) gets 45 per cent of the seats they will form the governments. And if they can secure 35 per cent of the valid votes polled it should be easy to get at least 45 per cent of the seats. The other Parties are hopelessly divided and no one would expect any of them to secure 35 per cent of the valid votes polled or 45 per cent of the seats.

For the Congress(I), distribution of Party tickets was itself an ordeal. Even Mrs Gandhi had to admit publicly that some "good people" were left out in the process. Selection of Chief Ministers and Ministers will be a more serious problem. Except in Orissa, where Mr J. B. Patnaik is a certainty, there are two, three, or sometimes four candidates for the post of CM. When tickets were distributed, each of them tried to grab the maximum number and during the election battle each tried his best to get as many of his own supporters elected and as many of his adversaries defeated. After the results come out, they will all be engaged in the third round of battle — trying to occupy the most prestigious chair in the respective state secretariats. And at the same time, opponents will have to be kept far away. In this, the final battle, they will make frantic efforts to get either Mrs Gandhi's or Mr Sanjay Gandhi's support.

Ultimately, the extent to which Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay will intervene in the selection of Chief Ministers and Ministers will depend on the actual results. If the Party secures more than 55 per cent of the seats in most states, Sanjay will naturally have a big say in the ministerial selections. Of course, it can be safely predicted that no group will be isolated from power completely, irrespective of who gets the Chief Ministership.

For the largest state of India, Uttar Pradesh, the name of Mr C. P. N. Singh is being mentioned in some circles, though in all likelihood the post will go to Mr N. D. Tewari. Mr Singh is considered a rising star in the Congress(I), but in the eyes of the Party high command he is not experienced enough to occupy the most important chair of Uttar Pradesh yet. At the moment, he is likely to get a more important assignment at the Centre after which he might be sent to Lucknow. So for the present at least, Mr Tewari is expected to get the Chief Ministership. Mr Kamalapati Tripathi's son is also tipped for an important portfolio, provided the family behaves well.

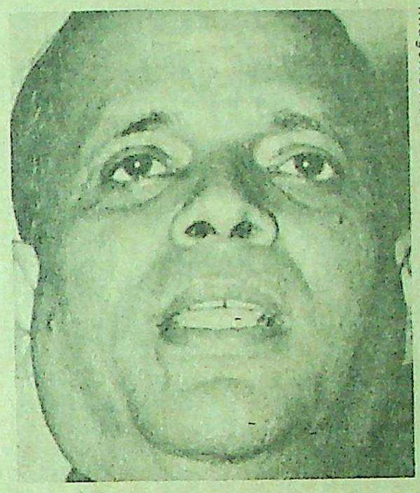
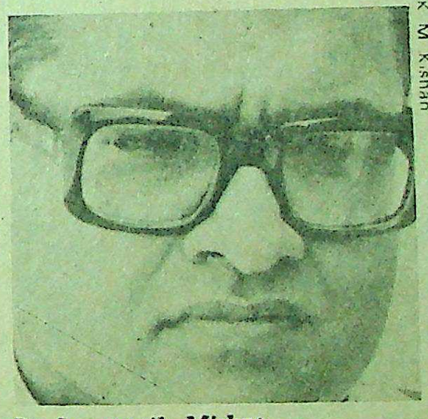


Image makers

J. B. Patnaik



K. M. Kishan

Dr Jagannath Mishra

In Bihar, the contest will ultimately be confined to Dr Jagannath Mishra and Mr Kedar Nath Pandey. Dr Mishra is still the favourite and unless all the other leaders of the state gang up against him, it will be very difficult to deprive him of the Bihar CM's post. Of course, he will have to accommodate supporters of Mr Pandey, Mr Bhisma Narayan Singh and Mr Sitaram Kesari in his cabinet. In no Congress(I)-run state is the Chief Minister expected to get absolute authority again. The system of checks and balances will go on operating in all the Congress(I) states.

Mr V. C. Shukla, I am afraid, is in for some serious trouble. And if Mr P. C. Sethi goes ahead with his newly formed Shukla-Sethi alliance against Arjun Singh he will also be in for trouble. To declare a crusade against Mr Kamal Nath is one thing, but to go on propagating — even in limited circles — that Mrs Amteshwar Anand is interfering in Madhya Pradesh politics is something else altogether. The Party high command will not tolerate this. Even if Mr Arjun Singh cannot be made the Chief Minister of MP now, Mr Shukla's future in the present set-up of the Congress(I) will continue to remain bleak unless he changes his attitude drastically. The scene in Maharashtra is very complex because there are so many claimants for the Chief Ministership. According to persons close to the Party high command the veteran Mr Vasantdada Patil is expected to get the first chance. In Gujarat it will either be Mr M. R. Solanki or Mr Yogendra Makwana while in Rajasthan Mr Jagannath Pahadia will in all probability be the first choice.

In Punjab again there are a large number of claimants. Some people are keen on getting back Mr Zail Singh as the Chief Minister of the state, while Mr Darbara Singh's name is also being mentioned. Some pundits suggest that Mr G. S. Dhillon's claim cannot be ignored either. It is to be seen whom Mrs Gandhi and Mr Gandhi prefer.

Sanjay played a significant role in the selection of the Party's candidates. In the election battle he was second in command. If everything goes well for the Party he will have a big say in the choice of Chief Ministers and Ministers. And when that comes about, the Party will by and large accept his dominant role, with or without reservations, whatever the pundits might say now.

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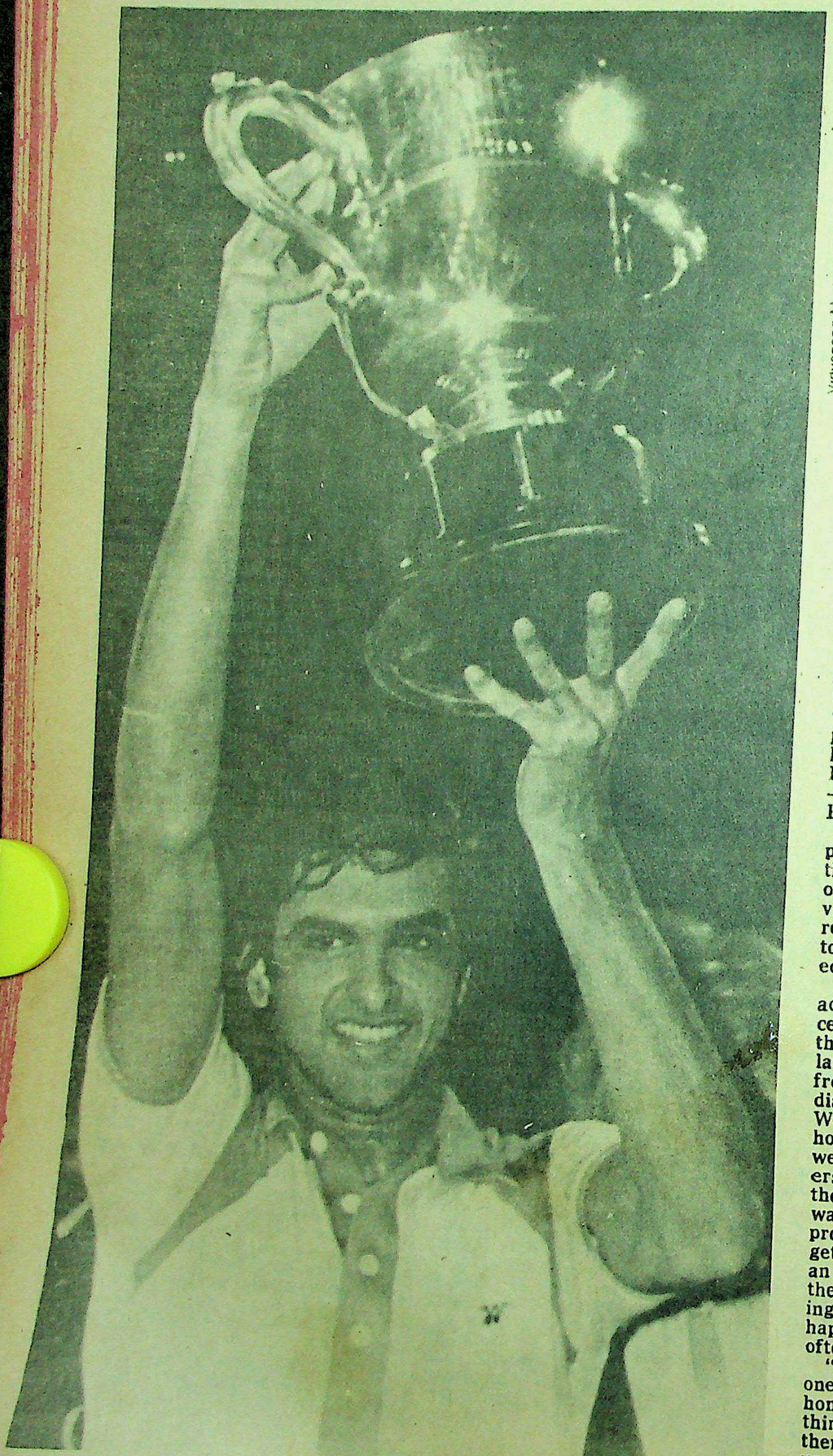

UPI

Mister Grand Slam

ASHOK KAMATH profiles Prakash Padukone

Vidyanand Mullerpatan

THE TV crew from Madras had just finished filming the interview with the new superstar. On an afterthought, the producer suggested that they shoot a sequence of him chatting with his parents. Prakash called the senior Padukones and the trio posed for the TV camera, although the Padukones were visibly self-conscious. Someone suggested that they actually talk. Prakash broke into Konkani and that seemed to ease things a bit. "Hope to see you again in May after you've won the world championship," the producer remarked, as he took his leave of "Prashanth", 64, 15th Cross Road, Malleswaram, Bangalore 560003 —the home of Prakash "Grand Slam" Padukone.

The TV floodlights, the radio microphone, the photographers' flash bulbs, the media men in general tripping over each other for exclusive interviews, not to talk of the gladiatorial reception. What does it all feel like to suddenly have the spotlight trained on you like never before?

"Well, it really is a great feeling," admits Prakash. "You know, scarcely did I imagine that I would get the kind of reception I did when I landed in Bangalore. On the flight from London to Bombay, the Air India crew gave us a reception of sorts. We landed in Bombay in the early hours of the morning and there were a couple of hundred well-wishers and friends to receive us. But the reception at Bangalore airport was something unprecedented. It is probably once in a lifetime that one gets the opportunity of driving in an open jeep with people lining the sides of the road, lustily cheering you. At least these things didn't happen to sportsmen in this country often."

"But one has to take all this in one's stride. At least that is what I honestly believe in and that's one thing I have been able to do. Whether this kind of personality cult, as you term it, can have an adverse effect or otherwise, is entirely up to

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the individual at the receiving end. Becoming the cynosure of all eyes can have a twofold effect: at one level it might go to the head of the concerned person and at another, expectations are automatically raised high every time you go out on court."

In a society where social responses oscillate between extremes of blind idolatry to downright iconoclasm, it is common enough to see sportsmen being treated according to their performances. To drive home the point I remind Prakash of the report that soon after he lost the final of the All-England Championship, Liem Swie King's statue was demolished and the fallen hero was the target of brickbats even in his hometown.

"Yes, I agree that we have to be more balanced in our reactions. We either put our heroes on a pedestal when they win or (once they lose) consign them to the dustbin. At least, speaking for myself, I am not affected in either way since I play for my own satisfaction. The receptions and all the exposure and the glare of publicity are only incidental. Next year, if I don't retain my titles and consequently do not get this kind of reception, I will not miss it at all. Nor will it mean that I will not try my best after that." It sounded like a new Prakash talking; Prakash the philosopher.

"Like one of my friends told me that he felt the entire thing was being overdone. He felt that people were making a mountain out of a molehill. It is not for me to comment on whether people have over-reacted or done otherwise. I am only saying that if someone has done something remarkable, go ahead and honour him. But at the same time, do not kick him where it hurts, when he fails." At the moment, anyway, Prakash has reason enough to bask in the euphoria that has followed his hat-trick of triumphs in the Swedish, Danish and All-England Badminton Championships.

Prakash with his fiancee, Ujjala Karkal

WHAT is the young badminton star like as a person? In Prakash's own words, "I am basically a very reticent person. I take a lot of time to get used to people. I prefer a quiet atmosphere with my small circle of friends. Not for me any heavy socialising or anything like that". Speaking to him, one can vouch for that fact. It took a considerable effort to draw Prakash out of his shell. But as the interview went along, he became more articulate, more forthcoming in his replies. At the end of it all, one got the impression that he is desperately trying to shield his eyes from the glare of publicity, without being offensive in the process.

Almost anyone who has anything more than a nodding acquaintance with Prakash speaks of him as being a glutton for hard work. In fact, his being a cut above the rest on the badminton court has often been ascribed to the fact that he is his own ruthless taskmaster. Does he really enjoy his uncompromising, spartan discipline and rigorous work schedule? Does it not require a certain amount of masochism to drive himself to reach training targets he sets himself even when there are times when he does not relish doing it?

"It is like this. Of course there are times when, in the midst of training, I feel like giving up. Like say this morning I decide to run 25 laps but by the time I've completed say 20, I am too physically or mentally tired to continue. But I never quit. I tell myself that it is like notching up 13 points in a game and then becoming tired. On a court I never give up until I've reached (or my opponent has) the magical 15 points, no matter how tired I am. Likewise, I never give up until I've completed the number of laps or sit-ups or whatever—I have set myself."

"Maybe there is a certain amount of masochism involved to inflict pain on yourself when you are training but there can be nothing more satisfying than reaching the target you've set yourself. And it pays handsomely in the long run. I have adopted the Indonesian training system. Until I trained with the Indonesian national team in Jakarta in October-November 1977, I followed a rather unscientific system of training. It was in Jakarta that I realised the importance of training for a little of everything: speed, stamina, power, footwork and flexibility. For speed we do sprints, for footwork improvement we do the skipping exercises, for developing strength we do weight training and for flexibility we go through gymnastic exercises.

"Every morning, six days of the week, along with a band of local friends, I train for about an hour and a half at the Kanteereeva Stadium. On Mondays we do only long distance running. This is to improve our stamina. Then of course, the sprints help us improve speed. On Tuesdays we concentrate on weigh training while on Wednesdays we work out in the gym. Thursdays are devoted to skipping, Fridays are again consumed by weight training and Saturdays we devote to shadow badminton. We go through all the strokes in the game with all the seriousness of actually playing. After the end of a stroke we make it a point to return to the centre line before executing the next one. On some Saturday mornings we play some other games just to break the montony. The workouts begin at 7 a.m. every day. But that is not the end of the routine."

"I am back home by around 9 and in office by 10.30. Normally I break off from office around 4.30 pm and head straight for the club. It is only in the evenings that I play badminton. We play in all seriousness: no one is allowed to take the games lightly. You know, it is so hectic—the training and my job in the bank—that I make it a point to keep Sundays completely free for rest. I just don't stir out on Sundays."

The Padukone household in Malleswaram represents a typical middle-class home: unostentatious, functional and with all the attributes that distinguish a house from a home. The house belongs to Prakash's grandfather, Mr. P. Annaji Rao, and was built a couple of months after Prakash was born. The living room "reeks" of Prakash and badminton. A glass shelf, almost bursting at its seams, contains trophies, mainly won

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by the second son of the household. The All-England trophy gets pride of place in the centre of the room. Across a rather amateurishly designed thermocole-trophy runs the legend: "Hail King Prakash".

PRAKASH is the second child of Ramesh and Ahalya Padukone. The eldest, Pradeep, is an electronics engineer in the United States; Mahesh works for the State Bank of Mysore; sister Padmini is currently doing a course in catering in Pune while the youngest of the lot, Harish, is a second year B. Com. student. Prakash himself graduated in Commerce from the MES College, hardly a stone's throw away from home. A couple of days after he won the All-England title at Wembley, his employers—The Union Bank of India—announced his second promotion in less than two years. What does his work at the bank involve? Says Prakash, "I am attached to the Development Manager's office. I am mostly involved in deposit mobilisation. Naturally there is a certain amount of customer relations work. I started off as a grade II officer, got my first promotion after I won the Commonwealth Games title and now I am a grade I senior officer. I quite enjoy my work. Banking is not all that drab as some people make it out to be. I would have preferred to work in one of the branches because one gets to learn a lot if one is shifted around from one department to another. But it is only fair that I work in the administrative office because it makes things simpler when I have to take leave to play in tournaments or attend coaching camps."

Prakash belongs to the minority tribe of sportsmen who have been able to match their performances on the field with those inside the classroom. Until Pre-University he maintained a first class grading and graduated in Commerce with a second. How did he manage? Were there points when he found himself at crossroads where academics clashed with badminton? "Not really. The badminton season did not exactly clash with my examinations. Except on one occasion when I was training for the Thomas Cup in Patiala and I had my second year university exams coming up. I took my books along with me to the camp and after a hectic day of workouts, I would study late into the night for my exams. I returned to Bangalore one day before the start of the exams, completed them and reported back at the camp. That way, I have invariably managed to have the best of both worlds."

After beating Liem Swie King for the first time in five encounters, Prakash ascribed his success to the fact that he managed to slow down King and thus upset the former champion's rhythm. Does he fancy that — other conditions remaining more or less the same—the tactic will pay off when they meet again? "Honestly," Prakash beamed, "I think that is the only way one can beat him." At least that is the only way I can. If I try to beat him at his own style of play—the fast, hustling, power game—it will be disastrous. Like it was on the four occasions before my Wembley triumph.

Two photographs from Prakash's family album

"No, it is not as though King does remarkably more work than I do. I think we work more or less the same. But he has started that kind of work early. All champions normally start early. It was not so in my case. In addition, there are a lot of other factors that go to build up the physical and mental resistance of a player. Like diet for example. We are uncompromising vegetarians at home. All my non-vegetarian eating is done outside home. And that apart, I undergo strict training in the morning, rush back home for a bath, shave and breakfast, rush to the office, work and then go back to the court. I'm not complaining, but it is quite different for King and many other champions. They spend most of their time in the camp, training in the morning, have a rest in the afternoon and are fresh for another session in the evening. In terms of ability to put in hard work, the conditions are more conducive to King and his kind. Sportsmen in India have also to keep their jobs going because that is what is going to provide security once our playing days are over."

IF someone came forward and told our top sportsmen to concentrate on their respective sporting careers, assuring them that they would be taken care of after their playing days are over, would it lead to an improvement in the performance of the sportsmen concerned?

"Yes, it will lead to a more professional approach to sports if some kind of security can be provided for the future of our sportsmen. But like I said, without the assurance that even after your playing days are over you will be provided with something to fall back upon, sportsmen and sportswomen cannot be asked to concentrate on their respective sporting disciplines and not look beyond."

And talking of professionalism, does Prakash intend turning pro? Is there any future for professionalism in the game of badminton? "At the moment at least, there is little point in my turning pro. If I do, it would mean that I cannot take part in Asian and Commonwealth games. This means my avenues of international competition are restricted. Moreover, in badminton we have nothing like the tennis circuit for pros. The money involved in pro badminton is nothing compared with pro tennis or pro golf or pro boxing. There is an acute need for money to come into badminton in a big way like tennis or football or boxing. And I suppose one way to see that done is to get the Americans involved in it."

"A step in the direction of holding prize-money badminton tournaments was made last September. Three thousand pounds for the first prize is not a bad beginning. But like I said, it will take time before a circuit is developed and professionals can look forward to it as a source of livelihood like many tennis players do."

Does Prakash see badminton as a mass sport in this country? "It is difficult to say, considering the costs involved. Unless equipment is subsidised, it is difficult to imagine a situation where badminton develops a really broad base". True indeed. But in its own small way, Prakash winning the All-England title is probably about the best thing that happened to the game of badminton in this country in recent times. The fanfare, the pageantry, the publicity was as much for Prakash as it was for the game of badminton. Prakash's fortunes on international badminton courts will no doubt give a renewed fillip to the game. At another level, because of the glamour and glory the game has recently acquired, parents need not necessarily look up to a Gavaskar or a Kapil Dev as models for their children: a Prakash Padukone could also do the trick.

In the meanwhile, even before the starry dust has settled, Prakash at the moment appears to be riding a streetcar named desire—a desire to win the official world champion's title at Jakarta. ■

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League beleaguered

The fate of Calcutta's annual football mela, the League, is uncertain. S. N. M. ABDI reports.

Nikhil Bhattacharya

Policemen in action during the East Bengal-Mohun Bagan finals

MAY is drawing to a close but the Calcutta Football League has failed to start. This had never happened before, not even during the traumatic Naxalite upsurge. Come what may, the League would start by the second week of May. But not this year. Many still bravely believe that the situation can be retrieved. But for most, the prospects are gloomy. If eventually the League is not held, "it will be sheer agony for me as I cannot spend the long summer months without the staple diet of football" says Kamal Das, a 19-year-old for whom the *maidan* is a place of pilgrimage.

Of course there are others who disagree with Das; they believe that a football tournament should not be held in Calcutta until the menace of soccer violence is controlled. The last two days of the Federation Cup (staged in April-May) saw the ugliest outburst of violence in the history of Calcutta football. More than 150 people were injured and Eden Gardens, the venue of the matches, incurred damages amounting to Rs 50,000 when irate spectators smashed concrete seats and collapsible gates. The Federation Cup finals, played between East Bengal and Mohun Bagan saw a complete law and order breakdown. The fanaticism of football followers and fierce club loyalties reached such a peak that the supporter of one club killed another club's supporter as the two were watching the match on television.

The West Bengal Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu saw it all. He was there at the stadium to give away the prizes. Before his eyes, officials of the two clubs quarrelled and fought on the sidelines while the players settled scores among themselves inside the playing area. Taking the cue from their heroes, the spectators in the stands went on a rampage. The Chief Minister was prompt in condemning the players and club officials for setting a bad example before their supporters. Later, both the clubs apologised publicly. Soon after, the Chief Minister announced that he would meet representatives of the three big clubs and officials of Calcutta Police to discuss ways in which vandalism on the football ground could be prevented during the forthcoming League and the IFA Shield matches.

But there are other problems besetting the League. Problems legal and an issue of face. As things stand, if the IFA decides to abide by the verdict of two courts, the League can start immediately. But if the IFA decides to press its point of view in a higher court of law, the League may not be held this year at all. According to the IFA Handbook, every year, the winners of the second, third and fourth divisions were promoted to the first, second and third divisions respectively for the next year's League. Correspondingly, the team at the bottom of the table in the first, second and third divisions was relegated at the end of the season to the second, third and fourth divisions respectively. However, towards the close of 1978, the IFA hit upon a new idea. At a special meeting of the governing body it was decided that holders of the first four positions in the second, third and fourth divisions would compete in the first, second and third divisions in the forthcoming League. Similarly, it was also agreed upon that four teams at the bottom of first, second and third division tables would be relegated to the second, third and fourth division for the next season. In January 1979, the IFA sent a copy of the altered regulations to the Registrar of the Societies and it was duly recorded. Informing the registrar was necessary because the IFA is a registered society under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act of 1961.

The new "rule" dealt a severe blow to a medium budget local team, Bhratri Sangha. At the end of the 1979 League it found itself among the last four teams in the first division. Relegation to the second division stared it in the face. So it went to court, challenging the validity of the IFA's governing body's rights to change the regulations. Bhratri Sangha declared at Calcutta's City Civil Court that only a three-fourths majority of the IFA's general body (composed of 177 members) can effect such an amendment. It maintained that the IFA's governing body (composed of 34 members) did not have the power to make the alteration. The court upheld this, giving an ad-interim order of injunction restraining the IFA from enforcing the amendment.

The Sangha won the first round convincingly but the IFA filed a suit in the Calcutta High Court, challenging the order of the lower court. The judgement once again went in favour of Bhratri Sangha. It said, among other things: "Taking the prima facie of the matter, we cannot help but observing that there is hardly and substantial ground which would prompt us in disturbing the order of the Learned Judge of the Court below."

The IFA's dynamic and affable secretary, Mr Ashok Ghosh, is naturally worried about the League's prospects. On May 21 he told me: "We have left it to the (IFA) president to decide whether we should go to court again or not. If he decides not to appeal in a higher court, the League may start at the end of June". Mr Ghosh also pointed out: "To save time, we may divide the first division teams into two groups which will mean lesser number of matches. We may also make arrangements for staging five matches at five grounds daily. We have already forwarded this proposal to *Calcutta Police.*" ■

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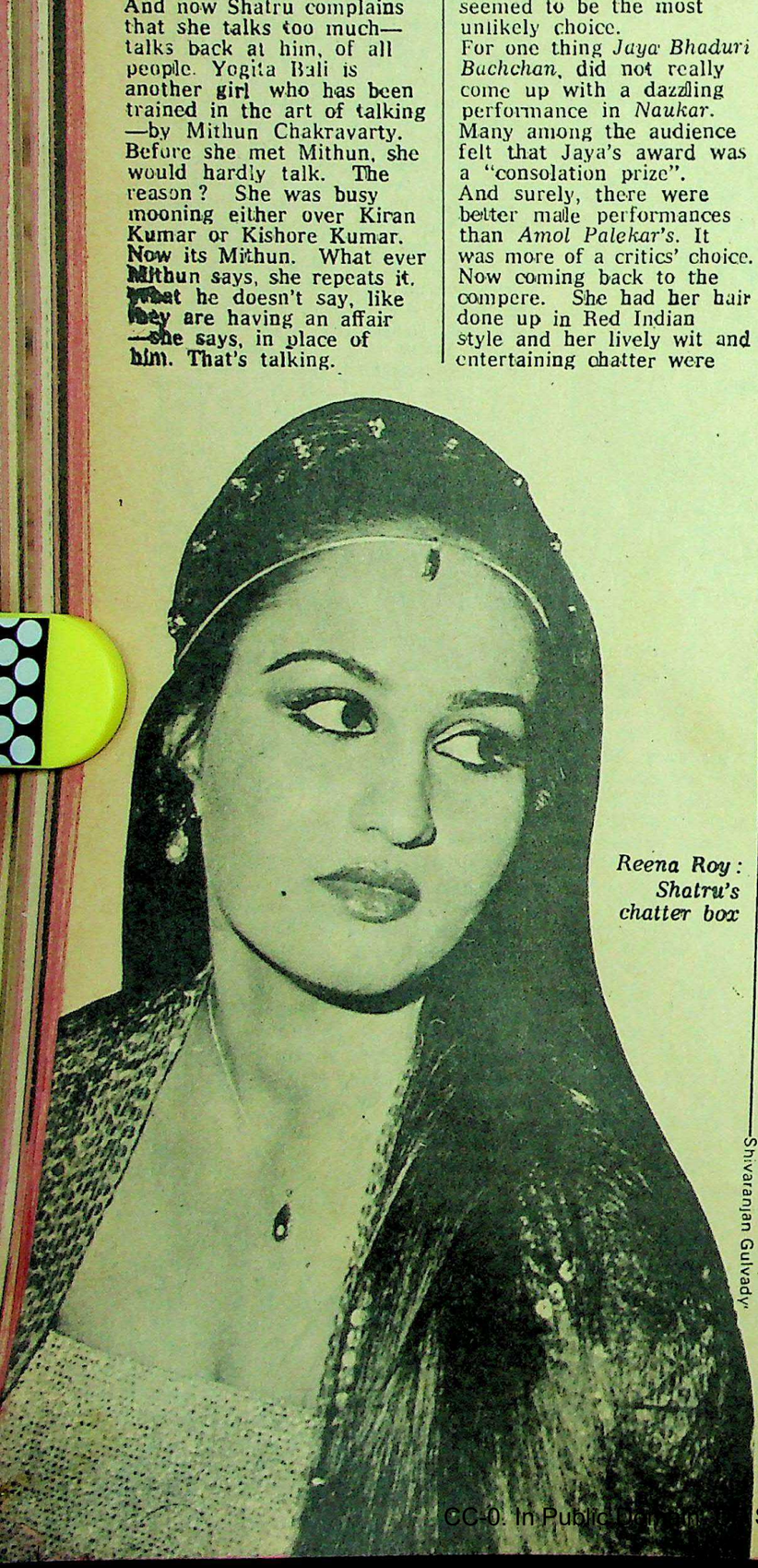
SHATRU claims to have taught his girlfriend *Reena Roy* how to "talk". True, she was really dumb when she launched her filmi career and her smarter sister Barkha had to do all the talking for her. And now Shatru complains that she talks too much—talks back at him, of all people. Yogita Bali is another girl who has been trained in the art of talking—by Mithun Chakravarty. Before she met Mithun, she would hardly talk. The reason? She was busy mooning either over Kiran Kumar or Kishore Kumar. Now its Mithun. What ever Mithun says, she repeats it. What he doesn't say, like they are having an affair—she says, in place of him. That's talking.

YOU should have seen *Zeenat Aman* compering the popular Awards Nite in Bombay recently. Her way-out, knock-out looks added plenty of glamour to the occasion. The award winners however seemed to be the most unlikely choice. For one thing *Jaya Bhaduri Bachchan*, did not really come up with a dazzling performance in *Naukar*. Many among the audience felt that Jaya's award was a "consolation prize". And surely, there were better male performances than *Amol Palekar's*. It was more of a critics' choice. Now coming back to the compere. She had her hair done up in Red Indian style and her lively wit and entertaining chatter were the highlights of the show. *Rekha* sat through the event with a smirk on her face which read: "Wait till next year—that'll be the year of Rekha."



Reena Roy: Shatru's chatter box

Shivaranjan Gulvady

Mithun: Silence is silver, speech is gold

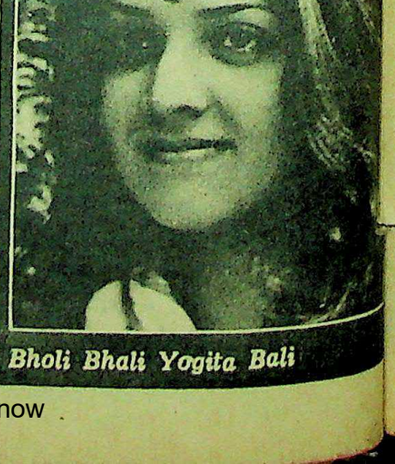
Mati Lal Mondal

BENGALI cinema has been introduced to a good combination; *Amol* and *Smita* from Bombay. A Press conference was held recently to announce the making of *Ashwamadher Ghora*, the Bengali production in which the two are cast. Smita sat throughout the conference huncned in her seat like a curious youngster. She looked as if she was brought to a party of grown-ups. The star was gaping at everyone and everything with a wonder-struck look. But she will come alright in the movie. Her off-screen crumpled looks are now quite familiar to the glitter-world sharks.

EVERYONE knows that a male star feels embarrassed if the word gets around that he needs a wig. But who could imagine that a female star would feel equally embarrassed and try her utmost to hide the fact that she needs spectacles? Can you beat it? For specs are quite in, especially those with the new in-frames. But our little girl *Moushumi* avoids glasses like the plague. She even doesn't mind getting a squint. Maybe she believes that men don't make passes at girls who wear glasses. And that is why she has this squint and makes most of the passes herself, especially at heroes like *Vinod Mehra*.

SANJEEV is no more the biggest contender for the title of filmdom's biggest *kanjoos*. Now it's his pal *Jeetendra* who is in the running. Jeetu wrested the title from the senior, confirmed kanjoos *Rajendra Kumar*. One wonders what *Reema Kapoor*, brought up on the extravagance of the *Kapoors*, would have done as the daughter-in-law of Rajendra Kumar?

THE producer who can heave a sigh of relief is *Raj Grover*. He has finished shooting *Parveen Babi's* bit for his new film *Taaqat*. Now it doesn't matter really if she decides to chuck films for good. There was no doubt that she would complete a big-budget film like *Shaan*. But a new producer like Raj Grover would have been badly hit if she had jilted his film. ■



Bholi Bhali Yogita Bali

Shivaranjan Gulvady

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A MALAYALAM director who has more than 50 films to his credit will soon need a psychiatrist. He is convinced that his wife has become a victim to the evil spirits generated by *Balu Mahendra*. It's disgusting to listen to such stories, but they're being floated every day since *Shoba's* tragic death. Ironically, Balu Mahendra was the man who photographed his biggest hit.

THE moment *Pratap Pothen* was paired with *Sri Vidya* in two successive films, the pulp Press in Kerala started spawning gossips. "Since my *Thakara* turned out to be a record smasher, all kinds of nasty stories about me have been created. But linking my name with Sri Vidya was the limit. She's married to a very successful producer, and touch-wood, it's such an ideal relationship. Just as I was thinking how nice it's to work with a seasoned artiste like Sri Vidya the gossip mills have started grinding..." complained Pratap.

ONE cannot help admiring *Jayalalitha's* candour. When a Bombay-based journalist thought she was married to "some *Jayaram*" because she calls herself Jayalalitha Jayaram, the star not only corrected him (Jayaram happens to be her father's name) but also added that she has been going steady with the Telugu actor *Shoban Babu* for the last seven years. "I cannot marry him as he's already married," said the actress who's struggling to stage a come-back. Asked if Shoban Babu could be a help to her, Jayalalitha replied, "I'd rather try on my own." Whether she succeeds in doing it or not, one must say this much of her: that she's one actress who doesn't go around cribbing, and despite the emotional and professional upheavals in her young life she carried herself with poise and dignity.

STARS in Madras seem to have more *chamchas* and side-kicks than the ones in Bombay. Some of the enterprising ones help the upcoming stars to organise fan-clubs (called *Manrams*). They go around decorating cinema halls, screening new movies of their matinee-idols and keeping a tab of his/her box-office records. *Chinna Annamalai*, once a struggling chamcha, made his fortune when he organised hundreds of *Sivaji Ganesan Manrams* throughout Tamil Nadu. As a token of appreciation Sivaji helped him turn producer. Some of his earlier ventures including *General Chakravarthy* were hits but his most ambitious film *Dharmaraja* turned out to be the thud of the season. Annamalai must be thinking that he should have been independent long back.

THE failure of *Dharmaraja* is worrying K. R. Vijaya. Most of her hit films starred *Sivaji* and it's a long long time since she carried a film on her own shoulders.

A WELL-known psychiatrist in the city may soon go bonkers. He often gets frantic calls from fans who want to speak to Dr Rajkumar. There is one particularly lonely lady who keeps telephoning him at odd hours. The psychiatrist has been telling his callers that he is not the Kannada hero, *Rajkumar* (who resides mostly in Madras) and has an honorary doctorate. Our suggestion to the harassed psychiatrist is to add his family or caste name to the insertion in the telephone directory.

Sometime ago when the psychiatrist had gone to England, his wife was harassed by the lonely lady who refused to believe that her matinee-idol was in the UK. "I just want to hear him sing once over the phone. I saw him coming out of a studio this evening. How could he have gone to London?" she insisted.

Jayamalini: Dancing oomph girl

THE first film directed by *Lakshi Muzhalai Pattalam* is fairly interesting but since it was supervised by her 'guru' director K. Balachander, the credit for its success has gone to him.

BHARATIRAJA and his cameraman for five films, Nivas, seem to have parted company for good after producing *Kallukkul Eeram*. This film was directed by Nivas in which Bharatiraja played the hero. Will Bharatiraja act again? Right from his first venture he has been acting in his own films in the Hitchcock tradition. But if he threatens to do a full length role again, distributors may refuse to touch the film.

THE surprise hit of the season is *Oru Talai Ragam*, a film packed with new talents. The film has *Toopa* playing the heroine opposite Shankar. A college campus serves as the background for the film. This film is expected to thrill viewers of all shades.

NANDITA BOSE, the Bengali actress who was threatening to make it big in Malayalam films is sitting idle these days. What went wrong? The grapevine tells me that she was in the habit of putting on silly airs. Malayalam producers believe that since they can have more popular artistes like Zarina Wahab, why bother about Nandita?

PIOUSJI

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THE WORLD

Thar' she blows !

This Monroe was no Marilyn, however hard she might try to show herself off as one. In fact, this skirt-blowing, leg-baring girl is Constance Forslund, who is starring as the one and only Marilyn Monroe. She showed a lot of leg during the filming of *This Year's Blonde*, the first in the series of three NBC-TV presentations, based on Garson Kamin's *Moviola*, the bestseller which deals with the life of Marilyn Monroe. Ms Forslund recreated the famous skirt-blowing episode, originally taken from the movie, *Seven Year Itch*. In the film Marilyn Monroe's skirt had blown thanks to a mischievous wind, but Ms Forslund adopted a different technique to achieve the same result: she stood

on the West 50th Street Metro airshaft. And as the skirt blew, photographers lost no time.

C(anary) major

Gone are the days when birds were used to send wartime letters and messages from one place to another. Birds are now used for peaceful purposes and being trained in the arts. Indeed, in the Ukraine, a canary singing group has come into existence and ornithologists are breeding and training canaries that can sing the bass for the group. This singing group has not confined its chirping to light music but is trying its beaks at classical music too, for the repertoire includes the *Moonlight Sonata* and some Russian folk songs. One wonders who the conductor is going to be.

Royal air farce

This time it is the RAF Buccaneer nuclear bombers that do not seem to fly. During a recent exercise with the United States Air Force, one of the British bombers crashed in the Nevada desert with a broken wing caused by fatigue cracks while trying to evade some American fighters in a simulated low level air fight. The poor performance by the Buccaneers have led RAF officials to consider scrapping the entire force. This no doubt will deal a blow to Europe and the North Atlantic that would be left without the services of the highly trained squadrons till 1982.

Inscrutable ailment

That old historical tormentor of travellers—the Sphinx — is in torment. Nearly 5,000 years of harsh weather has made the Sphinx lose its beautiful neck, paws and sides. They are all crumbling and adding to the sands of the pyramids.

The hullabaloo was raised by the Egyptian newspaper, *Al Ahram* which said: "Whether we like it or not, the Sphinx is sick and his condition —despite official statements—is not reassuring". This raised a hue and cry in the Parliament. According to the newspaper the causes for the Sphinx's flaking and crumbling skin were sandstorms, wind, rain, rising underground water and pollution from cars. When the issue went to the Parliament, the Minister of Culture Mr Mansour Hasan said that there was nothing to worry about and that he was waiting for a more detailed diagnosis. Egypt was going to sign a contract with Sweco, a Swedish engineering firm for a thorough examination.

See no cleavage

There she was! Bewitching Ms Zsa Zsa Gabor in a very provocative dress with an even more plunging neckline. She arrived hand in hand with Tony Randall and together they made an odd couple for the roundup benefit of the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation at Madison Square Garden in New York City on May 9. It was only natural for the photographers to start clicking their cameras. Poor Tony Randall. Seeing all the attention the lady was getting he whipped off his huge Stetson and did the only thing he could think of: cover her neckline.

Grey-t

Japanese citizens simply do not think the same way as other people do. And it needed a Japanese to tell us that. *The Japanese Brain* is a book written by Dr Tadanobu Tsunoda of the Tokyo Medical and Dental Research Institute and according to him his countrymen's grey cells function unlike those of others. He has 20 years of research to back him up. Sound and language interpretations function differently in Western and Japanese brains. The learned doctor says that the Japanese can hear rippling water or the sound of a cricket more clearly than anyone else since Japanese brains integrate all the functions of mechanical and musical sounds. That is why, according to Dr Tsunoda, the Japanese have a priority for sentiment and culture while Westerners stress more on logic and ethics.

No queer 'ere

Times are bad for the gay community. Homosexuals can be dismissed from jobs if they are discovered to be gays, an employment appeals tribunal has recently decidid in Britain. Naturally, the gay community fears that they will face a lot more persecution in later years. The tribunal had upheld the dismissal of a 43-year-old handyman since he was supposed to have "indulged in homosexuality."

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Women mostly ignored

By S. URMILA MAJUMDAR

"FROM a political and economic point of view women in China enjoy equal positions with men. The Constitution, Party and State shows great concern for the well being for the women."

"Abortion is legal. Anyone can have any abortion like anyone can have a bad tooth pulled out."

These are two of the few statements that Mrs Hasna Jasimuddin Moudud makes about Chinese women in her book. Mrs Moudud first lets us know of her desire to study "especially the women" in China; then we discover that she devotes no more that 10 of the 89 pages in her book to the topic.

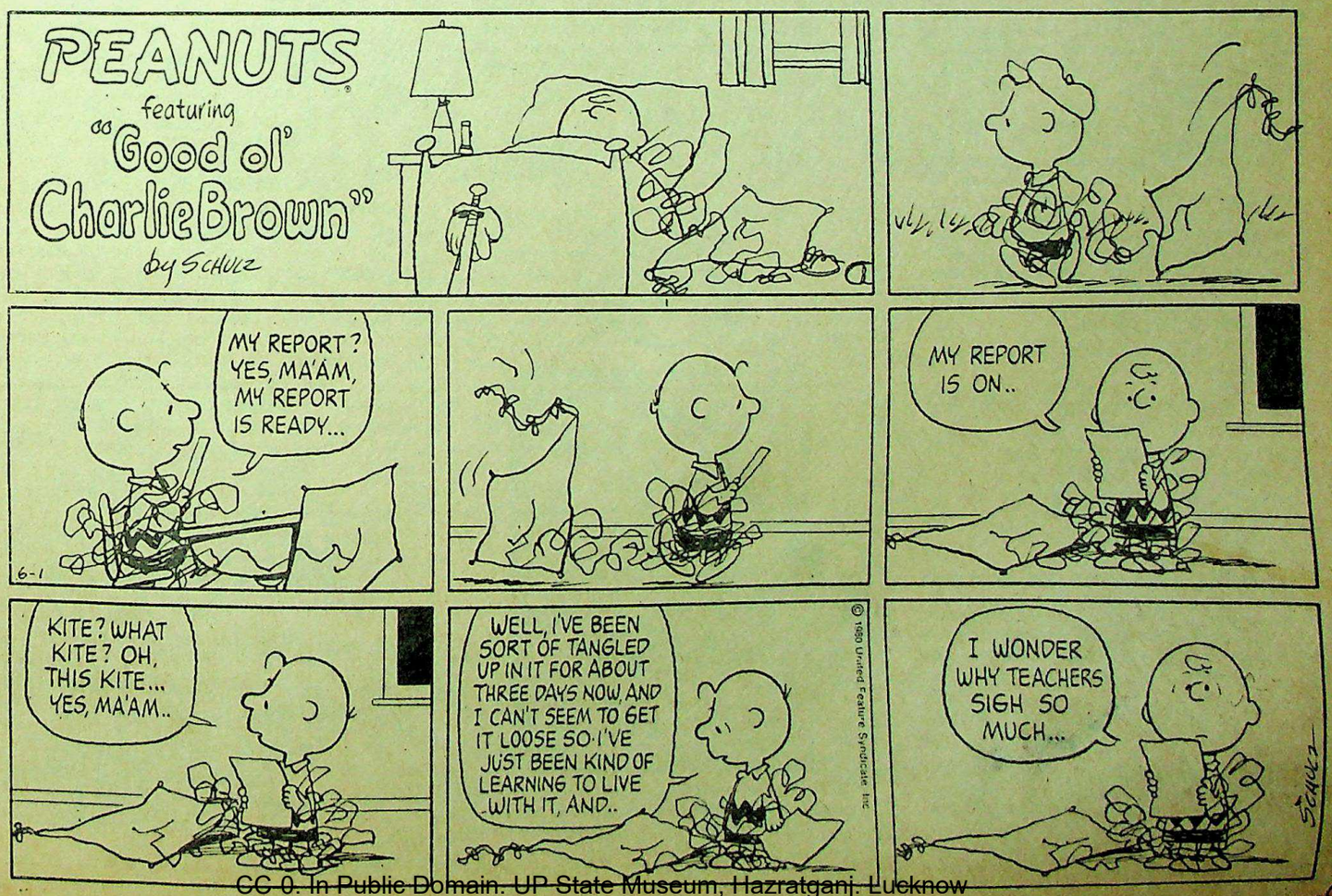
Even in the first chapter one begins to have doubts about the central theme of the book. There is a section titled 'Federation of Chinese Women' which takes up six pages, the longest passage in the entire book dealing with women in China. But all other references made by the author on the topic are confined to scattered statements. Indeed, so scanty is her treatment of women and, comparatively, so exhaustive her treatment of many other things that the book could well have been called anything from 'Nature in China', to 'China, the Land of Tea'.

The book is simply a Bangladeshi Minister's wife's diary, and not a particularly brilliant diary at that. Even the descriptions lack the insight one associates with class writing.

This is more a teenager's diary.

However, as a travelogue, the book might have some value, for the author provides details on scenic spots, folklore, the arts and cuisine of China, and succeeds in informing us, albeit en passant, that the post liberation period has provided women with better opportunities in all spheres of activity.

(Women in China by Hasna Jasimuddin Moudud. Vikas. Rs 45)



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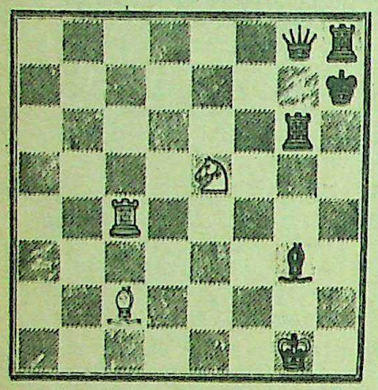
chess

K. A. Mikaze (Black) to move



Harry Kiri (White)

THE Japanese grandmaster K. A. Mikaze can get himself mated from almost any position with remarkable speed. Take the position he reached as Black against Harry Kiri in the Yokohama League last month. Harry, who loves to sacrifice his pieces, had already sacrificed most of them by the time they reached the position in the diagram. He would have resigned long ago, but he knew of Mikaze's reputation.

While Mikaze (Black) was thinking about his move, Harry spotted that if it were his (ie White's) turn he could try 1. R—K4 whereupon Mikaze might find 1. . . R—N2 allowing 2. R—KR4 double check and mate. He then noticed that the fact that it was Black's move in the position made it much more difficult for Mikaze to walk into a mate in two. But Harry was underestimating his opponent's resourcefulness.

Mikaze moved. Harry hadn't expected this one and thought for a long time over his reply, which made his opponent very impatient, so much so that when Harry eventually did make his move, Mikaze banged down his reply without thinking. Harry glanced at the board and coolly delivered mate in one!

How did the game end?

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THE Italians showed more enterprise than their American opponents on this deal from the qualifying round of the world championship last year. With better inspiration in the play, they might have gained points instead of losing them.

Dealer, North. Game all.

	♠ Q 10 9 3 ♥ — ♦ J 8 4 ♣ A J 10 6 3 2	
♠ 7 6 5 ♥ 8 7 5 4 ♦ 9 6 3 2 ♣ K 5	N W E S	♠ A K J 8 4 2 ♥ 9 3 ♦ K 7 ♣ Q 8 4
	♠ — ♥ A K Q J 10 6 2 ♦ A Q 10 5 ♣ 9 7	

When Lauria, for Italy, opened One Spade, Soloway overcalled with Four Hearts and played there. This was the bidding at the other table:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Franco	Kantar	De Falco	Eisenberg
—	—	No	1♠
dble	No	3♣	No
3♠	No	3NT	No
4♥	No	5♣	No
6♥	No	No	No

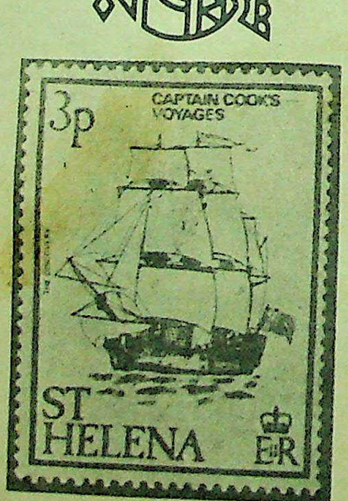
West led a spade. South ruffed, drew trumps, and led a low club, on which Kantar smartly played the King. De Falco won with the Ace and used his only entry to lead the Jack of diamonds. Eventually he had to lose the fourth round of diamonds to West's 9.

It would have been slightly better play for declarer to duck the first round of clubs. The best exit for West is a second club to dummy's Ace. South knows the heart distribution and can read East for ♣ Q x x. If he can judge that East holds six spades, then he must be 6-2-2-3 and the right card from dummy is a low diamond, not the Jack.

Winning Card Play, by Hugh Kelsey (Gollancz Master Bridge Series, £5·95), is thoroughly workmanlike, as one would expect. Casting no aspersions, for great minds think alike, it did strike me that the format and contents bore a cousinly relationship to Dormer's and my 'Play of the Cards'. **Improve Your Opening Leads**, by Hugh Kelsey and John Matheson (Gollanz, £3·50), contains none of the usual sterile injunctions but a series of instructive problems, with the full deal slown in the answer. In a quiet way, one of the best of recent books.

TERENCE REESE

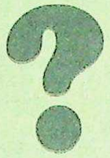
stamps



It is almost a century since Captain Cook first appeared on a postage stamp. A series issued in New South Wales in 1888 to mark the centenary of the colony included a 4d stamp showing his portrait. Since then hundreds of stamps have been issued in his honour, most of them in the Pacific islands which he visited during his three voyages of exploration. The Discovery, one of the two ships in which he made his last expedition, is featured on a recent stamp from St Helena.

C. W. HILL

quiz



QUESTIONS

1. When did the CIA officially come into being ?
2. What is eurhythmics ?
3. Which is the first English anti-novel ?
4. What is the currency of Guam ?
5. What is a keratometer used for ?
6. What is a frame-story ?
7. What is a Sijo ?
8. Who was the first swimmer to win three individual titles in the Olympic Games ?
9. Which is Federico Fellini's first movie ?
10. What is the 'Autumn Sonata'?
11. Why is chamber music so called ?
12. Who is the pioneer of the Expressionist movement in music ?
13. What are the names of the satellites of Neptune ?
14. What is Tossing the Caber ?
15. What is trampolining ?

ANSWERS

1. September 18, 1947.
2. The art of interpreting music through body movements.
3. Sterne's Tristam Shandy.
4. The US dollar.
5. An instrument for measuring the curvature and diameter of the cornea.
6. A story which contains one or more stories.
7. A Korean verse form, chanted to the accompaniment of music.
8. Debbie Meyer of the USA who won the 200, 400 and the 800 metres freestyle at the 1968 Mexico Olympics.
9. The white sheikh (1952).
10. An Ingmar Bergman film.
11. Because it is music for small instrumental groups and best heard in small rooms, not in a hall.
12. Arnold Schoenberg, a German musician, in 1910.
13. Triton and Nereid, discovered by W. Lassell in 1846.
14. It is a sport in Scotland where a tree trunk is tossed.
15. A sport involving a series of bounces in air off a sprung-nylon webbed bed supported on a frame.

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"I love your 'V.I.P.' As a true Greek Orthodox, I fall for everything with the Classic line!"

It was a beautiful beginning. That spontaneous compliment to Classic, our prestige moulded luggage range, was all we could have hoped for.

But that was Delphina Mixopoulous.* A mixture of old-world Oracle and jet-setting beauty.

"Your 'V.I.P.' will go places" she said, in the same occult tone.

"It already has" we said confidently. "'V.I.P.' goes to 48 countries around the world!"

"I'm sure I've taken it to 49—at the very least!" quipped the shipping heiress who found it difficult to stay away from water. Even on land.

"The most beautiful thing about 'V.I.P.' is its clean line. Classic—that's a good name for it."

"We also have another range —Travelite" we informed her.

"Some people can travel light", she shrugged, "Me, I take along a dozen suitcases or more. All Classics."

"Of course, I always take a bit of Greece with me wherever I go—just in case. I feel a little homesick," she confessed. "So I choose the 'V.I.P.' blue of the Mediterranean sky, the green of the olive groves and the gold of the Grecian sunshine..."

"We've built one of the largest luggage factories in the world" we said modestly.

"That's splendid" she enthused. "We Greeks love monuments to everything. Even success."

"Of course" we said, "in today's world, practicality is important. So we build our 'V.I.P.'s really tough."

"That's how they survive all my Epic voyages" she exclaimed with an admiring smile. "My next Odyssey is to Africa...and I've got my 'V.I.P.' suitcases packed and ready for it."

"We're sure you'll like our Carry-ons" we said.

"Well" she joked, "there are some who say Greeks love to carry on. Regardless! That, of course, is another of those Greek Myths."

"We hope you will return to India soon" we said.

"Nai! Nai!" she replied. "I most certainly will! I've got to visit so many good friends. Like you."

Seeing our confusion she explained that 'nai' was 'yes' in Greek. Now, you know how the expression talking Greek arose!

We said a regretful goodbye, observing that nobody could now talk about the Greek influence in India and think only of Alexander the Great!

* *To protect the privacy of our 'V.I.P.' customers, it has been necessary to conceal their actual identities.*

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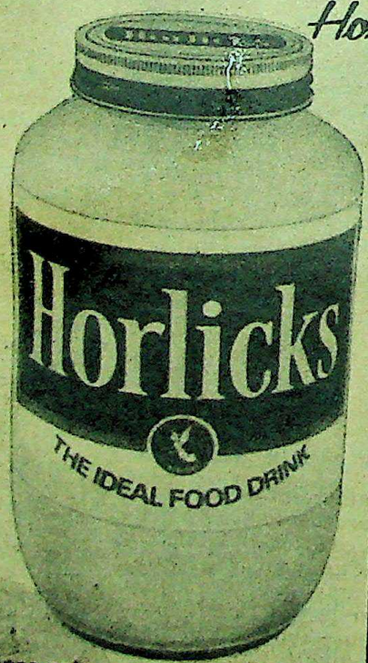
Most mothers are concerned about their children getting enough nourishment. But not Suchitra...

"That's because I give them Horlicks every day. Ever since my doctor recommended Horlicks, I've made it a daily habit for my children. I know Horlicks helps them stay fit and healthy.

Are you a Horlicks mother too?"



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Beginning June 1

This week the Sun alone is in Taurus. Mercury and Venus are in Gemini. Jupiter, Saturn, Rahu and Mars are conjoined in Leo. Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio. Kethu alone is in Aquarius. The Moon will be moving through Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces from Sagittarius.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) This week your affairs make good progress despite some anxiety and annoyance. Your health may need an extra care. Much will depend on how you make the decisions. Your family life may create problems which may in turn affect the financial front. Check all extravagant tendencies. Wait for important letters before taking a decision. You will make new friends. **Good dates:** 3, 5 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 3. **Favourable direction :** South.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) In the early part of this week you will gain on the financial front. Favours from high authority are likely. Elderly relatives will prove helpful, but money-matters need careful handling. Guard yourself against extravagance and imposition. Eschew speculation and avoid changes. A friend from the opposite sex may betray you. **Good dates :** 1, 2, 3 and 4. **Lucky numbers :** 1, 10 and 5. **Favourable directions :** West and South.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) This is an important, eventful week for you. Property-dealings and speculation are well-signified. A good time for romance and marriage. Go for all kinds of changes. Women folk may prove helpful but they may hinder progress. You may get entangled in needless quarrels. But gains on the financial front are predicted. A secret matter will progress. **Good dates :** 2, 3, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 3, 9 and 6. **Favourable directions :** South and East.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Exercise tact and patience in all your business transactions. Seek and act upon the advice of the elders. Guard against disputes. Avoid change. Safeguard your health and that of your family. Do not throw discretion to the winds. Be cautious in speech and correspondence. A sudden sickness may upset your plans. Keep your temper under control. Take care of your valuables. **Good dates :** 2, 4 and 7 **Lucky numbers :** 1 and 8 **Favourable direction:** North.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) New friendships and pleasant relationships are likely. Your own health and that of your family will improve. This week is favourable for marriage and dealings with elders. Make hay while the sun shines. You will gain on the financial front in unexpected ways. A good time for travel. Letters from distant places will gring good news. A friend may betray you. **Good dates :** 1, 4 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 4, 6 and 8. **Favourable direcitions :** East and North-west.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Moderate success in money-matters is predicted. But do not be careless in business interviews and correspondence. New friends enter your life and contribute much to your happiness. Children and womenfolk may cause some anxiety. Guard against over optimism. If you are careful, luck will surely smile on you. **Good dates :** 2, 4, 5 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 3, 7 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North-west and South.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Success on certain fronts is predicted. You will gain financially, often unexpectedly. But guard against deception from women folk. Do not enter into arguments with colleagues. Postpone courtship and marriage. Concentrate more on business affairs. Adopt novel methods for success in business. Wait for important letters. **Good dates :** 1, 2, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 1, 2 and 3. **Favourable direction : West.**

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) This week may be somewhat disappointing. Problems on the financial front and complexities in business are likely. But new friendships will contribute to your happiness. You need patience and self-confidence to get through the difficulties. Seek and act upon the advice of friends and elders. Your own intuition should also prove very helpful. **Good dates :** 4, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 8 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You will experience a strange mixture of good and ill fortunes. Meet unexpected loss and anxiety with courage. Postpone courtship, marriage and other changes. Do not be careless in your business affairs. Eschew doubtful friendships and concentrate on your profession. A new friend of the opposite sex will contribute to your happiness. **Good dates :** 3, 5, 6 and 7. **Lucky numbers :** 1, 5 and 10. **Favourable directions :** West and North.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) You will have an active, happy and successful week. You will prosper in business. Good fortune on all fronts is predicted although you may be faced with disagreements. Curb impetuosity and check irritations. Push your affairs to the utmost. An old friend will come to your rescue. Check all extravagant tendencies. Do not gamble for high stakes. **Good dates:** 3, 4, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 3, 4 and 8. **Favourable direction:** East.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Success and happiness will be your portion this week. This week is favourable for love, marriage and other auspicious events. You may have to go on a pleasant journey. You will go through beneficial changes. Success of your children is predicted. Intellectual and artistic activities will keep you engaged. New friendships are also likely. **Good dates :** 1, 2, 3 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 2, 4 and 9. **Favourable direction :** North.

PISCES (February 23 — March 20) Success, good fortune and happiness are predicted. You will benefit through elderly women and business colleagues. Your own originality and business acumen will also help you to succeed. You will gain through unexpected sources. Friends from the opposite sex will prove helpful. Watch your finances. **Good dates :** 1, 3, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers :** 4 and 8. **Favourable direction : South**

M. B. RAMAN

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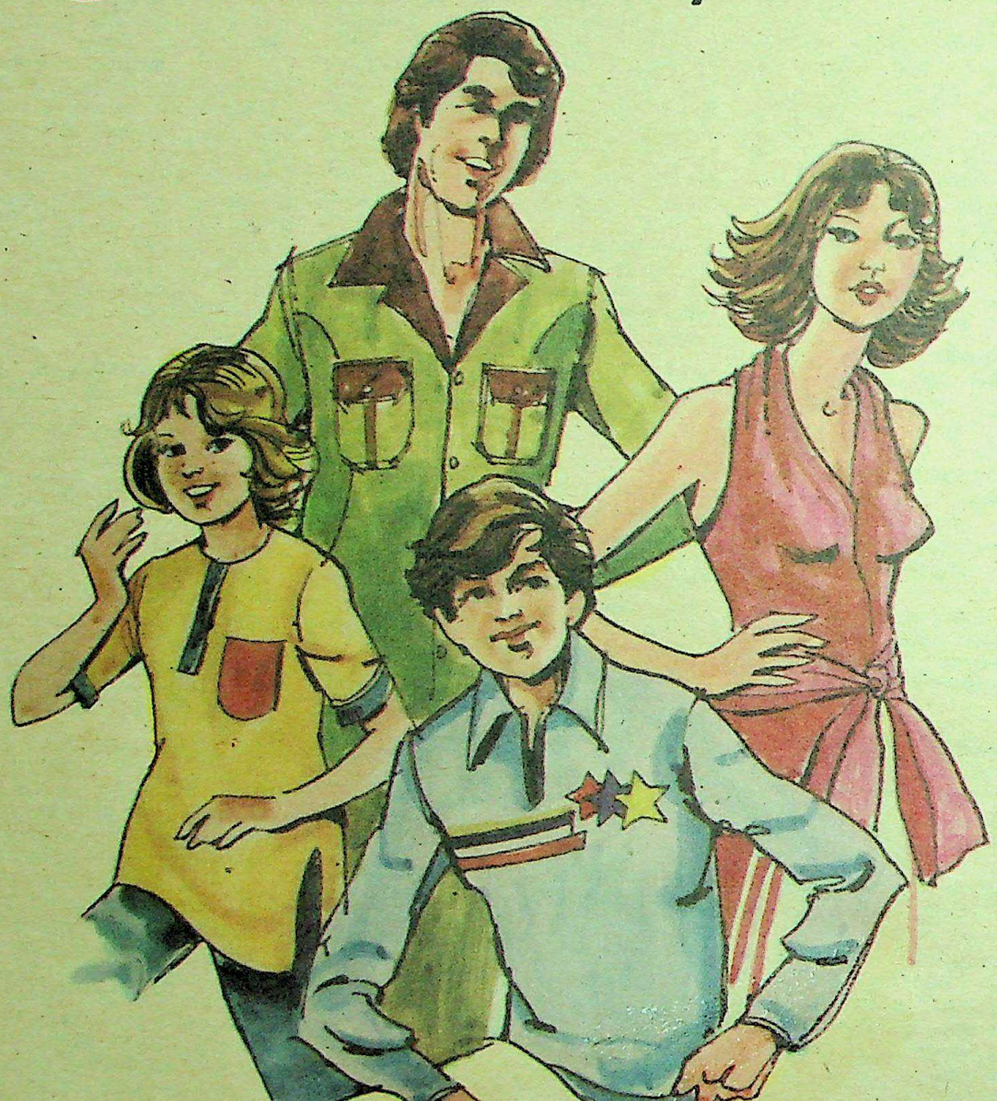
Summer boon

from Binny



Bold and pastel colours. In genuine polyester blends. Soft sheer fabrics ideal for blouses and dress materials. We've got them all in our special summer collection.

Ask for our New Apsara, Loyal Skipper and Snow Peak in 80/20 blend. Viking in 50/50 and Triple Bee. Remember, Binny gives you only genuine polyester blends. Besides, we also offer you a variety of designs.

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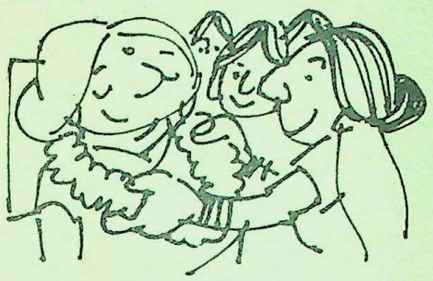

CALCUTTA: The ladies compartment of the Bandel-Howrah Local was the venue of a unique farewell meeting on Friday (May 16) morning. The recipient was Mrs Hemlata Devi, a school teacher who had been travelling in that train daily for the past 42 years. The participants were her fellow commuters, women going to work in Calcutta. Friday was her day of retirement when she boarded the train for the last time. The meeting was perfect in every detail, supervised by Mrs Sovana Ghosh, a senior member of the commuting fraternity. Another senior member was elected president of the meeting. There was an opening song and speeches recalling Mrs Hemlata Devi's long association with the early morning journey every day. She was given presents and a scroll. Then with the closing song the function was over—a function that not many perhaps knew about, but those who did would remember for ever—*The Statesman* (D. N. Chopra, Ranchi)

COCHIN: An institute awarding fake diploma certificates in medical laboratory technology has been unearthed, city police claim. The institute has for the past three years been selling diploma certificates, purported to have been issued by leading doctors along with character certificates and record books to "trainees" to meet the growing demand for medical laboratory technicians in Gulf countries, police said. The existence of the Institute at nearby Kaloor came to light when a "trainee" who had paid his fee for a three-month course in the morning and got his "certificate" in the evening reported the matter to the police. According to police the institute has been charging Rs 1,000 for a first class diploma certificate, Rs 700 for a second class and Rs 500 for a third class. Police took into custody the 'principal' and another person besides seizing some records and seals used by the institute — *The Hindu* (G. Sriram, Madras)

SALEM: It is never too late for Cupid, god of love, to make even a person who has lived the full three score and ten years, fall in love. This has been proved by the well attended marriage of 73-year-old Nagappan with 63-year-old Kolundai at Andikarai near Mettur last week. Nagappan, a washerman, had remained a bachelor, but Kolundai was married four decades ago but was deserted by her husband. Her only daughter is the mother of three. The two had met at a dhobi khana and it was love at first night—*The Hindu* (Chandra Manoharan, Ootacamund)

GWALIOR: An American girl sat on fast outside the Gwalior Central Jail in sympathy with the nine dacoits who have been on indefinite fast here since May 1 demanding their release. Miss Sari Bond who is impressed by the Gandhian philosophy, sat with two workers of the Gandhi Seva Ashram—*Deccan Chronicle* (Dr S. Suresh Babu, Nizamabad)

NEW DELHI: A suit pending for the last 28 years is to come up in a court here later this month for hearing of final arguments. The suit was filed on Dec. 11, 1952 under the Displaced Persons Act by the late Rai Sahib Prithvi Raj, a contractor, claiming about Rs 2 lakh from Jamia Millia Islamia University and its Vice-Chancellor for having constructed a teachers' training hostel on his land. The issues in the case were framed in 1956. The recording of evidence running into 2,300 pages, was concluded on March 30, 1971. About 15 judicial officers have dealt with the case so far. An equal number of pleaders have been replaced by both the parties. A sub-judge who initially heard the case, is now a judge of the Delhi High Court, while another sub-judge who had heard it has since retired after serving as High Court judge — *The Hindustan Times* (B. B. L. Sharma, New Delhi)

KARNAL: The Block Development office at Radaur, 50 km from here, is the scene of a drama which has become a source of amusement in the area. According to authentic sources, Mr Jawahar Lal, Block Development Officer, was transferred from Radaur and his successor, Mr Vijay Sharma, took over on May 5. But Mr Jawahar Lal got his transfer order stayed. Now both have placed their chairs facing each other in the office. Both are signing the files and giving orders. One of them has taken charge of the cash and the other has charge of the office record. The office staff are in a fix as to whom they should obey. The people of the area do not know who they should approach for their problems. Both claim to be the real Block Development Officer — *The Tribune* (R. N. Sulthan, Chandigarh)

ROORKIE: A quarrel over 50 paise cost a young woman her nose. The police said a woman demanded 50 paise from her husband here last evening. The man refused. There was an exchange of hot words and in a fit of rage the man chopped off her nose. The chopped-off nose was later handed over to the police—*Times of India* (S. R. Swamy, Tuticorin)

without comment

WHAT the Assamese want to do to the non-Assamese is, in essence, what Idi Amin did to the Indians in Uganda—Rahul Singh in *Business India*

SOME anti-nationals were active in Assam, fomenting trouble and trying to disintegrate the country's solidarity—Mrs Indira Gandhi

IT was Mrs Gandhi who had a secret pact with the former Pakistani Prime Minister, the late Mr Bhutto, during the Simla conference—A. B. Vajpayee, ex-Foreign Minister

INDIA had in no way compromised its foreign policy as a result of these two meetings (with the then Foreign Ministers of Israel and South Africa)—Morarji Desai

THIS (Mr Sanjay Gandhi's interference in the administration) should be stopped in the interests of democracy and fair administration—Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal

NOBODY can bring up anyone unless you sustain yourself. Politics is not business management—C. M. Stephen on Sanjay Gandhi's rise to power

I AM feeling very comfortable that I have nothing to do this summer—H. N. Bahuguna after quitting the Congress (I)

IT is not whether we win that matters, but the Jana Sangh should be taught a lesson—A Janata leader in Madhya Pradesh quoted in *The Statesman*

MANY of us in India tend to take Bangladesh for granted. Either we expect too much from Bangladesh or we give it up altogether—M. Dubey, the Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh

JUST like the Americans and the Chinese ,the Soviets would not want a hostile government being established along their frontiers. They may feel encircled by the USA and China and want to defend themselves—Eric Gonsalves, Secretary in the Indian External Affairs Ministry

I AM more concerned right now that they (journalists) should go on writing, because whether they write for or against, they bring more and more people to me. And once a person comes here, it is very difficult to escape—Acharya Rajneesh quoted in *Current*

I THINK I was born with a talent for humour. It isn't something I have learnt—Woody Allen quoted in *Debonair*

Illustration/Ahi Bhusan Malik

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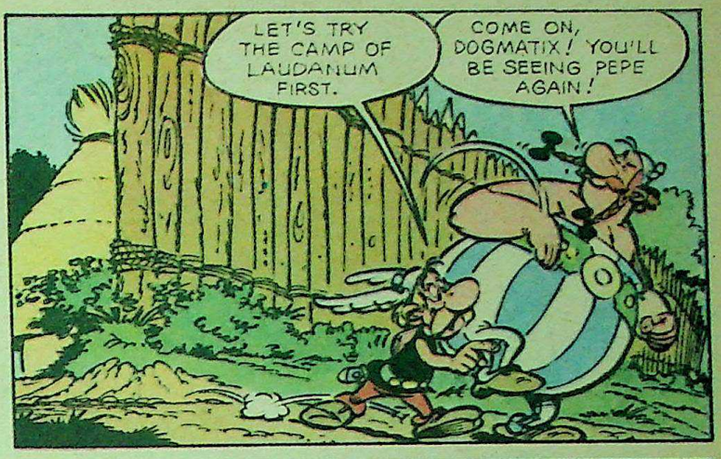

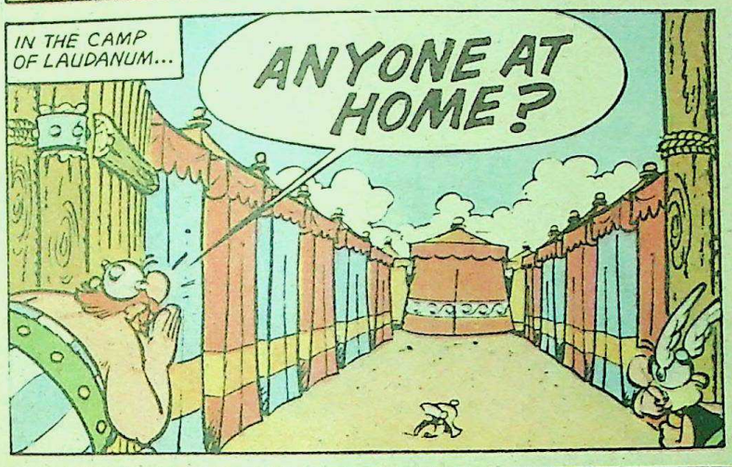

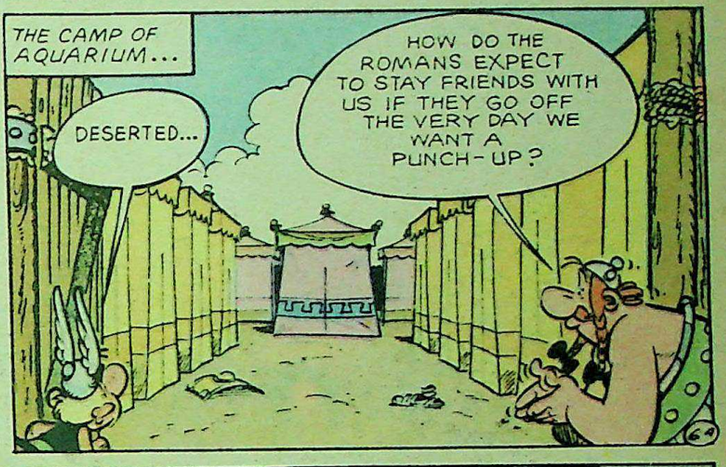

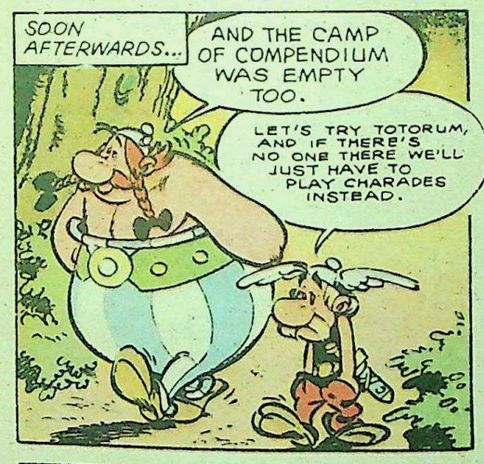

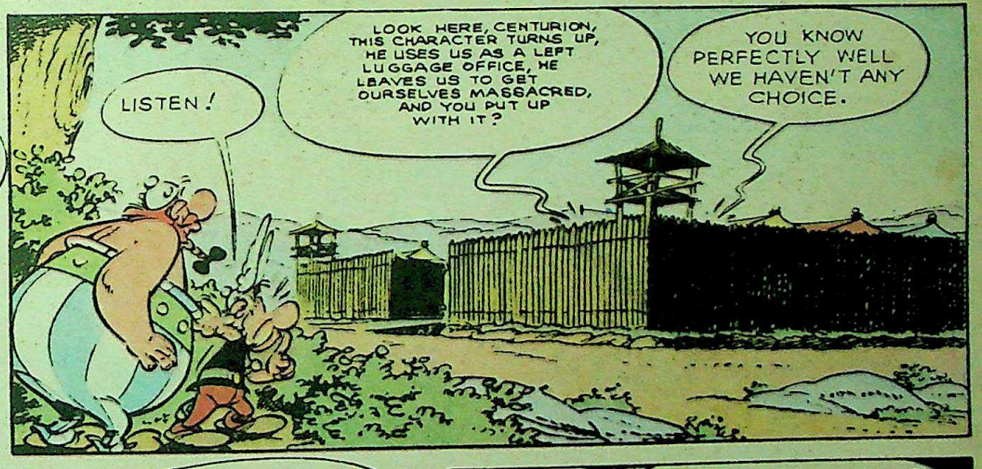

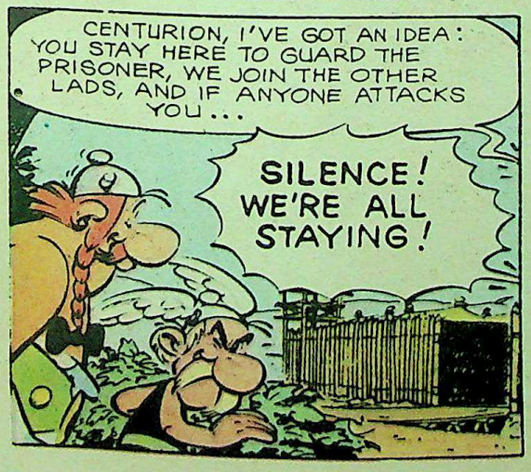

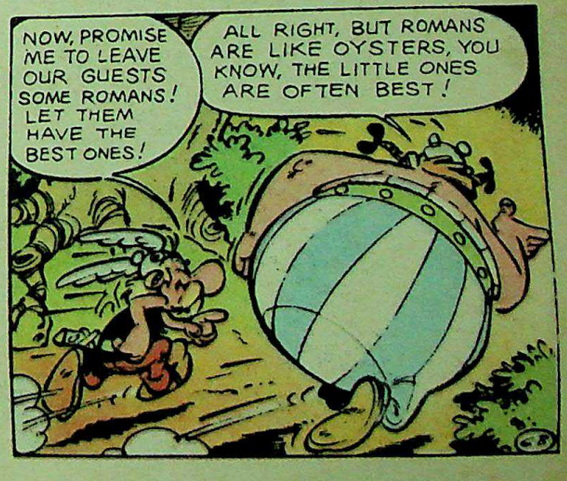

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SUNDAY NO BAR

Dharm Vir Jayner

Jagmohan

ON MAY 4, liquor shops in Delhi remained open for the first time on a Sunday after many months. Under Morarji Desai the capital had more dry days in a year than wet ones. In the new policy announced recently, the number of dry days has been drastically reduced and Sundays have been spared from the 'dry' net. But the initial happiness on the part of liquor enthusiasts of Delhi was shortlived. Though the state-owned liquor shops were open on May 4, there was no beer or whisky available. In some shops only brandy was available: hardly a cheering drink for a hot summer day. For a few days following the "relaxed" liquour policy, only empty liquor shops were open in the capital because the wholesalers were holding on to their stocks, hoping for a hike in the prices. Actually, none of the top people in the Union Territory of Delhi, who are responsible for the implementation of the liquor policy—Lt. Governor Jagmohan, Excise Commissioner Jagdish Sagar, and the chief executives of the two government agencies responsible for liquor distribution, K. N. Sahani and B. Chatterjee—drink. But shouldn't they be a little kinder to their elbow-bending brethren ?

SHIFTING FORTUNES

MANY government servants had been under a cloud during the days of the Janata raj, but now it is perhaps the turn of others. Ramanathan, press officer to Charan Singh when the latter was Prime Minister, is now posted as a deputy press information officer in charge of photo features in the Press Information Bureau of the government. He was recently given a notice by the government to "explain his conduct" during the Lok Dal regime although he was posted to the Prime Minister's office on government orders. Another unfortunate man is H. C. Bhargava, a senior superintendent of police posted with the Intelligence bureau. He was the man in charge of dealing with top opposition leaders like Nanaji Deshmukh during the Emergency. During the Janata raj he was entrusted with the task of carrying out a raid on Mrs Gandhi's farmhouse at Mehrauli, on the outskirts of Delhi. As a result he has now been given marching orders from the capital and shunted off to Kohima. Professional hazards, perhaps.

DONNING NEW COLOURS

THE University of Delhi, which has on its rolls nearly one lakh students, has got a new vice-chancellor, Gurubaksh Singh, who comes from the Benaras Hindu University. The pro-vice-chancellor's post has gone to P. C. Mukherji, a 59-year-old retired don from Calcutta. Mukherji, a former principal of Presidency College, Calcutta, had worked with Gurubaksh Singh at the Central University, Hyderabad, a few years ago. Two other important posts of the University, having ranks equivalent to that of the pro-VC, — the Dean of Colleges and Director, South Campus, have gone to youngsters in the University fraternity. P. L. Malhotra (42) the younger brother of Lt. Governor Jagmohan, has been appointed the Dean of Colleges. Malhotra had been the principal of the College of Vocational Studies which has a student strength of around 400 and is one of the smallest constituent colleges of the University. If Malhotra has superseded many, then so has Abid. Ahmed (41) of the business studies department, who has bagged the prestigious South Campus directorship. So far Delhi University—despite many agitations by students, teachers and the karmacharis—has been able to maintain its reputation of being a university which conducts its examinations regularly and where academic years begin and end on time. One only hopes that the Benaras and Calcutta University culture will not be 'imported' to the University along with the dons.

NOTEWORTHY

TAILPIECE : Overheard at a bureaucratic gathering in Delhi: There is a new nursery rhyme for bureaucrats.

All Joint Secretaries to prepare three notes; one for the Minister one for the dame and one for the little boy who lives down Safdarjung Lane.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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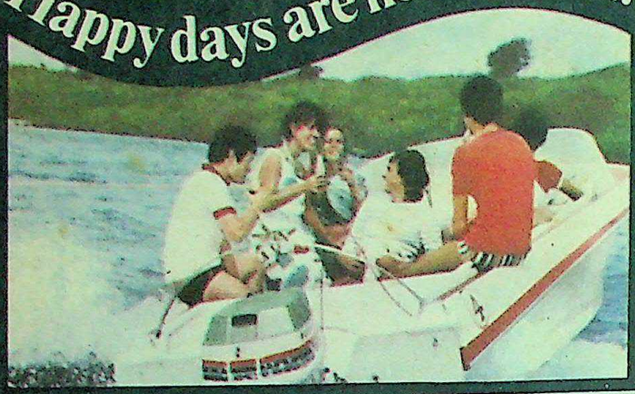
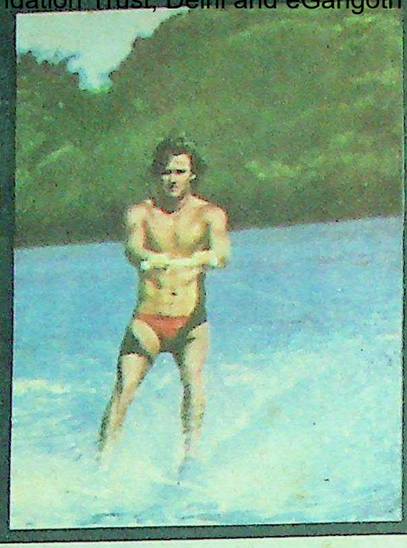
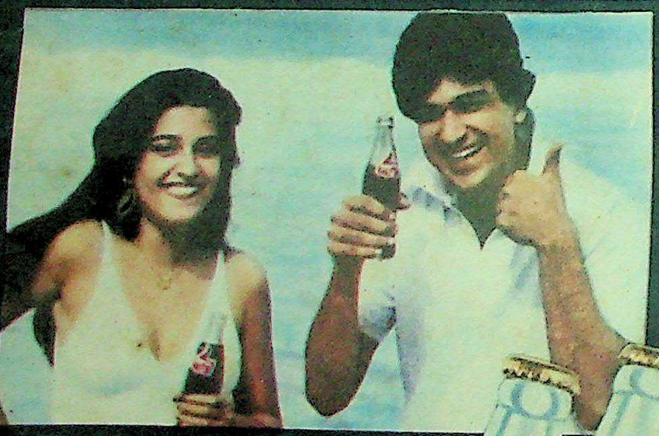
Sunday Weekly 25 May 1980

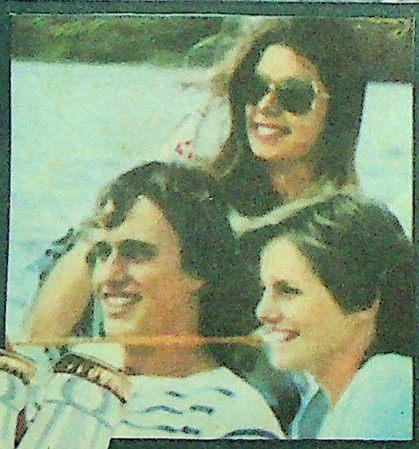
Happy days are here again...





Everybody is feeling great on Thums Up.





Thums Up

The refreshing Cola

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24 AUGUST 1980 AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION Rs 1

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SUNDAY

OUR CALLOUS RULERS
BY CHANDRA SHEKHAR

ID: DAY OF DEATH

Police trying to prevent photographer Kamal Sahai from taking a picture of a Muslim youth whom they had beaten up mercilessly in Moradabad

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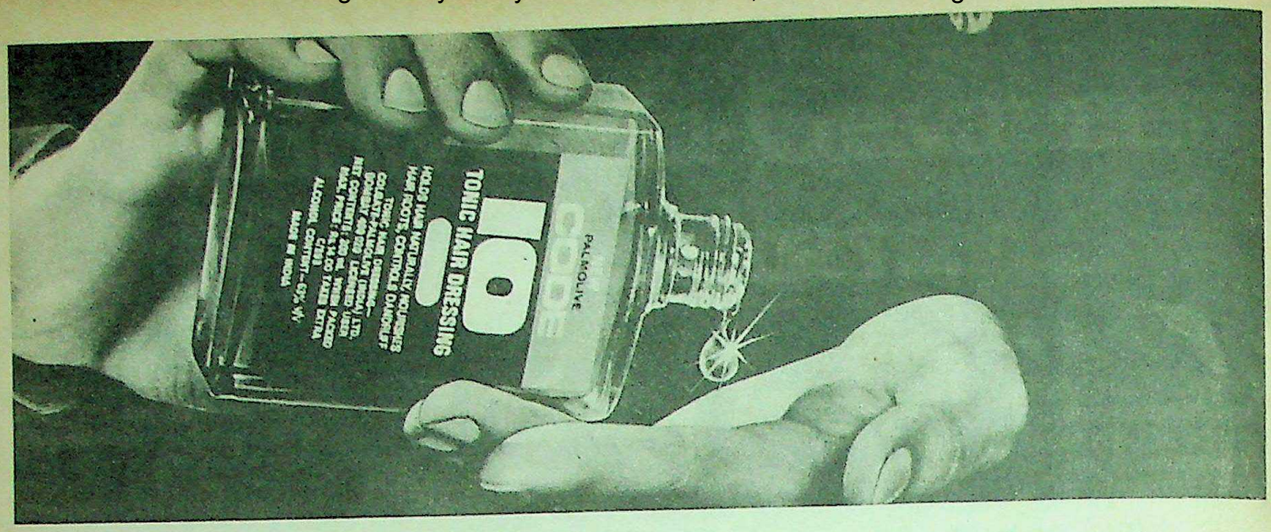

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SUNDAY VOLUME 8 ISSUE 7 RUPEE ONE AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

August 24, 1980

At Moradabad, Id Day turned into a day of death when police, who have virtually become a symbol of repression and atrocities in UP, opened fire on Muslims who had gathered for prayer. Hundreds of people, including children, died and the BSF had to be brought in to control the situation. The Moradabad massacre, in turn, triggered off communal tension in other parts of UP. M. J. AKBAR visited Moradabad for an on-the-spot report. Page 6

There is a new hope for peace in the strife—torn north-eastern state of Mizoram, with the Mizo National Front chief Laldenga signing truce with the government of India. The accord, effective from 31 July midnight, is the outcome of a fascinating chessgame Laldenga and the government of India had been playing since 1966. A blow by blow account of that game and an exclusive interview with Laldenga. Page 20

The second Indian film to go to Cannes, after Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*, *Ek din Pratidin* has been hailed as Mrinal Sen's best. PRITISH NANDY and AIN RASHEED KHAN review the film which portrays Bengali middle-class values. Page 30

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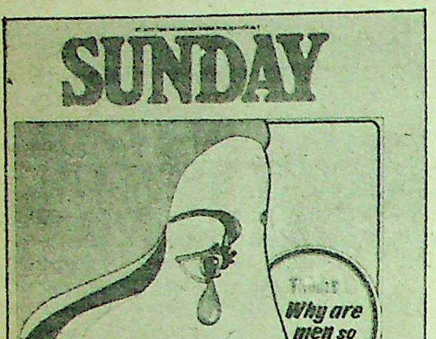

Manu's cruel curse

"HOW men exploit, abuse women" (27 July) by Saumitra Banerjee is an article which has been written, read, will be commented upon and then forgotten. Likewise, many articles have been written, read and forgotten. Isn't there really anything that can stop all these disgraceful and disgusting crimes and make society absolutely safe and peaceful for women? After all this hue and cry, has anything been done about the conduct of policemen? At least 70 per cent of reported atrocities on women are mainly due to policemen or police connivance.

Probably there is something terribly wrong with our society and culture. I wonder why there has not been a woman writer like Manu to define the role of woman vis-a-vis her husband and society, and that of man. If Manu were a female, the situation today would have been very different indeed !

Uma Chawla, Calcutta

THE issue on women was highly commendable. The highbrows once said, reminding all, that:

Woman was made—
not from man's head, to be above him;
not from his foot, to be stamped by him;
but from his side to be equal to him;
from near his heart to be loved by him;
and below his arm to be protected by him.

Rumki Roy, Rourkela

OFTEN it is we women who are our worst enemies. Are not mothers-in-law and women constables responsible for the torture of women too?

Indu Dalabehara, Calcutta

YOUR cover story will go a long way to making up the minds of most male intellectuals who complacently believed that women are themselves responsible for the atrocities on them. The immediate need of the day is an accommodative attitude towards women; bringing up a daughter should not be any more difficult for parents than bringing up a son.

S. Ramesh, Jamshedpur

IN THE past rape was committed but never came to light. Recently the Press has paid the attention that women have demanded. The worst tragedy is that policemen are involved in the crime.

Banshidhar Pd. Rukhaiyar, Hazaribagh

RAPE is a social stigma. It seems quite pointless to listen to unending tales of woe of women who have fallen prey to lecherous crimnals, time and again.

Subhashis Ray, Puri

POPULAR film stars should be ashamed of propagating the idea of male superiority; even top actresses get at least one slap from their husbands on the screen, and rape victims of 'good character' almost invariably commit suicide. With such constant brainwashing through films, one cannot but expect a reversion to the days when a woman was tested in fire for the fault of being abducted. Ms Nargis Dutt, instead of condemning Satyajit Ray for projecting reality, should use her influence to check this trend.

Balamani Bezbaruah, Jorhat

Home was hell

I READ Mira Savara's account of "Wife beating: violence in the middle class family" (27 July). I myself have been badly affected by incidents of wife-beating in my own home. I come from an upper middle class family. I have seen my parents quarrelling day in and day out ever since I was a little child. My father was a very hot-tempered person and at times he had good reason to be angry. But the manner in which he treated my mother was unjustifiable: he would abuse her, her mother and father and also physically assault her, resulting in some injury at times. When my mother physically retaliated, he would complain about her to others as though violence was his sole right. We were silent witnesses to all this. The impact of my early years left me a very nervous person for the rest of my life, a handicap which has severely affected my personality, career and, above all, peace of mind. I realised this after going through psycho-analysis and psycho-therapy which eventually saved me from becoming a nervous wreck. Now when I see the same recurring, I am moved and curse my father for having been the cause of it all.

In a home where the wife is not respected by the husband, children lose respect for their parents and tend to behave similarly after they are married: the same story is repeated with the grandchildren. A woman who has been maltreated all her life develops psychological defects leading to problems of social adjustment.

Another point I would like to make is that parental traits are carried to children through environmental effects. My brother occasionally expresses his anger by throwing down plates and thinks fit to slap his wife when she makes an error because he witnessed such behaviour in his childhood. Do we women enjoy similar rights?

Anonymous

Sad commentary

"RAPE and the laws of Manu" (27 July) by Shubhadra Butalia was an eye-opener. Superbly written, the article cites some cases of women who had burnt themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, while others watched. The callous indifference with which these women were treated, especially by government officials, does not really come as a surprise when one considers a report in *Weekend Review* (2 August 1980): At an informal lunch in Delhi, a senior Union Cabinet Minister is said to have remarked, "Rape to hazaro saal se ho raha hai, aur aakhir aurat to bhogne ke cheez hai." The Minister in question was one of those to troop down to Baghpat. Even if what he said was in jest, it shows a lack of culture

Kanchan Sen, Calcutta

IT IS our duty to the victims of rape to get them married off happily; ignoring the ridiculous notion of virginity would help a great deal. In rape what does a woman lose that a man does not? Apparently, it is her "honour" in society. The idea that if virginity is lost, everything is lost should be done away with. On the other hand, rapists must be severely punished and socially boycotted.

Mahesh Kumar, New Delhi

READING our magazines and seeing our films, even normal persons would become rapists !

S.F. Sundara Raj, Tiruchirapalli

WHEN women are proving themselves to be equal to, if not better than, men in most fields, it is absolutely essential that they be guaranteed protection and safety in the interest of society.

Anjana Maitra, Rourkela

THAT was a truly emotion-charged cover story. I was shocked, angered and disgusted after reading it.

N. Ramesh, Hyderabad

MERELY creating laws will not help to check crimes on women. Such atrocities will continue as long as bourgeois society prevails. These atrocities are the poisonous fruits of capitalism: never does one come across them in a socialist country.

Marmabina Sen, Bangalore

IT IS a shame that rape, molestation and other crimes on women continue to occur when the PM of our "motherland" is herself a woman. It is high time that the Indian Penal Code was amended to treat crimes on women at par with crimes such as murder and homicide. Instead of mere suspension or dismissal the criminals should receive capital punishment.

S. Krishna Kumar, Bombay

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Shame on the law

S.N.M ABDI's report "Ordered to have intercourse with his mother" (27 July) was shocking. A worse instance cannot be cited to show how filthily the police behave with women. The fact that policewomen commit atrocities against their own sex, in a country which has a woman PM is shameful. If guardians of the law resort to such brutalities, how can the people be expected to respect the law?

R. Bhaskaran, Tiruchirapalli

WHILE your cover asks the question "Why are men so cruel?" the more pressing question, I believe, is: "Why is the government so inactive?" S.N.M. Abdi's heartrending account of the torture of Rukmini, a pregnant woman, by two policewomen would prove my point.

Ramanath Rath, Behrampur, Orissa

DESCRIBING Rukmini's nightmarish experience with the Nandini police in Madhya Pradesh, the reporter pointed out that a woman sub inspector Edna Montis and a woman constable Naseem Begum not only tortured their pregnant victim but also "picked up a pencil and pushed it violently into Rukmini's vagina" resulting in her miscarriage. Does this not show that even women are no better in treating their genre than men?

P. Balasubramanian, Salem

Remember ?

I AM surprised that Dr T.D.Goswami, general secretary of the Gauhati University Teachers' Association should in his letter (Opinion, 27 July) suppress the clarification he sought and obtained from me.

In my clarification I had pointed out that the torchlight procession had stopped in front of our family-residence at Nijarapur, Gauhati, and shouted abusive slogans like "Death to the traitor Hiren Gohain". Dr Goswami probably sees no provocation in such incidents which are not all that uncommon. Only three or four days ago a visitor to the university campus looking for my house had been badly threatened.

It is not very helpful if leaders of the present movement evade responsibility for such incidents. They might have had a better hearing if they had taken steps at the initial stage to prevent their occurrence.

Hiren Gohain, Reader, Gauhati University, Gauhati

THE general secretary of the Gauhati University Teachers' Association Dr T.D.Goswami would have done better to refute *Sunday's* findings ("Assam: Tragedy unfolds", 8 June) on the present movement in Assam than to make a futile case against the predecessor president and the executive on whole imaginary and untenable propositions. The two general meetings of the association mentioned in his letter were not in fact requisitioned and Dr Goswami can never prove the contrary. Again, the idea of a Sangram Samiti was hotly debated in the September meeting and was ultimately rejected in favour of allowing the executive committee to take decisions on the foreigners' issue.

About the charge of 'inaction' by the executive committee under my presidentship, I have no comments to offer except quoting a resolution passed by the general body on 13 September 1979: "This emergent general meeting of the GUTA expresses its appreciation of the service rendered by Dr P.Sharma to the GUTA and its solidarity with the President Dr Sharma and strongly urges upon him to accept the mandate of the members to continue in office as President."

Purna Sharma, Gauhati University, Gauhati

My word !

THIS refers to "Offensive but not unparliamentary" (27 July). So Mr Khushwant Singh is at it again. Even at the Rajya Sabha his *therukoothu* (Tamil for folk theatre, literally street act) is on. But Bhupesh Gupta is more than a match for him. The brush between the two over the definition of the term sycophant is hilarious. I'm glad the communist leader refuses to withdraw his well-founded allegation ("Not a syllable of it will I withdraw.") Bravo ! Among the various dictionary meanings Mr Singh lists he conveniently omits the most relevant one: "Sycophant, n ... Flatterer, toady; parasitic person..." (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, Fourth Edition); "Sycophant. n... a servile flatterer." (Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary). Mr Singh speaks proudly of his Gandhism. Clearly he means Indira-Sanjay Gandhism.

A.S.Raman, Editor, Swarajya, Madras

We regret that in Rasheed Talib's article, "Can Mrs Gandhi provide a national consensus?" (Sunday, 27 July), certain sections were interposed, leading to a wrong paragraph sequence. Our sincere apologies to the author and the readers.—Editor

Leaks all over

I READ "How question papers are bought and sold" (8 June). Similar incidents occurred during the first year B.Sc examinations of the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education in March this year. Most of the question papers were leaked out and the authorities did not lift a finger. On 7 April the Chemistry Paper B examination was postponed

Rajesh Kumar Gupta, Jammu Tawi

First demand: leadership

I WENT through "Are workers getting selfish?" (27 July) with particular care and attention and seriously pondered over the author George Fernandes's assessment of the situation: "Gone are the days when a fight for workers was equivalent to a fight for human values—the concept of unions as champions of workers has given way to the concept of unions as service agencies." If we read between the lines, we understand the phenomenon of degeneration of trade unions. In the analysis, many labour leaders, including Mr Fernandes, and organisations like AITUC and CITU, would be held responsible for this. There has been a gradual phasing out of the "principles of class struggle" and now even trade unions controlled by communists are the safety valves of workers' anger. The economism of workers has grown because of extremely sectarian methods of politicisation and mobilisation of workers for political advantages. In spite of all the talk of left unity, AITUC and CITU do not hesitate to use underhand methods to control each other's strongholds. Labour leaders, including George, owe us an explanation: is it not a fact that their petty rivalries have

emasculated the working class movement?

I do not blame the INTUC or BMS—they have never believed in the Marxist-Leninist organisation of the working class, or in the principle of a classless stateless society as the ultimate stage of evolution with change in production relations. But those who believe in class war and understand the precepts of revolutionary Marxism and refuse to abide by it cannot escape our criticism. Bogged as they are in their own bureaucratism and hierarchies of district committees, state committees, central committees and politburos, the communist movement is incapable of inspiring any revolutionary ideals or principles. Student and working class organisations built on class lines necessitate a revolutionary programme and a concrete theoretical analysis must precede their establishment. But because of the conformist class character of the Indian coffee house Marxists (of whom, ironically, I am one) this seems impossible.

Why is it that we have very few A.K. Roys in our communist movement, and why, in spite of his excellent work in the Bihar coal-belt, does he never come into the limelight? Marxist leaders can be seen frequenting conferences and seminars on class struggles and proletarian internationalism. Why blame workers for demanding terrycot suits? The point is obvious. If the Indian worker is losing his radicalism, it is because his leaders have failed him. Raising the red flag on May Day does not usher in revolutionary consciousness.

Sanjeev Chopra, Convener, Collective for the Resurrection of Revolutionary Marxist Traditions, Jullundur

UNEMPLOYMENT is a national problem, but many trade union demands tend to be localised. Hence asking workers to think over a national problem will not be practical. It is the duty of the national trade union leaders to make workers aware of these problems. Again, the price rise is not due to the demand for more wages or bonus. It is the profit-hungry producer who raises the prices of products. Workers demand more wages only to meet the higher cost of living.

M. Krishnan, Pondicherry

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ID: DAY OF DEATH

M. J. AKBAR reports why Moradabad's Muslims were gunned down by police on the day of Id

Once again this was a case of police brutality, pure and simple. The forces of "law and order" unleashed their fury on thousands of Muslims who had come to offer prayers on their day of joy and celebration; hundreds died, including many children, in the massacre and the stampede. And hundreds were injured; for many of them death will come. Both the Hindus and the Muslims of Moradabad are telling anyone who will listen that what happened on 13 August in their city was not a communal riot: it was a straight clash between the police and Muslims. But the police, in order to throw a cover on their brutal misdeeds, are telling lies about what precisely happened, and building up false trails that might shift the focus of attention from the incidents of the namaz. Moradabad was not communal on 13 August, but the police might have made it communal by the time this appears in print.

Kamal Sahai

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HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN AND INNOCENT NAMAZIS SHOT DEAD WHILE PRAYING BY POLICE STOP POLICE ATROCITIES AND KILLINGS CONTINUING STOP DEAD BODIES DESTROYED STOP POLICE TRYING TO TURN IT COMMUNAL STOP HINDUS ARE HELPING MUSLIMS STOP BRUTALITIES AND KILLINGS MAY CONTINUE AT NIGHT STOP PLEASE COME MORADABAD ONCE

Telegram sent by Hafiz Mohammad Siddique, Congress(I) MLA from Lalbagh, Moradabad, to the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Chief Minister of UP, and others on the evening of August 13

AFTER a long month of daylong fasting, during which not a morsel of food nor a drop of water may pass the gullet between first light and sunset, Muslims gather on their rooftops to search for that thin sliver of gold which will appear for ten minutes or so on the western sky as the sun melts into the horizon below it. This is the new moon which will announce the end of the month of Ramzan, and the beginning of the most joyous day in the Muslim calendar - the day of Id. This is the day which Muslims await: new clothes are made, presents are distributed, the sweet *sewai* is offered as a sign of friendship. The high point of Id is the *namaz*, to which Muslims go early in the morning, dressed in their new clothes, perhaps with a little *attar* in their ear. Apart from the adult women, everyone else goes to the Id prayers - including all the children, both boys and girls. The *namaz* is a celebration of God's goodness, and a reaffirmation of brotherhood, a concept which finds expression in the gesture which has become synonymous with Id - the embrace.

More than 50,000 Muslims gathered at the Idgah (the name means where Id prayers are held) of Moradabad. Sixty per cent of this city of five lakhs is Muslim, and Id obviously is one of the major celebrations of the town. Buntings with *Id Mubarak* written on them flutter from shops; painted advertisements on walls encourage you to smoke Biri 788 in the first line, and wish you happiness on Id in the last. The Idgah is a largish open field, walled on the sides, with one entrance leading to the main road. At one corner of the Idgah, near the main road, is a small mosque called EK Raat Wali Masjid, because it had been constructed decades ago in one night. As usual the Muslims came for their prayers, bedecked in their new clothes, and brought all their children along. (The desperate theorists, who are searching hard for a deepseated, widespread Muslim conspiracy against the police, might like to ponder over this point: would Muslims who came to fight bring their small innocent, children along with them to get massacred?) And, as usual, the crowd spilled over from the Idgah onto the main road, on which the *namazis* spread pieces of cloth and formed the traditional rows for the prayers.

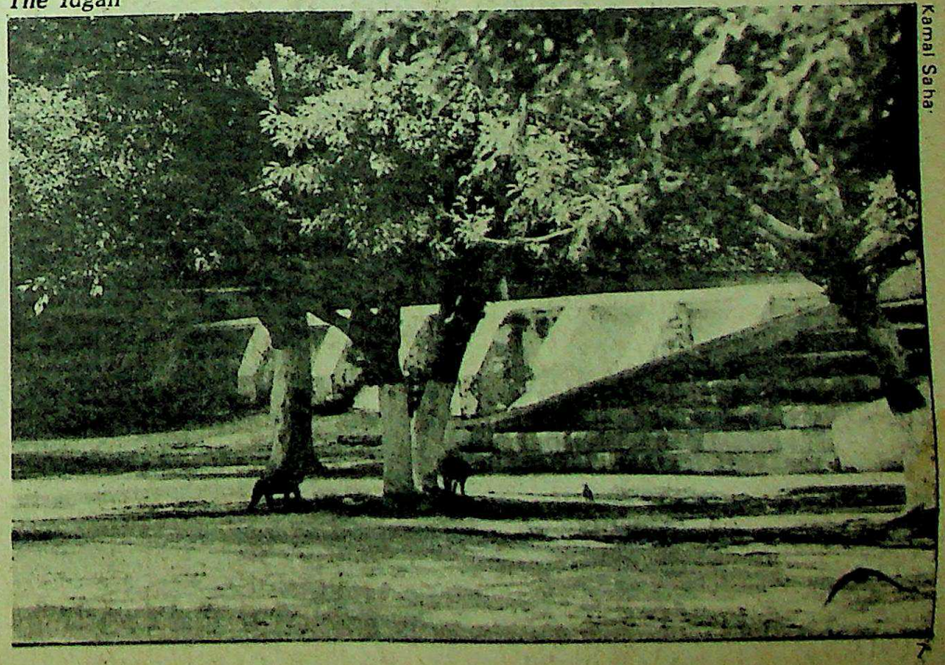
Just opposite the Idgah, across the main road, are shops owned by Punjabi Hindus, and nearby is a Punjabi colony. Various organisations had set up *shamianas* near these shops to offer Muslims Id greetings after the prayers. At every such gathering in the country, the local administration posts policemen to ensure that nothing untoward happens. Some of the force was posted at the *shamiana;* other policemen were on the main road at the point where the congregation which had spilled over onto the roads finally ended.

The *namaz* is divided into three clear sections. First come the genuflections, which take a couple of minutes during the Id prayers. Then the congregation sits and hears the Imam recite passages from the Quran: this is the *khutba*, and takes about five minutes. The whole congregation then raises its hands in *dua*, which lasts a minute or two, and the *namaz* is over. It was during the *khutba* that a pig wandered into the *namaz*.

First question: did the pig actually wander into the *namaz*? We met eyewitnesses, including one who was not a Muslim (see Tyagi's story) who confirm that it did. The dispute between the people praying and the policemen arose when the Muslims asked the policemen how the pig had wandered in despite the presence of the police. After all, prayers are being held at that Idgah for generations, and the harijan colony which is nearby has also existed for as long as anyone cares to remember: so how come a pig, which is considered by Muslims to be an unclean animal which would completely destroy the sanctity of the prayer, has never disturbed the *namaz* before, and chose to do so this year—despite a police force being right there?

The policemen told the Muslims that it was not their job to prevent pigs from disturbing the *namaz*. Therefore, question number two. Was it the policeman's job to stop the pig or not? On the face of it, it would seem a silly reason for such havoc, but only those who have no idea about Muslim sentiment would expect Muslims not to get agitated if a pig disturbed their prayers—particularly if they thought that the police had deliberately sent the animal. A friend of mine who is in politics, whose integrity I trust and whose secularism I have faith in, commented: "How can I give a statement asking the police to stop pigs from disturbing a *namaz?* Is that their job?" The only reply to that I can give is: supposing a bunch of communal Muslims took a cow in front of a temple while a huge crowd had gathered for prayers, and started to slaughter it, would it be the job of the police to stop this stupidity or not? A pig in a *namaz* is just as provocative, and every administration in the districts of Uttar Pradesh knows it. It is not a question of reason or rationale: this is simply how a community feels.

The Idgah



Kamal Sahai

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It is easy to get depressed about Moradabad. But hidden behind the filth of the violence lie certain equally important truths about the people of India and our institutions...The quiet but splendid job done by the BSF and the Army in restoring the confidence of the fear-stricken people, for instance.

Kamal Sahai

THIS altercation took place where the congregation was tapering off; and then suddenly everything began happening very quickly. Within the five minutes that it takes to read the *khutba* and complete the *dua* the police had opened fire! The *dua* was not complete before began the deathly whine of bullets speeding through or into the massed *namazis*. One person, who was at the prayer, described it thus: "During the *khutba* I heard a noise from the back. People started standing up and seeing what had happened. Then they sat down again. But before the *dua* was over, the noise of the quarrel became very loud, and then before anyone could really react we heard the sound of bullets."

The *Imam* who was at the microphone saying the *dua* stopped, and began appealing to the police to stop this madness of firing into a throng of *namazis*. Nobody listened. The local Congress(I) MLA Hafiz Mohammad Siddique, who was there, also appealed over and over again to the police—but they had gone berserk. A stampede had begun, and cries of pain filled the air as terrified children came under the feet of a fleeing crowd, as a bewildered people bagan getting hit by bullets.

The police are now telling many lies to cover up their criminal assault on a defenceless congregation, and these lies fall to pieces under scrutiny. The first lie they tried to circulate was that they were fired upon by a Muslim, and that armed Muslims were sitting at the prayers waiting to create trouble. The police killed many, many that day: did they recover any arms from anyone in that congregation? The police say, very correctly, that an SSP of theirs was injured, and claim that five constables died and four are missing. True, the SSP was injured at the Idgah, but did any of the constables die at the Idgah? Or did they die much later, when an infuriated mob of Muslims decided to take revenge by attacking the police *chowki* at Galshahid? The police also tried to create the impression that Muslims began brickbatting first and then the police opened fire. Another lie. The police opened fire within less than five minutes of the altercation; the brickbatting came later. After the stampede had started outside the Idgah, Muslim youth who saw how the police were behaving loosed the top layer of bricks from one of the walls surrounding the Idgah and started hurling them at the police. The real truth is that if the police, whatever the provocation, had simply waited another two minutes or so for the *namaz* to end, and people to get up, the carnage would never have taken place. But the police acted with communal fury.

D. P. Singh, an elderly government official who had come to wish the *namazis* Id Mubarak, was sitting at the *shamiana* which had been put up by the municipality, was hit by one of the brickbats and later died. And even as the violence became a confrontation, thousands of Muslims began fleeing through whichever way they could. The fact that the Idgah was walled became a major disadvantage. There are some Muslim houses adjacent to one wall; from these windows women hurriedly threw down ladders and children were pulled up to the windows and brought to safety. Many rushed through the one exit which seemed safe, the mosque: but the police later actually entered the mosque and fired right on the courtyard of the mosque, according to eyewitnesses. Dr Naseem Ahmed recounts that he helped pick up 24 bodies from the compound of the mosque, including 13 children.

The police created havoc. Many Muslims who were killed cannot be traced: the police have no "record" of the bodies. To give just one example: Salim Mohammad was 25 years old, and he had been married to the young Naeema just five months ago. He was a worker, who polished brass in one of the factories which have made Moradabad famous all over the world. He went to the Idgah, which is hardly five minutes away from his house, to pray; he never returned. A friend of his who was sitting near by saw a bullet hit the side of Salim's face, and Salim fell dead. This friend went to the fallen Salim, removed the only thing of value he had, a wristwatch, and brought it back for the family. (We saw the watch when we met the family: it was a poor man's watch, a brand called SIWA; it had been given to Salim as a wedding present by his wife's family.) Today Salim's body cannot be traced. His family have asked for it, but the police say they cannot find a Salim among the dead.

It was after ten o'clock that an outraged mob of Muslims attacked the Galshahid police *chowki*, in violent reaction. As one Muslim put it, "What did you expect the Muslims to do after having seen their children killed on Id? Throw flowers at policemen?" It was during this attack that policemen were killed by the mob, the *chowki* was burnt, and two rifles stolen.

BUT it is this attack by the Muslims, more than anything else, which proves that the violence on that day was not at all communal in nature. On the way to the Galshahid police post, the mob could have attacked many Hindu houses, shops and factories: they did not. Right in front of the Ek Raat Wali Masjid, right in the heart of the violence, is, for instance, the New Kumar factory for brasswork. This is absolutely within the densely populated Muslim Idgah *mohallah*, and if Muslims wanted to ransack it nobody could have stopped them from doing so. When we visited this place on August 15, Hindu workers were still living on the premises of the factory, and the factory was still safe. We met Dharam Singh, who was still staying there, and he assured us that there had been no trouble so far.

If the mob which could reach a police outpost had wanted, it could have attacked the Punjabi Hindu colony just across the road from the Idgah; or it could have raided the large harijan colony which is barely a couple of hundred yards away from the Muslim localities. But there was no attack on non-Muslims; the only target was the uniform—of the UP police or

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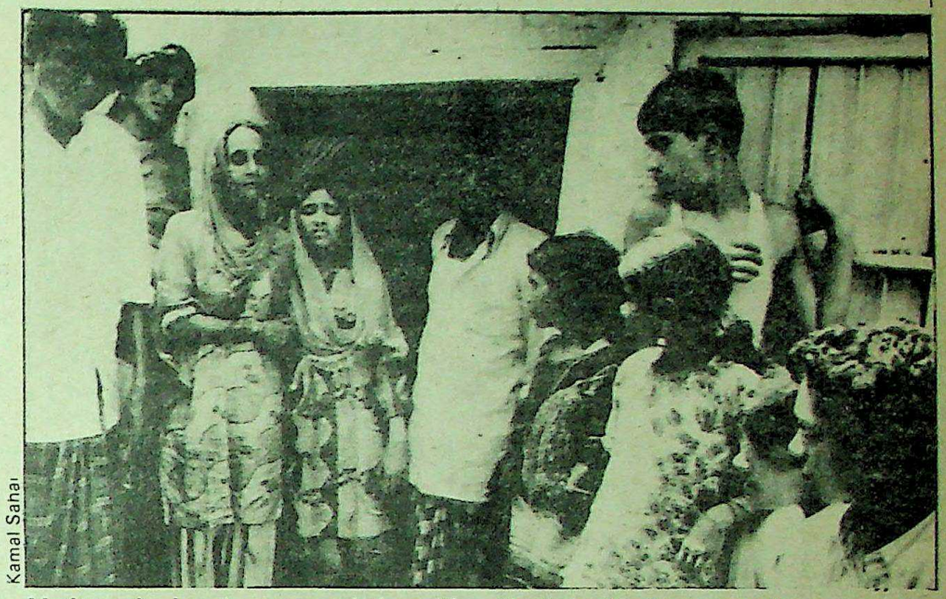
the hated PAC, which, time and again, has given evidence of its notoriety. It cannot be repeated often enough that there was no communal riot in Moradabad. There was no RSS involved; and despite all the efforts of the police to call this a Muslim League or Khaqsar instigated riot, they have not succeeded in convincing too many people. It was simply a case of the force meant to preserve law and order becoming thoroughly irresponsible. As Shamsul Islam, general secretary of the city Congress(I) commented, "There was no government." Mrs Indira Gandhi herself admitted that the administration was in a bad shape. She went on to blame the Janata and the Lok Dal governments for this, but this is hardly the point. Similarly, the opposition is blaming the Congress(I)'s use of the police to help them politically for the extraordinary arrogance of the police; but the argument is less important than the fact that we seem to be reaching a stage where the policemen are becoming a law into themselves, a force of petty dictators. The sheer contempt which the Moradabad police, for instance, was showing for the local Congress(I) MLA was revealing. Who will dare police the police? The District Magistrate and the police officer in charge on Id day have been transferred promptly, but are such transfers any real solution?

On the 14th and 15th, the police are alleged to have made efforts to give the disturbances a communal colour, to shift attention from their misdeeds. The atmosphere in the city was volatile enough. The Muslims were livid with anger, and anger is fertile breeding ground for violence. There is tension, there is fear, myths and impressions that have been buried in the subconscious begin to dance before one's eyes, and even yesterday's friend becomes suspect because he was born with a certain name. Communalists, of whom there is no shortage in our country, come to the fore to take over temporary leadership of enraged minds. Rumour is king. Creating communal trouble is not too difficult in such an atmosphere. The encouraging thing is that, by and large, both communities showed commendable restraint, given what could have happened.

Worse, the police were using "respectable" media to transfer the lies to the rest of the country. And unfortunately a few journalists (just a few; the majority, by far, were above reproach) were willing to play games. There was, for instance, the banner headline in one important national English paper which said that four BSF jawans had been killed, obviously by Muslims. The BSF itself had not given this story: and to its eternal credit, the local BSF not merely immediately denied the story, but took a special Press party to show that no one on its force had been injured in any way. This story came from, one presumes, the police, unless the correspondent literally made it up.

Communalism remains perhaps the most serious threat to our existence and integrity. There are enough people who are anti-national, who would like to see the tremendous experiment called India, born out of the faith of a saint called Mahatma Gandhi, destroyed.



Kamal Sahai

Mother who lost her son and the widow (both in the background)

Well, there *was* one story which was literally made up. A report appeared, again from a journalist who claimed to be sitting in Moradabad, that 500 armed Muslims had come from Sambhal and attacked the police headquarters. It so happened that we were at Moradabad on the 15th, the day on which this attack was said to have taken place, and everyone could see that nothing had happened to the *kotwali*. There had been absolutely no attack, from anyone. And yet this correspondent, filing a story from Moradabad, reported this attack. Similarly, the police have been trying to give the impression that there have been a great number of Hindu victims too, so that the impression may be created that this was a communal riot—but that again is simply not true. Almost all the victims are Muslims, who died or were injured during that terrible incident at the Idgah.

THERE is a saying in western UP that the people here *"hariyali ke andhen hain"* (have been blinded by greenness). This is rich and fertile agricultural country, quite different from the uncertain colours of central UP or the dust of eastern UP. This is, comparatively, a rich area; well irrigated, and the people have the confidence that comes from full stomachs. There are large populations of Muslims who have been traditionally politically articulate, and whose support means the difference between victory and defeat for a political Party.

Guns are hardly an unknown commodity. The gun is a status symbol, a weapon of defence against robbery, and a symbol of power among both Hindus and Muslims. When guns are available, they also tend to come out easily. This is what makes a communal disturbance in western UP so much more potentially murderous than anywhere else. A Hindu-Muslim conflagration here is dangerous in the extreme. And there are enough vested interests on all sides who stand to gain by it—the Muslim League for instance which, despite its strident provocations has not been able to make sufficient headway, politically, among Muslims. Conversely, the RSS or the BJP, stands to gain if the Hindu vote consolidates along communal rather than political lines.

The vultures that inhabit every community are only waiting for an incident like the one that happened at Moradabad to take place. This will be their source of sustenance for a long while. Time and distance destory the truth of any event: embellishments will make the Moradabad clash into a weapon for all kinds of motivated forces. A communal incident is like a self-sustaining bomb made of plasticine; the bomb can be moulded into whichever shape you want, and it will prove equally deadly wherever it is placed. Organisations like the Jamaat-e-Islami have been provided enough ammunition by the police in Moradabad to incite Muslims. The PAC, which in the past has already been condemned by enquiry commissions for partisanship, now has given Muslims one more very good reason to distrust it.

It is easy to get depressed about Moradabad. But hidden behind the filth of the violence lie certain equally important truths about both the people of India and our institutions which

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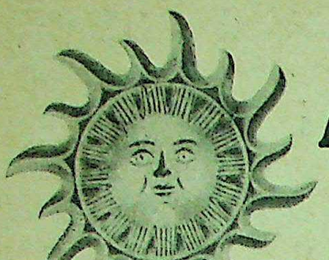
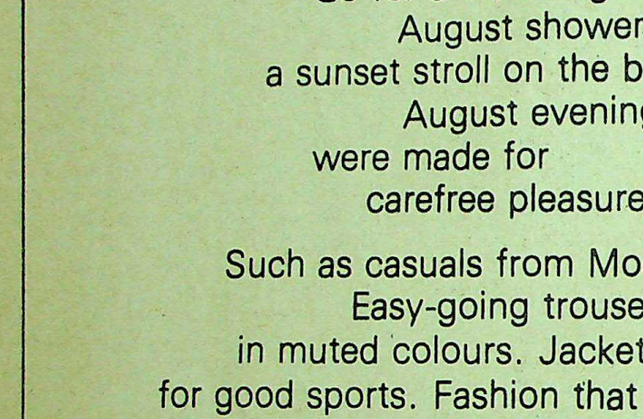


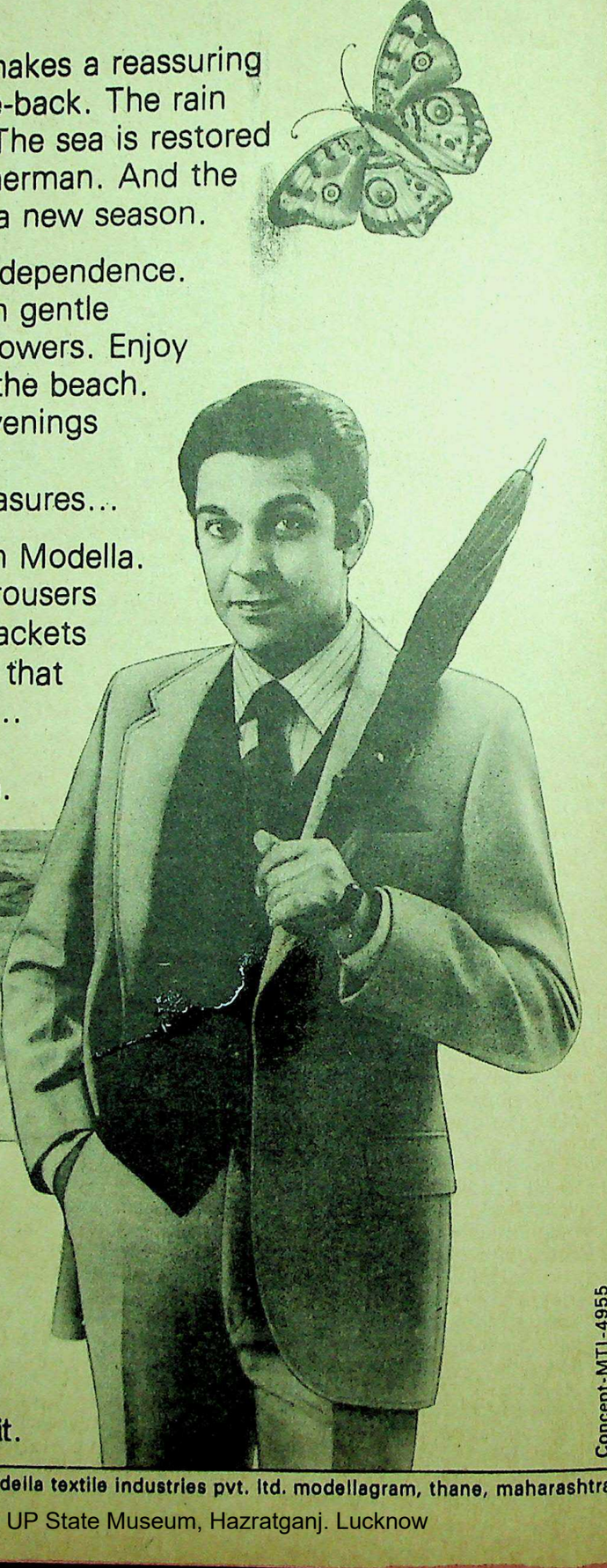
Audacious August.

The sun makes a reassuring come-back. The rain beats a retreat. The sea is restored to the fisherman. And the skies promise a new season.

Celebrate your independence. Go for a walk in gentle August showers. Enjoy a sunset stroll on the beach. August evenings were made for carefree pleasures...

Such as casuals from Modella. Easy-going trousers in muted colours. Jackets for good sports. Fashion that befits the season... stays with you the whole year through.





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more than restore the balance. The quiet but splendid job done by the BSF and the Army in restoring the confidence of the fear-stricken people, for instance. In riot after riot (and I have covered too many of them in recent times) one has seen the people wait for the Army or the BSF to rescue them, not only from their enemies among the civilians but also their enemies among the police.

But how often can you bring out the Army to do the job which the police should be doing? The immediate aftermath of the Moradabad riots was Muslim anger in a dozen towns; this was only to be expected—you cannot hope that Muslims will sit and watch calmly hundreds of *namazis* being killed. No, they will demonstrate, and ask the government to punish the guilty. But there is always more than simply this, where Muslims are concerned. History, Pakistan: the myth that has roots in the subconscious, the myth of the sword-wielding Mussulman, which at times even sends a quiver of doubt into the sanest non-Muslim and he asks himself the question, are the Muslims basically an unreliable, emotional, anti-national community? Why do they keep fighting all the time? The cry of the minority must always compete against the cacophony of vested interests which want to either suppress it or exploit it: and when myriad cries fill the air it is very difficult to sort out the truth from the confusion.

Indian society is a conglomeration of a lot of volatile groups competing for the diminishing rewards of a stagnant or shrinking economy. At certain periods, tensions which are dormant become dominant, lighting fires in hundreds of places. Not all the cities closed by curfew today are victims of communalism. But communalism remains perhaps the most serious threat to our existence and integrity. There are enough people both Hindus and Muslims, who are anti-national, who would like to see the tremendous experiment called India, born out of the faith of a saint called Mahatma Gandhi, destroyed. The most heartening thing I found about Moradabad was that, despite the intense provocation, Hindus and Muslims of the city were not spitting hate at each other. More than 60 per cent of the city is Muslim, and Muslims are angry; and Muslims have enough communalists within them who would like to provoke the community to convert this into a Hindu-Muslim war. But that did not happen. It could have happened so very easily. Particularly when all kinds of rumours, including ones which said that mosques had been burnt, were being spread, on the 14th and the 15th.

Muslims of India have many enemies, quite a few of which actually publicly rejoice in the fact of their enmity towards this community. But perhaps their greatest enemy sits among themselves. This enemy is, by and large, kept in check by the community itself. He is not supported during elections; he is not given too much social respect. But that enemy is there, waiting for the Muslim mind to be provoked; he is waiting for the day when the Muslims of a village, of a city, of a district, of a state, of the country, will reject their secular leadership and turn to him. He is waiting and dreaming for that day. I saw this enemy lurking in one *mohallah* of Moradabad. He was a resident of that *mohallah*. We went in to talk to the Muslims about what happened, and they began narrating their experiences, showing us the wounds on the bodies of their children, and on the hearts of the adults. Then this man walked in. He was large, bloated. His *pyjama* stopped above the ankle. His thin regulation moustache drew a black line above the upper lip. He had small eyes that stared keenly at us: were they wondering why we 'do-gooders' had come? Did our presence reduce one weapon in his arsenal? He sat there quietly, waiting, listening; watching. Waiting to be recognised by us as The Leader. Every muscle on his face, every dart from his eyes, said: My time has come.

He was the local leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami. ■

The man on the cover

WE were waiting in the bright afternoon sunlight outside the *kotwali*, which had become the fulcrum around which administration in Moradabad began revolving after the city sank into the fearful silence and tension of curfew on five pm, Wednesday, August 13. A regular stream of vehicles carrying different kinds of authority—officials, politicians policemen, army—caused a strange traffic jam: a traffic jam looks so incongruous in a deserted city. Just opposite the *kotwali*, or the police headquarters, was the only shop which was open in Moradabad—a sweetmeats shop mainly servicing the police.

Suddenly a heavy police truck screeched to a halt. Out jumped four policemen, very brisk indeed, dragging behind them a man who was still bleeding from an open wound on the left side of his head. The blood was pouring down the side of his face, and had soaked parts of his shirt. His face was swollen; there was terror in his eyes; he was shivering. Kamal Sahai, our photographer, immediately turned his camera towards the bleeding victim. The policeman whose hand interfered with the picture suddenly realised that a photograph was being taken, and rushed in front of the camera. But by this time one picture, we thankfully realised later, had been taken. We were brusquely told not to take any more pictures. Why? Who was this man? We followed him into the *kotwali*, but were prevented by the constables holding him from talking to him. We appealed to a senior officer (who had been sent to Moradabad on special duty). He was a very sophisticated, soft-spoken officer, very unlike some of his arrogant and stupid brethren on the police force. He finally relented and gave us permission: a couple of minutes, and no pictures please.

The man's name was Shakeel Ahmad. He had been arrested for breaking curfew, near the police canteen. He said that he used to supply milk regularly to the canteen, and was well-known there. After two days (this was on 15th), he had become bored of sitting at home, had gone to eat a *paan* in the police lines and was returning home along with a friend called Babu Singh when he was nabbed by the police. They asked the two their names, told Babu Singh to push off, put Shakeel in the van, and beat him up badly before bringing him here.

And then one of the policemen who had brought him could not control himself any more. He first abused Shakeel Ahmad, then turned to us and said, "This chap had gone to the police lines to collect information about the police which he could pass on to the Muslims."

Nobody tried to deny that Ahmad was beaten up by the police, with fists and rifle butts. The police had given a typically brutal, awful demonstration of their prejudice. When, in fact, the police realised that we were beginning to find out more than they wanted exposed, they caught us by the elbows (and a policeman's grip can be a very firm one indeed) and escorted us out. What fate awaited Shakeel Ahmad I do not know, but I have little doubt that the policemen took their revenge on him for having the temerity to talk so frankly to us. Even assuming that Ahmad was guilty of something—and the policemen we talked to had nothing but vague suspicion and reeking prejudice as their reasons for what they did—what right did the policemen have to beat him up in such a fashion? It was pure coincidence that our photographer was there, and we were there, and the photographer's opportune click recorded this one instance of brutality for the magazine. But how many Shakeel Ahmads are there in Moradabad? Perhaps readers might begin to understand now why the minorities have so little faith in organisations like the PAC.

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How I spent Independence Day, 1980

VIJYENDRA TYAGI, a photographer, describes the day he spent in Moradabad

AT about seven thirty in the morning the telephone rang. A journalist friend was phoning from the IENS building (which houses the offices of a large number of newspapers). I was told to come there at once; a party of journalists was leaving for Moradabad in a few minutes and I could accompany them if I wanted. We first went to see the Minister of State for Railways Mr C. K. Jaffer Sharief: he had been to Moradabad, and told us his version of the events. At ten minutes past nine, we were on our way. By 12.30, after a pause for a meal, we reached the outskirts of Moradabad. Our first job was to get curfew passes. We went to the District Magistrate's office, where we learnt that he was sitting at the *kotwali*. We turned towards the *kotwali*, and finally reached there after being stopped several times by policemen who wanted to see our curfew passes. When they learnt that we were a group of journalists and we wanted to go to the police headquarters, they let us carry on.

At the *kotwali*, the DM was not present, but we met some senior police officers. They immediately began reeling off figures and arguments trying to substantiate how justified the police were in all they had done. We said, after a while, that we wanted to visit the place where the trouble had begun, and please could we have curfew passes. But some police officers replied that the situation in the city was very bad, and advised us not to go into the city but return to Delhi after this chat with the police. They could not assure us safe conduct. But we took our passes and proceeded towards the hospital where the wounded were lying.

Every room was full of injured people. And on enquiry we discovered that most of the patients were suffering from bullet wounds. (The police have been trying to sell the theory that the majority of the deaths resulted from the stampede, then why were there comparatively so few stampede victims in hospital?) A couple of arson victims were also there. The patients were in a terrible state. Many of the wounds had been simply bandaged without any proper medicines having been applied. Patients had little or nothing to eat for the two days that they were there. Most were moaning in pain. The doctors complained about lack of facilities and amenities; the doctor in charge admitted that patients had died in hospital. There were many wounded still on the verandahs.

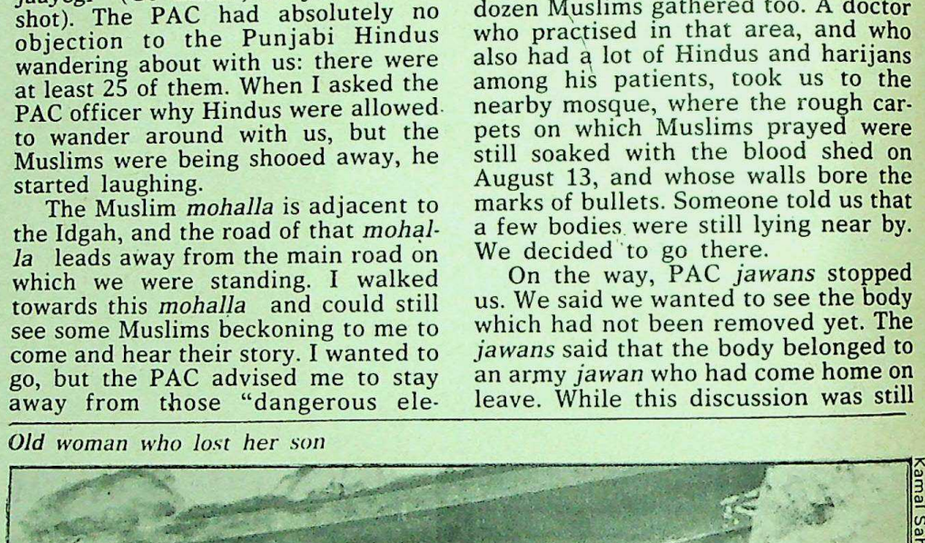
We went towards the Idgah. On the way, near the bus stand, we were stopped by some people who we discovered were Youth Congress(I) activists. We carried on towards the Idgah. Brickbats were still lying scattered on the road outside the Idgah, and the *shamianas* next to the road were damaged. I started taking pictures. By then, some people from the Punjabi Hindu community who lived right in front of the Idgah, came to us and said that a serious outrage had been committed here. A group of PAC *jawans* were standing near by and watching us talk to the Punjabi Hindus. In the distance , but not too far away, near a corner on one side of the Idgah, I saw three or four Muslims standing. I was going towards them when the PAC *jawans* saw these Muslims, went towards them and said, *"Aap log ander chale jaiyen nahin to goli maar di jaayegi"* (Go inside, or you will be shot). The PAC had absolutely no objection to the Punjabi Hindus wandering about with us: there were at least 25 of them. When I asked the PAC officer why Hindus were allowed to wander around with us, but the Muslims were being shooed away, he started laughing.

The Muslim *mohalla* is adjacent to the Idgah, and the road of that *mohalla* leads away from the main road on which we were standing. I walked towards this *mohalla* and could still see some Muslims beckoning to me to come and hear their story. I wanted to go, but the PAC advised me to stay away from those "dangerous elements". I told both my journalist friends and the PAC that I was more familiar with Muslims than they were: I trusted them enough to go and meet them, I said.. I went.

As soon as I reached the Muslims, they said they would show me things which the police and the others were not too keen to show us. Bullet marks on the walls of the Idgah, where the police had fired to either kill or wound Muslims. Hundreds of slippers left behind by children and adults who ran in panic. Somebody cried that this was his eight-year-old daughter's slippers; somebody else said this was his child Fatima's slippers and *dopatta*. I called out to the other journalists to come and see this; they came, and about a dozen Muslims gathered too. A doctor who practised in that area, and who also had a lot of Hindus and harijans among his patients, took us to the nearby mosque, where the rough carpets on which Muslims prayed were still soaked with the blood shed on August 13, and whose walls bore the marks of bullets. Someone told us that a few bodies were still lying near by. We decided to go there.

On the way, PAC *jawans* stopped us. We said we wanted to see the body which had not been removed yet. The *jawans* said that the body belonged to an army *jawan* who had come home on leave. While this discussion was still

Old woman who lost her son



Kamal Sahai

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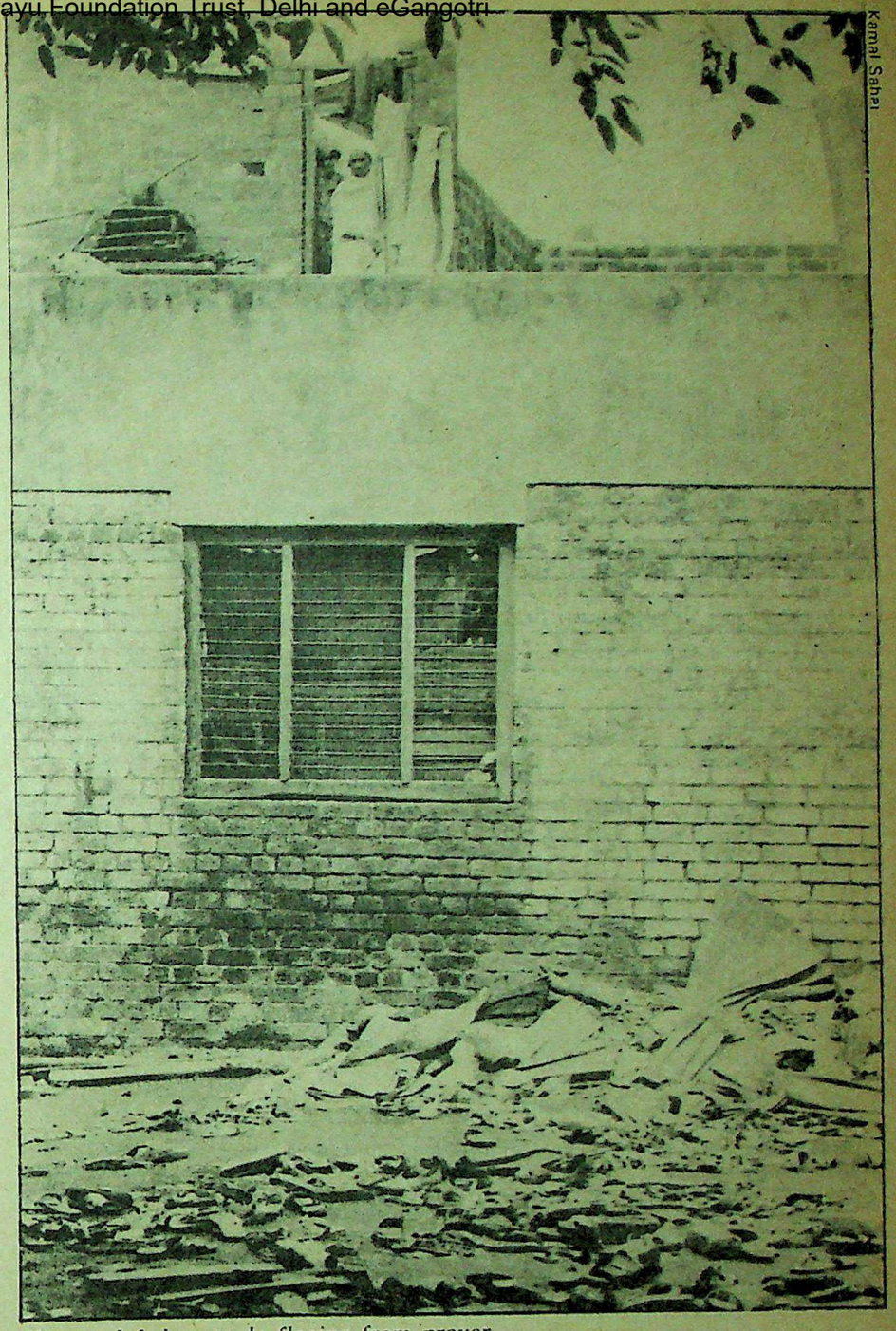
going on, I nipped across and took pictures. Four pigs were now picking at the corpse, which was hidden by a piece of cloth. It seemed to me that there was more than one body behind the layer of cloth. (Interestingly, the policemen had the same explanation of a *jawan* on leave lying dead for another body floating face down in a pig swill nearby.) By this time Devendra Pandey, a Congress(I) MLA, also reached the spot. Other people had begun gathering too. A harijan came and began driving the pigs away from the shrouded body. I asked him how this riot had started, and he replied: *"Babuji, sach puchiye to yeh jhagra nahin. Yahan to police ne namaaz parhte hue logo pe goli chalaee."* (Sir, if you want the truth, this was not a quarrel. Here, the police simply fired at people praying).

This harijan said that he was an eyewitness to the whole episode. "It was after 9.30, and the prayers were not over, when a pig entered the area where the people were praying. A Muslim asked a policeman how the pig had entered during the prayers, and wanted the police to remove it. The policeman replied that it was not his job to remove pigs. The Muslims praying then turned around and asked the policemen what their job was if they could not remove the pigs. There was an altercation. Somebody from up front told the police that they should not behave like this. But just due to this bit of provocation, the police began to use their *lathis*, and within a very, very short while, they started lobbying teargas shells and firing. This was the origin of the trouble, and now the police are trying to make this into a communal war."

After that I went to the police *chowki* which had been attacked by the Muslims after the police firing had taken its toll on Id day. Furniture had been destroyed. The police there told me about how they had suffered here. On my way back I saw some shops which had been burnt (they were Muslim shops, I learnt later). At this point, some policemen caught me, and began to get abusive and aggressive. *"Ise thana le chalo,"* (Take him to the thana) said one constable, but then an officer came and set me free.

Our group then left to visit a relative of Devendra Pandey, who is in charge of the bus station at Moradabad. The people of the *mohalla* soon gathered around us, and told us stories of how Muslims had scaled walls on Id day to escape the police, and how the terrified people were running for safety with children in their hands. "We did not do a thing. It was the police." Women told us how they were sending milk for the children of curfew-bound Muslims if they could do so.

We went to the *kotwali* after that, and the journalists began talking to the rather dramatic DM, whose mouth was packed with *pan*. I slipped away and began walking towards some looted shops in the bazaar nearby. A little ahead, a sub-inspector and a few policemen were playing cards. As I approached, one of them asked, *"Kyon be, kahan jaa raha hai?"* (Where are you going?) I explained that I was a photo-journalist who had come down from Delhi. The sub-inspector ordered his force to catch me; immediately they held me. I showed them the curfew pass. In response one of the PAC *jawans* abused me: "Have you come here to get your mother raped? " I asked him not to abuse me. I showed the pass again, this time to the officer. Who replied: "This is a curfew pass, not a pass to take photographs. If you value your life, get out immediately!"



Kamal Sahai

Slippers left by people fleeing from prayer

I rejoined my group and told them the story, and was rebuked for wandering alone. The time had also come, we all agreed, to go back to Delhi. Just at this point I saw a familiar face; somebody I knew personally, who lived in Moradabad. Once again I asked what had happened, and once again I heard what everyone else had been saying: "This was a straight case of police violence on Muslims, and the police was now desperately trying to convert this into a communal problem so that the mark of shame on their heads would be forgotten. The police and the administration were to blame. They were trying to link up the events with the story of the July 24 squabble between harijans and Muslims; they were trying to introduce different elements. But this was all a cover-up."

At ten minutes past six we left Moradabad for Delhi. At about 8.50 that night we reached Delhi. This was how I spent the 33rd birthday of our country.

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The Delhi Riots

Agitated Muslims wanted revenge for the Moradabad outrage. SHUBHARATA BHATTACHARYA was right there in the heart of old Delhi when the riots were taking place on 15 August.

MORADABAD dominated Delhi on 15 August this year. The day began with the Prime Minister starting her speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort with an expression of grief over the unfortunate incidents in Moradabad two days earlier. Within five hours of Mrs Gandhi having assured action against those guilty of the Moradabad incidents, "whether they were officials or non-officials," violence erupted in the walled city of Delhi, within two kilometres of the spot from where the Prime Minister had addressed the nation in the morning. The mob frenzy, which lasted from around one in the afternoon till around 4.30 pm, left two dead, including a six-year-old girl, and over a hundred injured. Over twenty shops were gutted in the Chawri Bazar, Nai Sarak and Ballimaran areas. A Volkswagen van and an Ambassador car were burnt in Urdu Bazar, and at least 30 rickshaws were gutted.

There had been tension in Delhi from the Id day. On 13 August, there was communal violence in the Panchkuian Road area near Connaught Place after Id prayers. On 14 August, there was some tension in the Badaliyan Mohalla of Churiwalan in the walled city following eve-teasing by some Muslims. The daughter of a local physician, Dr Jogeshwar Nath, Anju Gupta, an advocate, was allegedly teased when she was leaving for work.

But these incidents were not the catalysts for the 15 August carnage; it was Moradabad. After the news of police firing at Moradabad reached Delhi, preparations were made for observing a black day, on Independence Day. Posters appeared on August 14, and black flags were hoisted by Muslims in many areas, even on the boundary railing of the Jama Masjid.

A handwritten poster in Urdu, which was pasted in Ballimaran, read : *Hindustan ki azadi, 1980 ka tohfa—Musalmanon ko battaur barbadi ? Akhir is mulk mein yeh tohfe kab tak milenge ? Mashrik se Magrib aur shumal se janoof tak ke vakyat ke liye hamari hakoomat kyon nahin dhyan deti ? Aaj yaume siah pur-aman tarike se manaen, aur Moradabad ke shahidon aur Hind mein shahid tamam musalmanon ke liye duan mukfarat karen. Ehtijaz siah petian baandh kar pur-aman taur par karen. Muslim Member Parliament aur samaji karkoon bhi hukumat-e-hind se ehtijaz karen.* (The gift of Independence Day 1980—destruction of Muslims ? How long will we keep on getting such 'gifts' in this nation ? Why doesn't our government pay any attention to these incidents taking place in the east, west, north and the south ? Observe a 'black day' today in a peaceful way and offer prayers for the martyrs of Moradabad and the Muslims killed all over the country. Observe the protest by wearing black bands, but maintain peace. Muslims MPs and social workers too should protest to the government of India).

The poster was not signed by any person or any organisation but bore the legend: *Sogwaran, Dilli Shahr* (The mourners of Delhi city).

There were many versions as to how the violence started. According to one, the speech delivered by the Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid on the occasion of the *Jumma* (Friday) prayers was inflammatory, and the rioting started after the prayer meeting dispersed. A violent mob carrying black flags left the mosque after the *namaz* and broke open the lock of a handicrafts shop owned by a Sikh in the corner of Chawri Bazar behind the mosque. This was followed by looting of a few neighbouring shops. A group of Hindus had collected in the Barsaboola Chowk (the junction of Chawri Bazar and Nai Sarak); they rushed foward to save the shops and a clash took place.

Another version said that the trouble started in Charkhewalan during a flag hoisting ceremony presided over by the local Congress(I) MP, Bhikhu Ram Jain. It is said that while the function was going on, a group of Muslims approached Mr Jain and asked him to put on a black badge and join them at a protest rally at 4 pm. Some Hindus there protested against the show of black badges at a flag hoisting ceremony, and tension followed.

According to yet another version, the trouble took place due to a clash at the trijunction of Charkhewalan, Ballimaran and Jogiwara. An Independence Day function was organised by the Shiv Shakti Parishad in which the Bhartiya Janata Party leader, Murli Manohar Joshi was invited. While the flag hoisting ceremony was on, a group of black flag-waving Muslim youth reached there from the Ballimaran side around 1 pm and tried to pull down the national tricolour. According to the Jogiwara Congress(I) leader, Satish Jain, one local BJP worker, Tara Chand, went and caught hold of the flagpole and prevented the flag from being pulled down. Soon afterwards, arson started and shops were looted and set on fire. The owners of the looted shops at the trijunction belonged to both communities.

Black flag and poster on the peripheral railings of Jama Masjid. Poster reads:"Stop slaughter of Muslims".

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Apparently the mob did not distinguish between them on communal lines.

WHEN we reached the affected area around 4 pm, I found the jeep (JKN 4313) of the commandant of the 20th Battalion, CRPF, D.A. Dhananjay, parked outside the gates of Kasturba Gandhi hospital opposite the Netaji Subhash park. *"Zabardast pathrao ho raha hai,* sir" (Heavy stoning is on, sir)—the message came over the radio from one of the units posted somewhere in the riot-hit area. A little further on, we met Mehboobali Zia, the city DCC(I) secretary, who was trying to maintain calm in the Urdu Bazar.Smoke was rising from behind the Masjid from the Chawri Bazar side, and some sounds of firing could be heard. There was no rioting in Urdu Bazar. The flag of the Indian Union Muslim League was flying at half-mast on top of the IUML office opposite the mosque.

We went then to the Esplanade Road side, on the other end of the Jama Masjid, and found the Hindu residents there in a belligerent mood, though no untoward incident was reported there. The police had managed to reach there in time to maintain peace. We moved towards Chandni Chowk en route to Nai Sarak. The busiest market of the city was completely deserted. Only pigeons were sitting outside the busy town hall at the Ghantaghar Chowk. There was no sign of arson in Nai Sarak either, but when we reached the Barsaboola Chowk, tension was visible on every face. The people there complained that the police did not do anything to prevent the shops being set afire.

At 5 pm police commissioner Pritam Singh Bhinder came to the Barsaboola Chowk in his car (DEB 1400). Almost simultaneously, the police loudspeakers announced the promulgation of curfew. "It's a bad situation. It is unfortunate for a policeman to handle a situation like this. My men have done a good job, otherwise a lot of lives would have been lost. But we policemen are always blamed for inaction," Bhinder said, when asked to comment on the situation on the spot. Tilak Raj Kakkar, the deputy commissioner of police (central) had blood oozing from his lips. His colleague, A. K. Singh, DCP (north) had been rushed to a hospital after they both had been hurt in the brickbatting that had followed the burning of shops. Mr Kakkar said that he had been at the Nukkar Chawri from 11 am. The trouble had started at 1.45 pm. He had two companies of policemen with him in the beginning; by five in the evening there were six companies (one company comprises 120 men). "There has been no police firing so far, only teargassing. I do not know the exact number of shells fired; we are yet to count," said Mr Kakkar. He replied in the negative when asked if the Imam was responsible for the riots. "There are some unruly elements on both sides," he said.

We then moved to the Ballimaran side, as reports of arson had come in from there. Rama Shankar, a local Congress(I) ex-councillor, was sitting at the entrance of the Ballimaran's narrow entrance. He said that there was a lot of tension among the Hindus of Katra Neel, across the road, who wanted to attack the predominantly Muslim areas of Ballimaran, so he and his followers had decided to stand guard. He said that the district Congress(I) president, Shamim Ahmed Siddiqui, was organising relief inside the Ballimaran locality. He was critical of the police and the fire brigade, who, he said, were too slow in reacting to the situation. He disclosed that around 1.30 pm some Congress(I) leaders from the area had informed P. K. Dhawan about the tension, and Dhawan had telephoned the Lt. Governor, Jagmohan, but the report from the LG's office had been that the situation was under control.

As we moved into the Ballimaran area, we found brickbats and broken soda water bottles strewn all over. We met Mr Siddiqui near Katra Alam Beg, off house no 2343, Ballimaran. A row of shops selling rubber mats had been set on fire, and fire engines were busy trying to contain the arson. Two owners of the gutted shops had reached the spot and they were trying to salvage whatever was left. Srichand Gupta of Allied Marketing Company said that everything in his shop was destroyed; but he had insurance cover. The fate of Mr Ram Lal, also a owner of a rubber sheets shop, was worse. His scooter, DLW 9674, was parked inside the shop and that too had been burnt. The victims complained that the fire brigade had arrived late and there was no arrangement for adequate water.

Siddiqui took us inside a Katra, where he showed us the body of Sabir Ali, the 26-year-old rickshaw puller, who was felled by a rioter's bullets. Ali had two bullet wounds near his neck; his brother, Akhtar Ali, also a rickshaw-puller, said that Sabir had finished his day's work that afternoon and was returning home after depositing his rickshaw when he was caught in a crossfire between two groups of rioters and died. Mr Siddiqui said that for three hours the body had been lying in the *mohalla*. He had informed the police and the fire brigade, but they did not seem bothered about removing the body. Sabir had married only three months back. His wife, Shohra Begum, was away at her parents' place that day.

We then moved towards the trijunction of Ballimaran, Jogiwara and Charkhewalan. The entire route presented the worst sight of destruction. Smoke filled the air, burning the eyes. At the predominantly Hindu locality of Jogiwara we found that the local Congress(I) and BJP leaders were presenting identical versions about the riots, though Mr Satish Jain, who was formerly a DCC(I) general secretary, differed with the RSS leaders when he insisted that he had seen elderly Muslim leaders trying to pacify the rioters and pleading with them not to loot shops. When we left Jogiwara and re-entered Ballimaran, Mr Jain's version seemed the truth; both Muslim and Hindu shopkeepers had been looted.

COULD the riots have been prevented ? After the Moradabad outrage, even a layman could have guessed that the Muslims of the walled city of Delhi would react. The authorities obviously knew about it : One newspaper office was alerted about the impending tension by an intelligence agency official at 1 pm. From a cursory survey of the affected areas it was evident that the violence was preplanned. The initial anger was against the police; the black flag-carrying Muslims had shouted, *Allah-o-Akbar* and *UP Police murdabad* before attacking the shops in Nukkar Chawri.

But in an area like the walled city, no violence can ever remain non-communal due to the history of mutual suspicions among the Hindus and the Muslims. And the narrow lanes of old Delhi are easy conduits for the mischievous rumours which start floating after every riot. On 15 August, a story spread that Muslims had decided to loot shops, so a big crowd of Hindus had gathered at Barsaboola even before trouble had started. The moment one shop was looted, Hindus retaliated. Soon, rumours went round Muslim localities that Hindus had looted Muslim shops. After that, there was no stopping.

Interestingly, in Ballimaran, there is a permanent police outpost, with armed policemen on duty, at a spot less than 20 yards away where the shops of rubber sheets and a diamond merchant were looted. Apparently the police did not act in time. Even the district Congress(I) leaders complained about the ineffectiveness of the police and the fire brigade.

At 6.50 pm on 15 August, a company of the Artillery Regiment of the army marched into Chawri Bazar from the Jama Masjid side, with light machine guns, carbines and Ichhapur semi-automatics on the ready. Preceding the marching column was an Army jeep. No. ZB 40098, in which sat additional district magistrate Arora with a microphone in hand, and announced that curfew was on and no one should move out of his house. The government of India was now in full command of the situation—but should it not have been in command much earlier.

We moved towards the Urdu Bazar police outpost, where the SHO, inspector Mauji Khan, was issuing curfew passes. Along with us in the queue were Muslims and Hindus who held in their hands invitations to various Independence Day functions, including *mushairas* organised by various government and non-government agencies. While the situation in the city remained tense, the *Dilliwala* was not going to give up his Independence Day *mushairas*. ■

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OUR CALLOUS RULERS

By CHANDRA SHEKHAR

THE people's enthusiasm of 1971, the darkness of 1975, the hope of 1977 and the frustrating end of the Janata in 1979 marked the Seventies. Seldom in history has such a serious sequence of events been squeezed into such a short period.

The new decade looks like being still worse. On both the political and economic fronts, the situation is explosive. India is sitting on powder: one fuse is enough to ignite the whole country. Almost all the fibres—social, moral, economic and political—that constitute a nation are undergoing serious strain; the whole system seems to be on the brink of collapse.

The Press is burdened every day with tragic news about rape, murder, police firings and atrocities against the weaker sections. *Police fire on students—five killed; Mass rape of tribal women near Gonda village; A woman was burnt after rape; 138 women committed suicide in Delhi:* these are the headlines. The Baghpat incident was a gruesome tragedy: one hangs one's head in shame at the very thought of it. And yet, people seem to be devoid of sensitiveness to such crimes committed against humanity. It is not just apathy and indifference; fear has overtaken them.

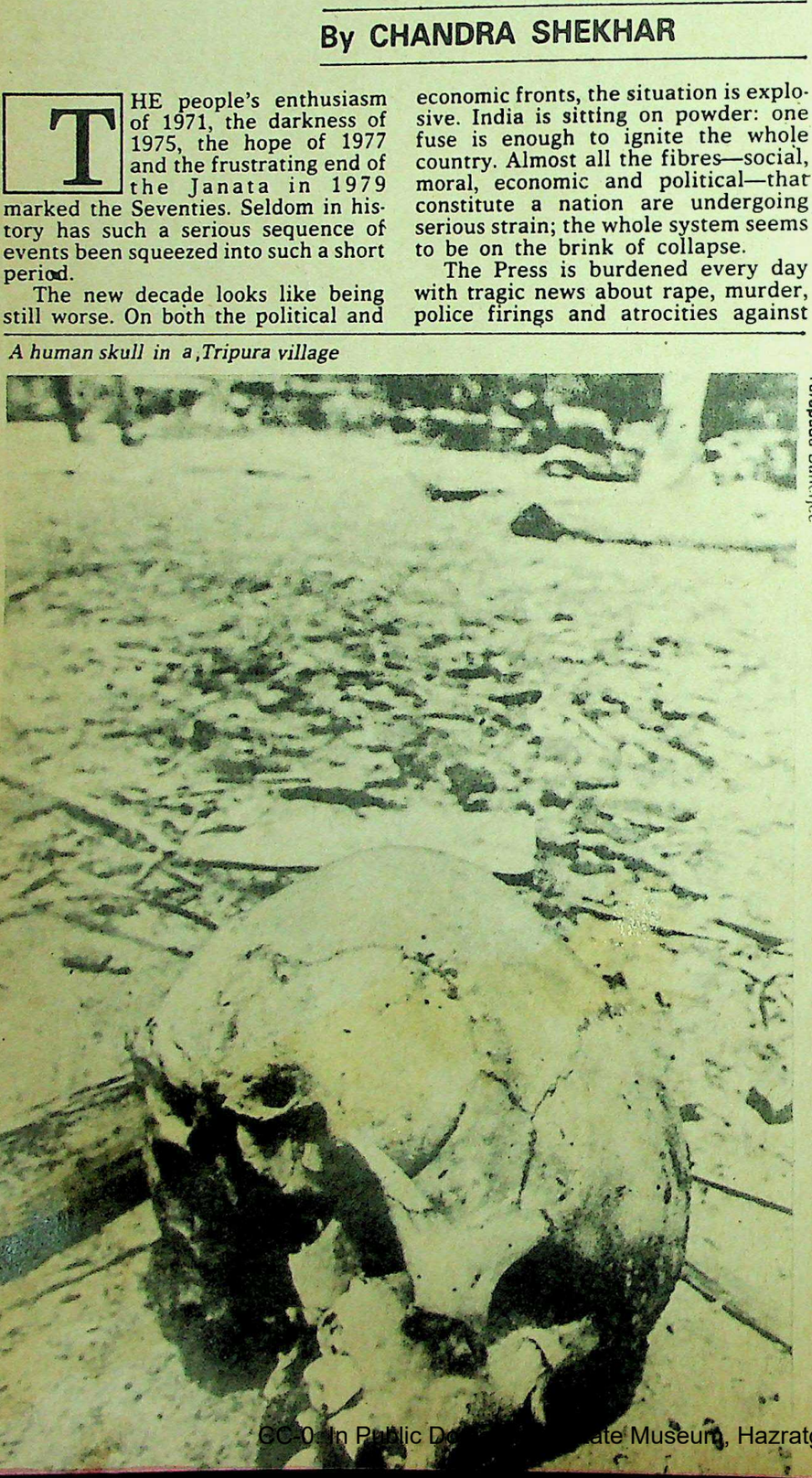
The reaction of the ruling elite is even more callous. It makes the opposition its scapegoat for its lapses, and conveniently ignores its weaknesses. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh confessed that a heinous crime had been committed against Maya Tyagi, but he was "unable" to take any action against the police, who, if they did not perpetrate the crime, at least failed to protect her. Such indignity against womanhood in a city in broad daylight was not heard of even during colonial rule! So, while the state is ruthless, the people are overcome by a fear psychosis; they are anxiety-ridden, alienated. And the opposition, on the other hand, suffers from a sense of self-righteousness. The various Parties seem to be vying with each other to inflate and exaggerate the propaganda value of such incidents; they will not agree to make a common cause to fight against the evil.

Such incidents as at Baghpat only confirm how the baser elements in human beings, their barbarity and savagery, have gained the upper hand under the protection of a ruling elite. But there is a still more serious violence being perpetrated by the state. The only answer that the state seems to have for social conflict is greater violence. Whether it is a caste or communal riot, or whether there are social tensions and conflicts, the authorities consider police firing the only way to restore 'law and order'. The old concept of the police *raj* persists, and all the talk of 'modernisation' in administration seems to be a deception.

How can one explain the Kafalta outrage in UP or the Belchi killings in Bihar? What is happening in Assam, Mizoram and Tripura? Mass killings by one section of the people against another, make a mockery of the authorities entrusted to maintain law and order. Hundreds of dead bodies were reported to have been recovered from some places! If such a state of affairs persists, the very basis of civilised society will collapse; and the future of democracy will be in total jeopardy.

The situation is alarming. And the response from those in charge is not only inadequate but agonising. Even on vital issues there is an endeavour for a joint, non-partisan effort to solve the problem; there is no initiative to forge a unity for cohesive action to resolve these problems. On the contrary the people in authority feel satisfied after indulging in acrimonious wrangles, and waste their energy

A human skull in a Tripura village



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trying to find scapegoats and scrape up lame excuses.

There are serious implications of what is happening in Assam. In Tripura, the tribals are totally disenchanted with the authorities. There is growing dissatisfaction among the people in Manipur, and in some parts of the North East a virtual insurgency is taking place. All this deserves more serious attention of the nation. The government cannot treat it as just a law and order problem, nor should one feel satisfied by describing it as the handiwork of some foreign powers, or the political manoeuvring of some communal forces. Further, the use of coercive power is not the answer to these problems.

The malaise is deeprooted. It has affected and sapped the vitality of the country's body politic. How can one ensure that a similar movement will not take place in Darjeeling by the Nepali-speaking residents for a Gorkhaland, or by the adivasis in Chotanagpur in Bihar, or by the tribals in Ahmednagar or Vidharba in Maharashtra, or the people of Uttarakhand in UP, or by the Maithili-speaking people in Bihar? One shudders to think of the situation; it could be similar to the one before the partition of India. And did the country's partition solve the problems—communal or otherwise? The disease we are afflicted by is like a festering sore; if it is not cured in time, it may prove cancerous, and the country's integrity and unity may be threatened. The problem of the Assamese, or the tribals in Tripura, is as real and genuine as the problem of the refugees in Assam. The problem is simple: exploitation and poverty.

Why did the tribals in Tripura resort to killings? Why did the Assamese go on a 10-month-old agitation against "foreigners"? These questions are as pertinent and relevant as the question, why was there an influx of refugees into Assam? Let us go deep into the facts. India is in reality, a multinational country; it has a pluralistic society. For years there has been discrimination between one linguistic group against another; and exploitation by the affluent of the poor. Today, there is an awakening among the people in backward areas. Above all, the instinct of self-preservation is arousing them.

They are inflammable material, susceptible to those arousing passion, trying to create a conflagration by whipping up chauvinism, mutual distrust, apprehension and discord. But what attempt has been made to bring about unity among different social groups?

The basic problem in this country is poverty; it is the root-cause of all this trouble. The refugees from Bangladesh settled in Assam in search of their livelihood. The tribal people in Tripura are facing a genuine threat to their economic existence. The Assamese are equally genuinely apprehensive about being overthrown by the outsiders.

In our country now, there is little difference between a democratic rule and a personalised one.

The country is supposed to be engaged in a grim struggle against poverty. The truth is, we have, by and large, failed in our battle against it. Our achievement has not been able to assure a subsistence income to our people. If we fail to appreciate this problem, we cannot win our battle for unity and integrity of the country. The problem is a human one. This is a battle for existence being waged by those who live in despair. No sabre-rattling, or chauvinism, can solve it. If we are serious about solving this problem, we have to create a new ethos of nation-building in India.

IRONICALLY enough, politics in India has become a game of sheer manipulation and manoeuvring. Its moral base has been completely eroded; hypocrisy and manipulative political acrobatics have become the norm in public life. Persons holding high posts indulge in this game with impunity, and the people do not resist. Why was the Belchi tragedy made a national issue? Was the Kafalta outrage, which took place under a Congress(I) government, any less serious than the Belchi one? The Baghpat incident was sought to be made a non-issue, while the Narayanpur episode (which occurred when the Lok Dal was in power in UP) was given extraordinary attention. This cannot be explained in any other terms but as a blatant and sinister design to take political advantage of human misery. This is what is called double standards in public life.

Then again, why has there been of late a lower rate of economic growth; industrial stagnation; reduction of employment opportunities; worsening law and order situation and a staggering price hike of sugar and other essential commodities? If the economic situation is so grim, what steps has the government taken to improve it? Why has there been dubious behaviour in Assam? Or why is dissension in Kashmir being fomented? These are the realities of political life which have become the norm in this country. What a tragedy! People are interested in politicisation of human miseries, not in solving them.

After freedom, we had promised to bring about social change through parliamentary democracy. This was the cornerstone of our national unity and integration. This would have been possible only if we could fix our priorities and make proper utilization of our scarce resources. But these objectives were thrown to the winds. If peaceful social transformation does not take place, the system is bound to be discredited, and sometime the strain will become too much. Wittingly or unwittingly, that stage is dangerously close.

Worse, in our country now, there is little difference between a democratic rule and a personalised one; whereas the two should be quite contradictory to each other. Further, in a democratic set-up, the bureaucracy should be impartial. But this impartiality has been deliberately destroyed. Take for instance, the mass transfers of officers recently in UP: the decisions were based on proven loyalty rather than merit.

When such things happen they are bound to vitiate the whole atmosphere. And in such a culture, who has the time for mass mobilisation for nation-building activities?

The nation is in great danger today. Yet there is little appreciation of the gravity of the situation by political leaders. Tragically enough, the ruling group is engaged in deification of individuals (to the extent of total extinction of human dignity) rather than attending to the serious problems of the country. There is a constant effort to create new gods. What an irony that democratically elected people in responsible positions choose to talk about a successor from one family only in this country! It does not even prick their conscience. How can any sincere effort be made by these persons to involve the people in solving the problems of the nation?

On the other hand, there is no streak of optimism among the leaders of the opposition. Those who were responsible for destroying the unity of what is now the opposition, have suddenly become protagonists of unity. While they successfully managed to bring the country to this catastrophic situation, they have no sense of repentance or regret. Yet they make claims to be fighters against oppression and injustice. They can hardly evoke any confidence among the people.

The indications are ominous. The stake is higher today than ever before. The system of parliamentary democracy itself is in serious peril. Booth-capturing by force; the apathy among the people about their right to exercise their franchise; the role of money and musclemen in the elections: all this has struck at the roots of democracy. The answer does not lie in the ability of the ruling party to manage its affairs and to retain its power; nor will the unity of various heterogeneous elements among the opposition led by old and outdated leaders provide an alternative.

But if there is pessimism all around, there is also a ray of hope. The solution has to be found outside the contours of the present political Parties. Let us reawaken the people, particularly the younger generation. Let us hope they will rise above petty personal loyalties, prejudices, narrowness and parochialism; let them understand the malaise of today's politics, and fight the nefarious attempts of power-seekers and opportunists by organising and strengthening themselves. Let them become harbingers of a new social order. ■

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MIZORAM:

The chess game for peace

SANTANU GHOSH traces how the truce came about

THE fears, the hate and the blood-letting that had haunted the north-eastern state of Mizoram (area: 24,000 sq km; pop: 350,000) for 15 years were officially declared over as the Mizo National Front (MNF) president Laldenga called a halt to the insurgency from 31 July midnight and New Delhi offered a reprieve to the insurgents. Guitars twanged and hundreds of Mizos, cooped up in their homes (the night-curfew had not yet been lifted) in the hilltop capital Aizawl broke out into tribal tunes to the chimes of the church bells as the calander turned from 31 July to 1 August.

The celebration was actually planned for 30 July, the day Union Home Minister Zail Singh informed Lok Sabha of the truce. Mizoram's Finance Minister, Lalmingthenga, rang up his uncle Chief Minister Brigadier T. Sailo from New Delhi soon after. But, the celebrations had to be put off, as sirens announced the curfew. The next morning, however, the people danced themselves to exhaustion; posters hailing the agreement plastered the walls. Finally, the curfew was lifted on 4 August. Boys and girls in jeans were back again at their favourite pastime—the *nulla rim* (courtship).

In October 1979, soon after his release from detention in Delhi's Tihar jail, Laldenga conveyed to Mrs Gandhi through Yashpal Kapoor and Pranab Mukherjee his commitment to the Indian constitution and a desire to end uncertainties in Mizoram. And soon after Mrs Gandhi's victory at the polls he offered to resume negotiations deadlocked during the Janata regime. It resumed over a *tandoori* lunch with Yashpal Kapoor at the capital's five-star Taj Intercontinental Hotel, on 30 January 1980. Two days later Mrs Gandhi wrote back: "I am glad to have your reiteration of the commitment you made to work within the framework of the Indian constitution". That set the ball rolling.

Encouraged by this, a three-member delegation of the Mizoram Congress (an affiliate of the Congress-I), led by its president Lalthanhawala, 37, (one of the few non-MNF people trusted by Laldenga) rushed to New Delhi in early February to plead for the resumption of the dialogue. Mrs Gandhi met them at her 12 Willingdon Crescent residence on 10 February and indicated during discussions that she was not averse to the withdrawal of all treason and criminal cases pending against Laldenga.

On Sunday 13 April Laldenga met Mrs Gandhi for the first time in many years. Zail Singh, Yashpal Kapoor and Pranab Mukherjee were also present. At the meeting Laldenga proposed to send some of his emissaries to the MNF headquarters at Chhipui near Bandarban in the wooded Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh to seek approval of the National Council, the apex policy-making body, for a halt to the insurgency. OK, said Mrs Gandhi. A wireless signal flashed from New Delhi asked the Lt. Governor of Mizoram, N. P. Mathur, to release Aichhinga, a former MNF assistant general secretary and Zaiderzauva, the MNF president's frail looking brother-in-law who for some time was the MNF operational commander for the Aizawl

A group of MNF guerrillas

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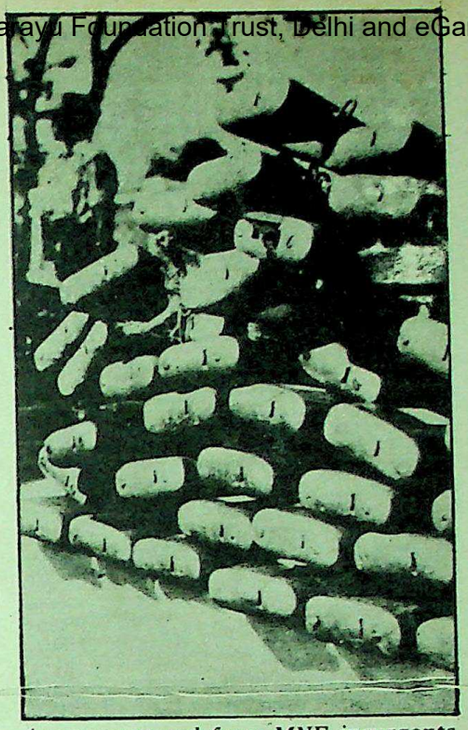
area, from jail so that Digit could proceed for New Delhi. They arrived in the capital on 28 May and were lodged at a five-star hotel at government expense, as Laldenga held a series of meetings with Yashpal Kapoor and senior Home Ministry officials. Finally it was settled that Laldenga's 24-year-old bespectacled son David would accompany Aichhinga and Zaiderzauva to the Bangladesh headquarters of the MNF.

Monday 2 June. An IAF MI-4 helicopter flew them from Aizawl to the border village of Parva, from where the trio slipped into the endless rolling hills of Sajek range washed by the river Sangu. The MNF National Council met for two days, 13 and 14 June at Chhipui presided over by the elusive guerrilla leader Zoramthanga, 36, a Mizo of Manipuri origin and the number two in the outfit. The emissaries flew back to New Delhi on 24 June pale and exhausted after the long and strenuous trek down the guerrilla trail but excited because the Council favoured Laldenga's peace initiatives. The same day, Laldenga met the Prime Minister at her South Block office. Mrs Gandhi told him: "The whole of north-east is in trouble, I need your co-operation". The aging rebel chief replied: "Our co-operation is for your asking". The CBI was ordered to withdraw all criminal cases against Laldenga and other important MNF activists. Finally, on 28 July the agreement was signed. When Zail Singh announced it in the Lok Sabha on 30 July, Laldenga in a sweatshirt was right there beaming from the distinguished visitors' gallery.

For quite some time Laldenga had been telling visitors to his Chirag enclave residence in south Delhi that the 'super powers' and the neighbouring countries on whom he had been banking for support had 'betrayed' him. He could also see how desertions and feuds had shrivelled the MNF. His overground friends in the steering committee, drawn from five Mizoram Parties, too wanted him to bury his past. And, as a devout Christian, he dreaded the possibilities of the tribal north-east going, red following the trend set by N. Biseswar of the PLA in Manipur and T. H. Muiva, a dissident Naga insurgent leader. Besides, his years in exile, first at Mirpur in Dacca, then at an Inter Services Intelligence guest house in Karachi and finally in New Delhi, had mellowed him considerably and made him homesick.

Born at Pukpui village in south Mizoram on 11 June 1926, Laldenga had studied up to the sixth standard at an American missionary school at Jowai in Meghalaya, joined the army during the second world war and rose to the rank of a *havildar* clerk before he was demobilised. Returning to Aizawl he got a job as a cashier in the district council. Came *Mau tam*, the famine. The year: 1960. Laldenga banded together a few young men to start a relief organisation named Mizo National Famine Front. The failure of the Assam government to rush food to



Arms recovered from MNF insurgents

the starving Mizo hills (then a district of Assam) incensed the Mizos and Laldenga promptly cashed in on their anger to advocate secession. The MNF was born on 12 October 1962. In December 1963, Laldenga slipped into the then East Pakistan to seek arms but was caught near the Karimganj border in the Cachar District of Assam while returning to India. He explained that he had gone to East Pakistan "to meet the Mizo brethren in Pakistan on the border". Accepting the explanation, the then Assam Chief Minister B. P. Chaliha released him.

Soon after his release, Laldenga renewed his efforts to set up and enlarge insurgent bases in and around the Mizo hills. Arms came in boats through the river Karnaphuli, in East Pakistan. Having built up an armoury at Hunmuam near Lunglei, Laldenga on 21 January 1966 wrote to the then Indonesian President Sukarno: "Political self-determination and creation of a separate homeland are the only wishes of my people". Soon after, Laldenga and 58 of his lieutenants issued a two-page unilateral declaration of independence from Kulikawn, the then headquarters of the MNF. When the number of recruits in the MNF and its armed wing, the Mizo National Army (MNA), soared to about 10,000, Laldenga launched a major offensive on the midnight of 28 February 1966. Code named 'Operation Jericho', the attack caught the security forces totally unawares. Working on a blueprint prepared by the MNF's General Swamvela, the insurgents swiftly took over the key towns of Aizawl, Lunglei, Champai and Demagiri, without much resistance. An army brigade marched into Aizawl only on 7 March and with IAF Hunters strafing the rebel positions, the security forces finally gained control of Mizoram about a month after Laldenga's successes, on 21 March. The next 14 years witnessed sporadic acts of insurgency which included ambushes, extortion of taxes, recruitment of volunteers and intimidation of the non-Mizos. In early 1975, the insurgents stormed the Aizawl police headquarters and gunned down three top police officers including the IG.

Curiously, Laldenga also kept the olive branch dangling. At least six groups of his emissaries met Union government officials and the intelligence operatives at different places in the country and abroad since 1970. The most sensational of these meetings was the one between Lianzuala, a top MNF functionary, and intelligence branch officials at an army base near Silchar in February 1973. The Mizoram police who had put Lianzuala at the top of its 'wanted' list did not even know for years that such a meeting had taken place. In November 1973, another meeting was held between Laldenga's men and intelligence officials, this time in faraway Kabul. Then another at Bangkok. Finally, the negotiations conducted by a senior RAW operative, H. R. Hasanwalia (code name: Shingal), with Laldenga himself, first in Geneva and then in Cologne in 1975-76 bore fruit.

On 29 August 1975 Laldenga wrote to Mrs Gandhi that if she offered religious and cultural safeguards for the Mizos, then he was prepared to call truce. Laldenga moved on to Cologne in early December 1975, after a holiday in Rome. There, other top MNF leaders, Chawngzuala (the then MNF Chairman), Tiangchuaka, Biakchhunga and Lalhleia joined him. And, finally on 24 January 1976, Laldenga arrived in New Delhi to negotiate the terms of a settlement with Mrs Gandhi on an explicit understanding that he would be free to leave New Delhi whenever he wanted to. The breakthrough was achieved earlier than expected, on 18 February 1976 when the MNF leader signed a preliminary agreement accepting Mizoram as an integral part of India, and that the political problems would be solved within the framework of the Indian constitution. The accord was approved by the underground leaders at a convention held in Calcutta from 24 March to 1 April 1976, at the request of Laldenga. He was re-elected president and was authorised by the convention to negotiate with the government of India. Subsequent talks between Laldenga and the representatives of the government led to the now famous 1 July 1976 agreement (Laldenga calls it a 'press statement') carrying the signatures of Laldenga and the then union Home Secretary S. L. Khurana.

The agreement (or, statement) however, failed to achieve anything tangible because Laldenga and the government differed on their priorities. The government wanted the insurgents to lay down their arms as a precondition for further talks on the future status of Mizoram. Laldenga

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wanted the priorities reversed. With negotiations deadlocked over the issue, the Army resumed operations to flush out the insurgents in October, but suspended them during Christmas when the talks resumed. Om Mehta, then Minister of State for Home in Mrs Gandhi's Cabinet, negotiated with Laldenga and promised to permit the MNF to hold a political meeting at Aizawl after the parliamentary elections. But, Mrs Gandhi's defeat at the polls changed the entire situation. The Janata government opted for a tougher line and the talks bogged down for the second time over the surrender of arms. That Laldenga and the Union government were drifting apart became all too evident after a five-minute meeting between Union Home Ministry officials and Laldenga in New Delhi in May 1977.

Laldenga handed over power to the MNF national council, thus abdicating his right to negotiate. The Union government retaliated by asking him to quit India by 6 June. At the intervention of an MP, a meeting was arranged between the Prime Minister Mr Morarji Desai and Laldenga in early August. And, on 31 August he met Home Minister Charan Singh. Neither of these meetings helped to break the ice. Both Desai and Charan Singh insisted that Laldenga must unequivocally accept Indian citizenship and renounce violence in writing before any purposeful dialogue could be resumed. Laldenga was told again to leave India by 21 November. Finally in February 1978, Laldenga was put under house arrest and the government filed a number of criminal cases against him. The number two in the MNF, vice-president Zoramthanga was also summoned to New Delhi, allegedly through a forged message in the name of Laldenga in March 1978. And promptly he too was put under house arrest.

Even then the dialogue did not snap totally. But on 19 March 1978 when Laldenga formally withdrew the commitments made by him in the 1976 agreement, reducing it to a mere scrap of paper, and the government reacted by invoking the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of 1967 to outlaw the MNF and its branch organisations. The insurgents, after a comparative lull, again became active in Mizoram. In June 1979 they launched a campaign against the *vais* (the non-Mizos) asking them to quit Mizoram. On 8 July 1979, Laldenga was arrested and lodged in the Tihar jail on charges of criminal conspiracy and waging war against the government. But in October he was released on bail as the CBI failed to submit a formal chargesheet to the court within the stipulated ninety-day period. The CBI, however, charged Laldenga, his son David, and a Congress(I) MP Bhagwan Din with conspiracy for obtaining a passport for Laldenga on forged documents. For a time the possibilities of a truce appeared remote. But by then, Laldenga was looking towards the future, and Mrs Gandhi. ■

'In Mizoram the tricolour was not flown on 15 August 1947'

A solution to the turmoil in Mizoram seems in sight again. The Mizo National Front leader Laldenga agreed to a ceasefire from the midnight of 31 July and withdrew the "Quit Mizoram" notice served on 'outsiders'. Simultaneously the security forces stopped their operations. SAUMITRA BANERJEE spoke to Laldenga in Delhi on the present ceasefire, the history of Mizo insurgency and future politics in Mizoram.

Q: Mr Laldenga, once you cooperated with the Government, later you took to insurgency. What led you to take this course of action?

A: You see, Mizoram was not represented in the making of the Constitution of India. We felt it was wrong to impose a Constitution of any kind on an area that has not been represented. I remember I had come across a book (where it was written) that George Washington met the king of England and the king asked him, 'George, is not the Constitution prepared by the London Parliament good enough for the people of America? I think the London Parliament made a very beautiful Constitution for you,' and George Washington's reply was, 'Your majesty, it is a matter of representation.' You see, a Constitution is a matter of representation always. So I believe that the Constitution of India was imposed and I think it is wrong. When a Constitution is imposed it is a case of domination. (The telephone rings and Laldenga excuses himself. It is a trunk call from Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram. As he returns, he says, "Aizawl is always a problem. It is too far.")

Q: Wasn't there any other course of action you could have resorted to? Why armed insurgency?

A: Well, actually, we met the (representatives of the) Government of India. The MNF never resorted to violence in the beginning. We met the then Home Minister, Gulzarilal Nanda, and Trilok Singh, a member of the Planning Commission. I also had discussions with the Chief Minister of Assam and I met Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965. It was never our wish to resort to violence. When I met Lal Bahadur Shastri, a reinforcement of armed forces was rushed into Mizoram which provoked the people. I requested the Prime Minister to withdraw the Assam Rifles battalion, as the people thought that suppressive forces were being brought in. I was happy that Prime Minister Shastri withdrew the battalion. Then came 1966. The same battalion was rushed in again and the situation was very tense and the people became rather afraid. This was because we knew what the army had done in Nagaland. I requested the Chief Minister of Assam to withdraw the forces and even rang

Laldenga, with his grand-daughter

Dharm Vir Jayner

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him up and said that I would come down and have discussions with him. But he refused to withdraw them. I was afraid that things might take a bad turn. So I rang up again—and I have witnesses—and the Chief Minister's secretary said the Chief Minister did not want to speak to me. That was a very unfortunate message. The army was poured in and the Chief Minister refused to talk to us! This is one of the factors that contributed to the building up of the movement.

Q: Is that what made you decide to take to arms?

A: As soon as suppressive measures were taken and the Government refused to talk to us, I knew that there was no other alternative but to fight. Most of the Indian Press had stated that the famine of 1955 (had the seeds) of insurgency. But this is very wrong. Nationalism was all along the politics of Mizoram. As far back as 1946 the idea of independence (of Mizoram) was there. On the eve of the independence of India, on 14 August 1947, leaders of all political, social, and religious organisations had resolved that if Mizoram was to join the Union of India, they should reserve the right to secede after ten years. But a lot of people in Mizoram did not even agree to this. They wanted to start (fighting) right away. A group of people, some ex-servicemen, declared that the tricolour should not be flown on Independence day. They were armed and vowed that anyone who flew the flag would be killed, and the tricolour was not flown on Independence day (15 August 1947).

Q: You wanted Mizoram to secede. Now you have agreed to negotiations and a settlement within the framework of the Indian Constitution. What brought about this change?

A: You see, in the course of our movement we have learnt that the geo-political situation and the (Indian) policy in relation to our movement is such that we have decided that our survival—and we have been fighting for our survival—should be (compatible) with that of India. However, we believe that as Mizoram was not represented in the making of the Constitution, certain arrangements must be made constitutionally. So our political demand really is a constitutional arrangement within the framework of the present Constitution. We feel this will be good for the people of Mizoram and we should seek our survival within the Indian Union.

Q: When did you start negotiating with the Indian Government?

A: It started as far back as 1971. We had clandestine meetings with representatives of the Government of India. But the fall of East Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh strained the process of contact. (Contacts were reopened) in 1973, 1974 and 1975 in various places like Kabul, Bangkok, Rome and Geneva. Finally, the Government of India agreed to grant us safe conduct tocome to Delhi and seek settlement of the political problem within the Constitution. So, we came in 1976 January, on safe conduct. It was agreed that should the talks fail, we would be allowed to return to the place where we came from.The MNF convention was called in Calcutta in March 1976, which officially resolved to accept the settlement of the political problem of Mizoram within the framework of the Constitution. Then a delegation, headed by me, was deputed to have talks with the Government of India. We entered into a dialogue with the Government of India represented by officials.

Q: Why did the 1976 talks fail?

A: The officials could not talk much about political matters. It was pursued as a law and order problem and not as a political one. Though the MNF agreed to accept a solution, the political side was totally ignored. The official representatives kept stressing on a laying down of arms, without discussing a political solution. So the talks centred around the modalities of how the arms could be laid down.

Besides, when our talks were incomplete, the official representatives suggested that we issue a Press statement declaring how the talks had progressed so that the nation would know what we were doing. So we prepared a Press statement declaring how the talks had progressed so that the nation would know what we were doing ... which the officials later passed off as an agreement. This caused a breakdown in our talks. They wanted to force this down our throats. It was (a conspiracy) hatched by these officials. Even the radio carried the news that Laldenga had signed an agreement. The next day we said nothing doing and said that the talks were incomplete. After that the army resumed operations in Mizoram from October to December 1976. In December 1976 the talks were raised from the officials level to the political. It was at this point that I had talks with (the then Union Minister of State for Home) Om Mehta. The talks went smoothly. We decided we would resume talks after the elections (March 1977).

Came the Janata regime and I met Morarji Desai in August 1977. The Janata policy was quite different. Desai demanded a complete surrender without talks, an unconditional laying down of arms as a precondition to talks. This the MNF did not accept. Then I was arrested and thrown into jail.

When Mrs Gandhi returned, she once again agreed to resume talks to find political solutions rather than military ones. Keeping her word, she withdrew all the cases pending against me. In response, I sent an emissary to the MNF headquarters and the MNF once again agreed to accept a solution to the problem within the framework of the Indian Constitution. The MNF has responded positively and has agreed to a ceasefire and withdrawal of the 'Quit Mizoram' order.

Q: What are your demands now?

A: We picked up the threads from 1977. The MNF executive committee will convene to formulate political demands and the committee shall depute a delegation to present the demands to the Prime Minister. The exact demands the MNF has to spell out.

Q: But you would be knowing, at least broadly, some of the demands.

A: Well, thinking aloud, every unit of India is a state, and threrefore, Mizoram can never be more than a state. Today, Mizoram is a Union Territory, and this is not sufficient for a constitutional solution. Isn't it? So, I think—as I said we can think aloud—it can be a state. A full-fledged state with certain safeguards. I say certain safeguards because of our ethnic difference and economic backwardness.

Q: Do you mean like Kashmir?

A: That I cannot answer yet. It would be quite out of the way for me to say anything. All I can say is that a demand shall be made, taking the integrity of the nation into consideration.

Q: If Brig. Sailo's Ministry is allowed to function, do you think the peace effort could be sustained?

A: Frankly, I do not expect the ceasefire operation to be successful. Even now, some of Sailo's followers, the police and other personnel pretending to be the MNF, terrorise the people, collect funds and ambush several people. With him as Chief Minister the ceasefire will not be successful, let alone a political solution. If there is an interested party at the helm of affairs of the state he will obviously twist the agreement to his advantage. Otherwise he won't be human. (Laughs). This will wreck the peace effort completely. As a matter of fact, Sailo has been circulating letters saying that there should be a military solution.

Q: The Mizoram Government has issued a Press statement saying that members of the MNF underground have launched a massive fund collection campaign in Mizoram in the name of a Liberation Front. How do you expect peace under such circumstances?

A: I don't know what collection of donations is taking place. But it is only today (1 August) that the ceasefire has become effective. So, if something like this happens now (after the ceasefire) they can accuse us and not before.

Q: Do you intend to head the Government in Mizoram?

A: Well, frankly, I wouldn't be a politician if I didn't try (to become the head of the government).

Q: Do you intend to join the Congress(I)?

A: (Hesitates) I have not thought of it yet. Though I trust Mrs Gandhi's leadership, I have not thought of joining Mrs Gandhi, as yet. If I say I will join Mrs Gandhi, then the whole thing will flop.

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India should welcome move for regional summit

Gen. Zia-ur-Rehman is on to a good thing, says PRAN CHOPRA

INDIA is responding with a sense of defeatism to an initiative by the Bangladesh President, Mr Zia-ur-Rehman. Instead of recognising it as a step towards a goal which a confident India would surely desire and work for, it is suspecting some kind of a trap or manoeuvre in the Bangladesh initiative, "an attempt to Liliputianise a Gulliver" to borrow a phrase used in private by a former Indian diplomat.

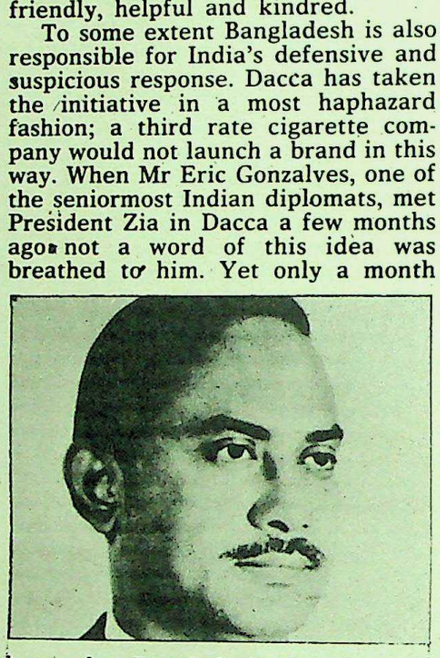
President Zia has proposed a summit meeting of the six South Asian countries, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan, to discuss closer economic, social and cultural cooperation. As the largest of the South Asian countries, as the largest common factor in the economic relations among all of them, and as the country with the largest stake in this area, the largest actual or potential leverage, and as the country with the most to gain if South Asia became a regional entity, India should welcome such a summit.

And India would have welcomed it without hesitations if New Delhi had been in the confident mood in which she used to be ten years ago. At that time, in fact, India herself mooted such an idea, and if it refrained from pushing the idea much harder the reasons were not any inner hesitations but an external constraint. Some of the South Asian countries proved lukewarm about it, and if India had pushed them she might have been accused of trying to institutionalise and thus make permanent her own dominant position in this region.

Now however the idea emanates from her neighbours. The Bangladesh President has put it forward formally, officially, and at the highest level. But unofficially the idea has also been floated in Pakistan in the form of a most significant article in the *Pakistan Economist* which I will discuss a little later and which probably would not have been so conspicuously published in a more or less orthodox journal unless it had at least the tacit approval of important circles.

I can understand caution being mixed with welcome, as in the first comment by the official spokesman in New Delhi on the proposal by the Bangladesh President. But I cannot understand the hope which lurks behind the scenes in New Delhi that if India sits tight long enough and makes no commitment to it the idea will just float away without India having to take the blame for killing it. It is a sign of strength, not weakness, to sit at the table with yesterday's enemies, and here we are not talking about enemies but about neighbours who range from the subdued to the suspicious to the friendly, helpful and kindred.

To some extent Bangladesh is also responsible for India's defensive and suspicious response. Dacca has taken the initiative in a most haphazard fashion; a third rate cigarette company would not launch a brand in this way. When Mr Eric Gonzalves, one of the seniormost Indian diplomats, met President Zia in Dacca a few months ago not a word of this idea was breathed to him. Yet only a month



later the Bangladesh Vice-Premier brought a fullblown proposal to New Delhi in the definitive form of a formal letter from President Zia to Mrs. Gandhi.

THE proposal was handled and sponsored very casually by the Bangladesh Press. It was first disclosed, and that too only in reply to a question, at a Press conference in Dacca which had been called for the Foreign Minister to talk about the Islamic meeting in Islamabad. The disclosure received a single column treatment in the *Bangladesh Observer* on a page on which it was dwarfed by the Foreign Minister's statement about the Islamabad meeting. A day later there was another Press conference by the Foreign Minister, and a public speech by President Zia, and neither of them made any reference at all to the proposed South Asian summit. Some promotion that! It has been claimed in Dacca that some South Asian countries have welcomed the idea. But no details have been given.

Worse followed after this half-cock launching. At Islamabad the Bangladesh Foreign Minister expansively said on May 19 that the summit would consider setting up "an organisation", and that the Maldives, Afghanistan and Iran would be welcome to join it. Now there may be nothing wrong about setting up an organisation or about widening the summit. But in the first place, these ideas are frightfully premature at this stage; in the second place, the time, venue and occasion for proposing them have to be carefully chosen; the choice by the Bangladesh Foreign Minister was either amateurish or insensitive to India's susceptibilities.

There are also some slightly more substantial reasons for caution in New Delhi both about the formal proposal by Bangladesh and the unofficial one emanating from Pakistan. Bangladesh and Pakistan take a very different view from India's about events in Afghanistan. India sees these events as part of a bigger problem; Pakistan and Bangladesh see them as the creation of Soviet expansionism alone. This being so, India is bound to be cautious about any ideas which might have been triggered off in Pakistan or Bangladesh by the Afghan crisis.

There is also another aspect. Both of these suggestions for regional cooperation came in the wake of a move started earlier by an unofficial organisation in Colombo (where incidentally the Bangladesh initiative first saw the light of day in the Press anywhere) for a seminar in Peking for discussing the establishment of a regional organisation which would include China as well. This gives colour to the suspicion which exists in some quarters in New Delhi that ideas of regional cooperation are being floated by India's neighbours only to internationalise their bilateral disputes with India and to create another platform where pressures may be exerted upon India.

But notwithstanding all these reasons for caution, ways of ensuring closer cooperation among the South Asian countries, and especially economic cooperation, ought to be high up on the Indian agenda. They were so once. They will be so again when India is once again more confident of itself, more giving, more outward looking, less afflicted by its present sickness of the soul which makes her preoccupied with petty politicking at home that some of the pettiness has infiltrated

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into its handling of external relations. But in the mean time India ought to be a little more open to ideas which others take the responsibility and initiative of proposing.

The question is sometimes asked what kind of economic cooperation there can be between India and its neighbours, when India can supply them most of what they need and they have hardly anything to sell to India. The question betrays both myopia and hyper-metropia. On the one hand it overlooks the fact that the present economic imbalance between India and its neighbours has in the short run a beneficial diplomatic dimension. On the other hand it overlooks the fact that in the long run there can be a balanced development of the whole region which will be the faster the more balanced it is.

PAKISTAN exports roughly one-fourth as much as India imports. Every one per cent of its needs that India may import from Pakistan would be four per cent of Pakistan's exports. This is the magnification India can have on Pakistan's export horizon, and on the import horizon also it could be substantial if not as much. Not every transaction would be on the best prices that India can get elsewhere. But markets are not won, and countries *never*, by only driving hard merchandising bargains. A loss sustained today may be an investment for tomorrow, and a loss in economic terms may be a gain in diplomatic terms.

As for the day after tomorrow, one only needs to remember the fact that all six countries of South Asia (with the possible exception of Sri Lanka in some respects) form part of a single geo-economic zone bound together by the drainage of the Himalayas into the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The greatest single economic potential of this zone lies in its river systems which are the lifeline of its agriculture because of the irrigation they can provide, and of its industry too because of the enormous power potential. This potential cannot be developed as greatly or as fast by any one country of the zone as it can be by all the six together, and whatever each country can contribute to the proper harnessing of the rivers passing through it can pay many times over for all the merchandise which that country can import from India or any of the other five countries.

Nepal is an outstanding example of this. By harnessing its rivers for generating power (and they cannot be so harnessed without Nepal extending India the fullest cooperation for it) Nepal can save India a flood damage of almost Rs 1,000 crores which these untrained rivers cause in eastern India almost every year, and it can sell India unlimited quantities of power.

So much for the niggardly calculations which traders and merchants make about what today's Nepal—or Bangladesh or Pakistan or any of the other five countries—can sell India. More boldly relevant for the future is what was written in the excellent *Pakistan Economist* article by Mr M.B. Naqvi, a senior Pakistani journalist, after he had toured India.

He expressed amazement at the industrial progress he saw in India, but he still has the courage to urge that each of the six countries (he also spoke of the same six as the Bangladesh President) should open its markets to the goods of all the other five, and all the six should so coordinate their future investment and development planning that there may develop a mutually beneficial "interlocking interdependence through investments in vertically divided industrial complexes on a truly international basis. This allround interdependence for raw materials, essential components, accessories and other industrial intermediates of everyone should be supplemented by free political institutions that fully safeguard the interests of politically or economically weak sections."

There is a lot else in Naqvi's article and in his vision which shows how even such obstinate political problems as Kashmir can be made less stubborn through extensive cooperation in other fields. But here attention needs to be focussed on this economic core of his article because of the interesting coincidence, *if* coincidence it is, that the Bangladesh President has also proposed the same thing and at about the same time.

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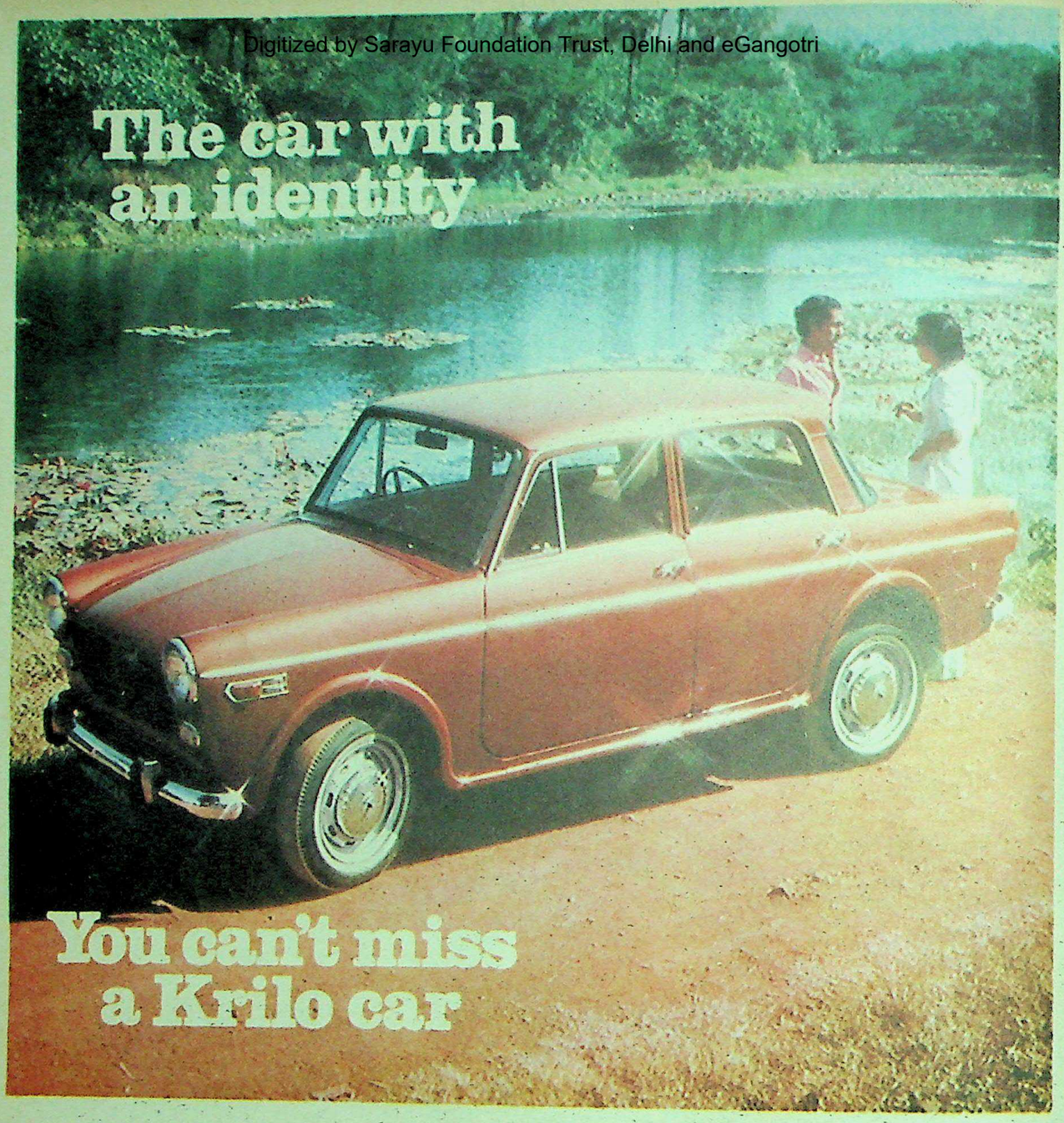

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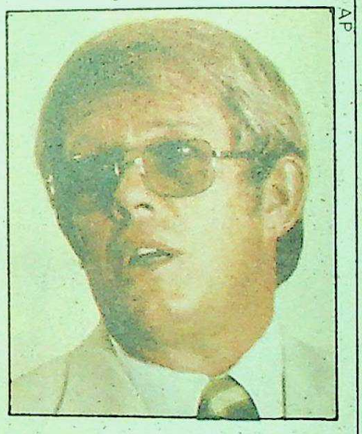
THE WORLD

Carter barter

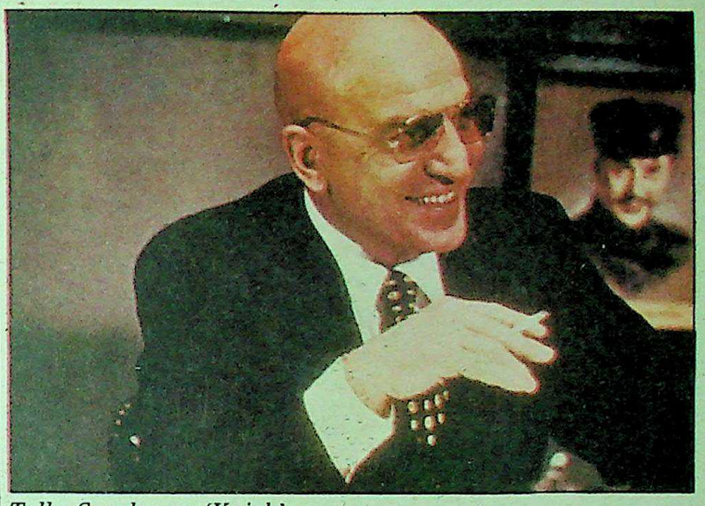
Sometime in early 1978, Billy Carter had read something about Libya in a newspaper. Six months later he was in Libya as guest of Ahmed Shahati, one of the most powerful men in Tripoli. Billy soon stepped into the unassigned role of an American Arab sympathiser, T.E. Lawrence-style. The result was a deal which he arranged between the oil-rich nation and an American oil refining firm, for several million dollars in commission. And a great deal of embarrassment for Billy's brother, the President: Billy had gone around



AP

saying things like "there is a hell of a lot more Arabians than there is Jews" that the US media did not like one bit.

Scene of inaction



Telly Savalas as 'Kojak'

The stars went on strike. We mean those who caper their way on the silver screen. Just a few days back, actors at the 20th Century Fox studios staged a strike due to conflicts between performers and producers and put the thriving American industry into its worst labour crisis for 20 years. But who is responsible? No animate being but an entirely new phenomena known as the 'pay television'. Pay TV programmes are usually old or recent films screened for a fee paid by TV owners without commercials. This form of TV was worth $ 400 million last year. The actors along with musicians, radio and TV performers want six per cent of the gross revenue of the programmes before they are sold to pay TV programmes. But producers have only offered three per cent and that too after the cinema has been screened over 15 days during a two-year period. Whatever the outcome, the strike was not without the usual sets and actors. The posters had an emblem of the Greek mask combining tragedy and comedy—hardly an emblem associated with industrial strikes. Then there was Telly Savalas, all dressed up in a dark skirt as Kojak. A film actor is a film actor is a film ac...

Get the picture?

Not an Unidentified Flying Object making to land in front of London's elegant St Paul's Cathedral. But a silhouetted Victorian gas lamp as it appears to a passer-by on the bank of the river Thames near Southwark. The giant lamp appears to dwarf the magnificent structure of the cathedral, with its cross and dome. And what is so special about the gas lamp ? It hangs beside the house in which Sir Christopher Wren, the man who designed the cathedral and many other landmarks in London, once lived.

AP

Braving all Hazzards

AP

Who ever heard of an actress, stuntperson and motor racer all rolled into one? Catherine Bach is all three—and more. She has made herself famous as the roadhouse waitress in the enormously successful television series appropriately called "The Dukes of Hazzard". And the young lady is original: the stunts she performs on the screen are all her own. Off screen, she has made a name for herself as a motor racer.

Her vehicle is a jeep.Picture shows her leaning on the tyre. One wonders if she, now relaxed and smiling is planning another of her stunning antics

Although Ms Bach's acting career has started with the television, she is a woman with great promise—and plenty of good looks which may be her biggest asset.

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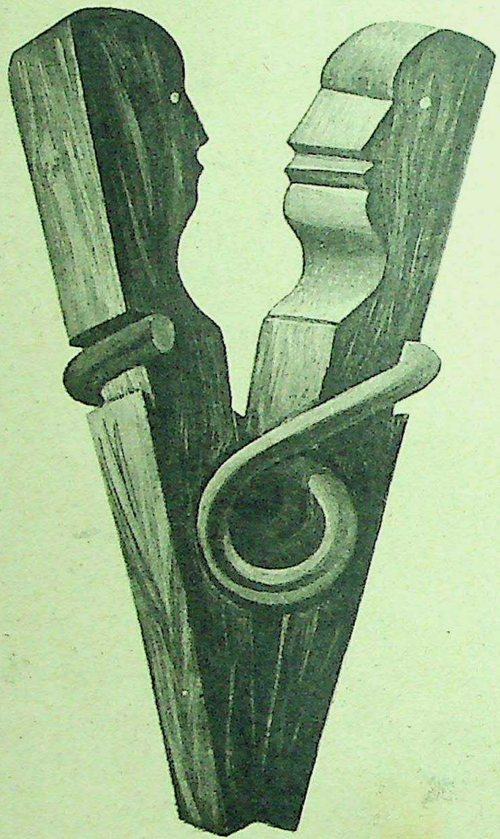
Calibre: It's when you don't succumb to marriage just because it seems the easiest solution to lust, laundry and loneliness.



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cali–ber: It's what some men look for in other men and all men look for in suitings.

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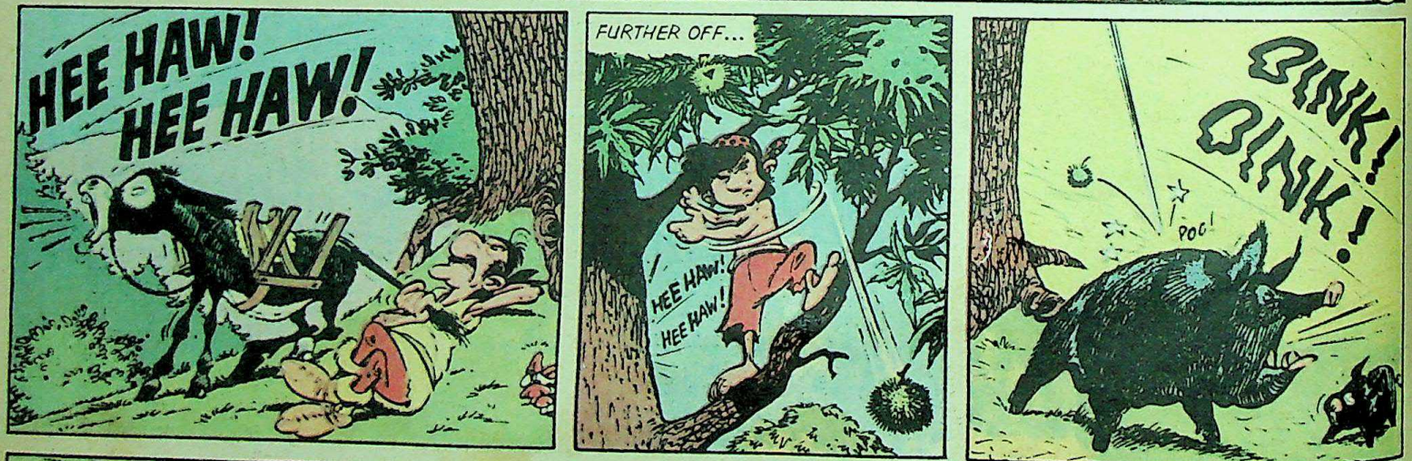

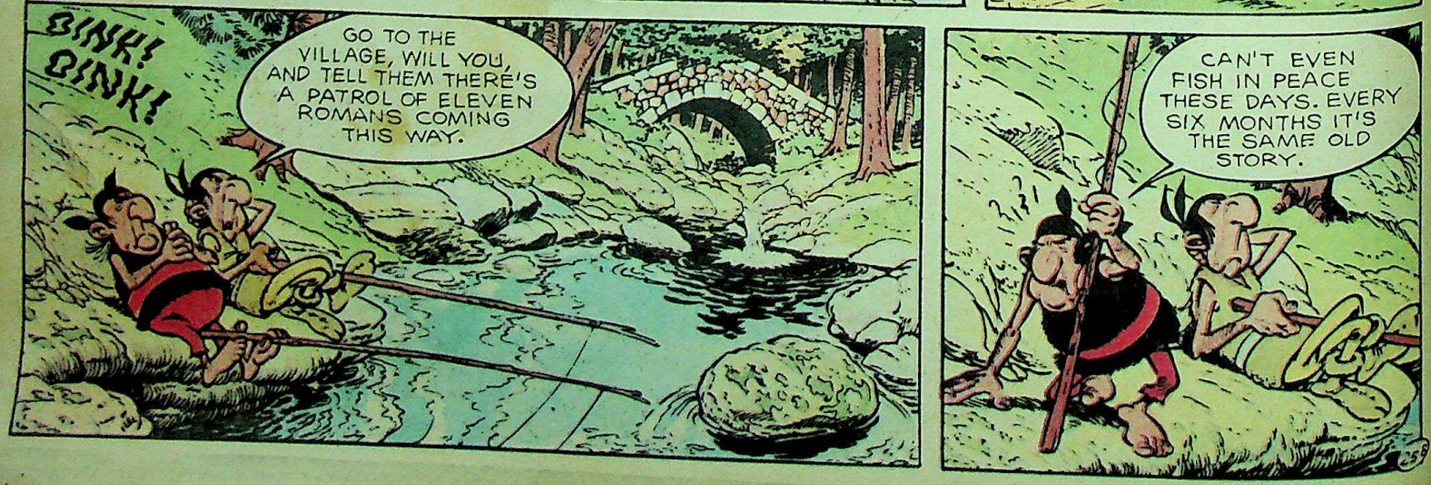

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One of the most successful political films

I HAVE never cared much for Mrinal Sen's politics. Nor for many of his films. Yet I empathise with his concerns. For they are the concerns of any sensitive, honest creative person in our time. Or, for that matter, of anyone who chooses to keep his eyes open in this country of the blind. Each and every Mrinal Sen film has refused to go beyond its ostensibly simple-minded political matrix. Each and every film of his found glib ideological explanations for every human situation that went wrong. And this happened far too often for it to be either a coincidence or an artistic declension. Obviously the filmmaker has made a conscious, deliberate decision to keep his film that way. And it may be worthwhile finding out why.

His easy politics have not made Mrinal Sen's films any more popular. Rhetoric and harangue may have endeared him to a certain kind of audience who are perhaps particularly vulnerable to the appeal of naive ideological solutions but they have certainly not won him a big following. Except for the odd film like *Bhuvan Shome*, very few of his films have really packed the halls or made his distributors yell for more. In fact, his last film *Parashuram*, which won Arun Mukherjee the best actor's award, has not yet found a distributor and many of his other films have put him and his financiers back by quite a tidy sum. *Chorus* is a case in point. The head of a nationalised bank which financed the film reportedly kept the stills stuck up on the walls of his office room to remind himself of what he should never touch again.

If nothing else, this means that Mrinal Sen is an honest man. He is obviously not selling his politics for popularity or personal gain. The vast number of politically conscious people

By PRITISH NANDY

Geeta Sen as the mother and Sreela Majumdar as the second daughter

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who swear by the Left are obviously not thronging to Mrinal Sen films; they are only paying lip service to the bitch-goddess of committed art and then joining the queue for *Jai Santoshi Maa* tickets. The suffering masses may be the subject of Mrinal Sen's films, but they are obviously not his audience.

Being a sensitive filmmaker and an intelligent man, I am sure he recognises this. Just as I am quite sure that he has no misconceptions about his role or his audience. Obviously then, he has chosen to stay within this cinematic matrix because he is convinced that it makes sense and is intrinsic to his creative universe. He could hardly be doing it for effect for the umpteenth time!

Mamta Shankar as the truant daughter

So it is time, I guess, we ought to take a hard, serious look at his craft again and see where he wants to take us and why. For despite their political garb, some of his films have demonstrated rare sensitivity and acumen. There is an unquestionable authenticity underlying all the didactic statements and shibboleths masquerading as social verities. And *Ek din Pratidin* is just the right time to do this. For in my opinion it is undoubtedly Mrinal Sen's finest film. By far.

It is a different kind of film, in one sense. As any Mrinal Sen afficionado would tell you. In another sense, it is the apotheosis of all that he has been trying to do and say over the past many years. It is a film about interiors. About a home; about the minds of people in that home; how these people react in a moment of crisis and yet how they stand together as a phalanx at the slightest external threat. Each and every person in this film, each and every member of Hrishikesh Sengupta's faltering family is carefully etched and convincingly portrayed in detail. There is no attempt to gloss over the inconsequential and propagate a vision. The vision of this film is made up of small, inconsequential details, human failings, tentative hopes, the tender violence we commit on each other at every crossroad of stress. And yet, strangely enough, from all these little details, these hurts that we inflict upon each other, emerges an arabesque of hope, an unusual vision of human destiny. Quiet, dignified, protean in its own way.

The film is set in the tumbledown ruins of a magnificent mansion built in 1857, the year of the Sepoy Mutiny. The intensely private drama of the family is played out against the frescoes, colonnades, mosaics and weathered splendour of the past. The broken walls, the cracked plaster, the broken panes of the windows replaced by torn calendar sheets. The *taedium vitae* of this sordid dwelling place becomes a magnificent theatre where the most violent emotions are expressed with restraint and quiet dignity. By moving away from the ostensibly political, Mrinal Sen has produced one of the most successful political films of our time. A film that even someone like me can understand, admire and find wholly unforgettable. The storyline of *Ek din Pratidin* is flimsy, and perhaps rightly so, in the context of Mrinal Sen's intentions. What charges it with special power is the filmmaker's insight into the subterranean tensions that hold a middle class family together: the financial insecurity, the latent emotional traumas waiting for an opportunity to break through the quiet waters of genteelity, the understated violence, the marauding sense of loss and deprivation. All this is played out against this magnificent scenario of brick and mortar, right in front of prying neighbours who move in and out of their lives (and the frame) with the easy grace of a stampeding herd of wild bisons running through a particularly small china shop.

Every little detail is taken care of in this meticulous film. The dented globe on the study table, the mismatched curtains, the plastic table cloth with floral design, the Bengali almanac, the surfeit of calendars to hide the peeling plaster on the walls, the *gamchha* hanging on the door. Everything is in place, just right. Every single neighbour has been beautifully characterised: they look, speak, bitch with perfect ease and authenticity, as Chinu the eldest daughter of the house (and its only wage-earner) fails to turn up home one evening.

This is what the film is about. Chinu's delay in coming back home one evening, and how the other members of Hrishikesh Sengupta's family react to this. As evening gives way to night, and then night gives way to morning, the tension builds up. Fear gives way to ire. Ire gives way to resentment. Resentment to hysteria. And hysteria to hurt. One by one the masks fall off and the wounded visage of middle class morality stares at you. Respectability breaks down. Everyone starts hurting each other, identifying blame, pointing a finger at each other as the tumbledown mansion takes on menacing proportions in the dark and the prying neighbours keep their nightlong vigil.

Then begins the panic-stricken search. To the police station, to the hospitals, to the morgue. The fragile security of the home is threatened and in its wake arrive anger, fear, humiliation, despondency, which like the traditional wolf had been kept outside the shuttered door by Chinu's secure bank job, however ill-paying it may have been. The night thickens with tension as this strange, tumbledown mansion traps everyone in the painful insecurity of its ruins. There is a strange sense of destruction and despair, of history working out its inexorable logic.

Ironically, the search never ends. Not even when the girl returns alone in a taxi just as dawn is about to break. Accusing eyes try to pin her down for having strayed, yet everyone is uncertain. No one knows how to react to her coming back, just as no one knew how to react to the possibility of her never coming back. And this is precisely where lies the quiet beauty of this film, its strange dignity. No moral questions are ever asked. Nothing is said explicitly. Only stray insinuations are made by some of the neighbours. And in these insinuations lie the vulnerability, the decadence, the painful self-pity of petty bourgeoisie morality. The conflicts and contradictions of our life become open wounds and fester in the glare of daylight. Till silence raises its voice and screams into the coming morning.

Hope? Yes, there is hope, says Mrinal Sen. Just as soon as the intran-

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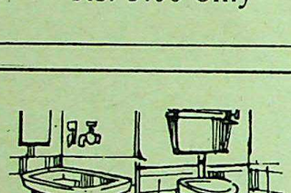

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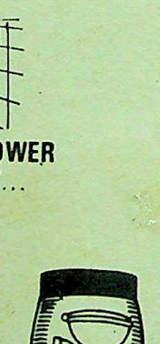

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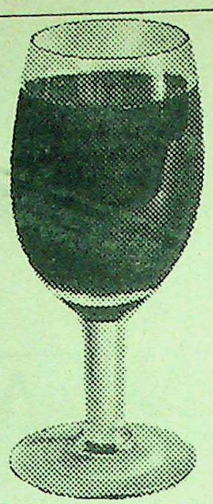
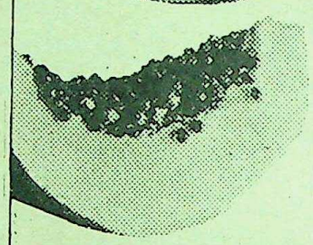
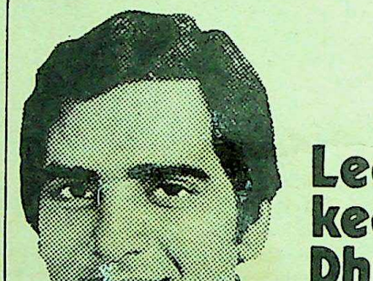


Leonard chills wine in Paris



Leonard cools papayas in Patna



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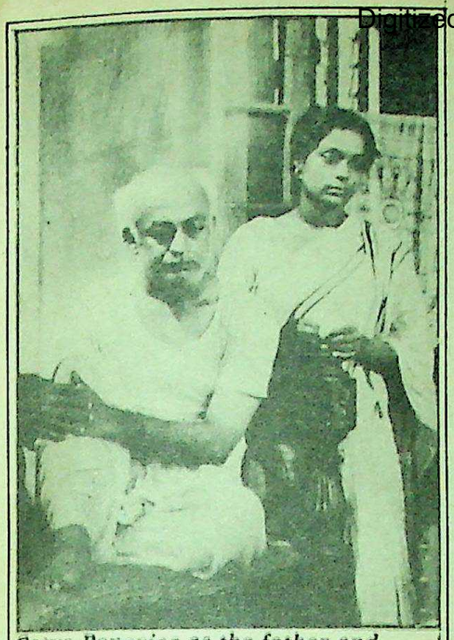


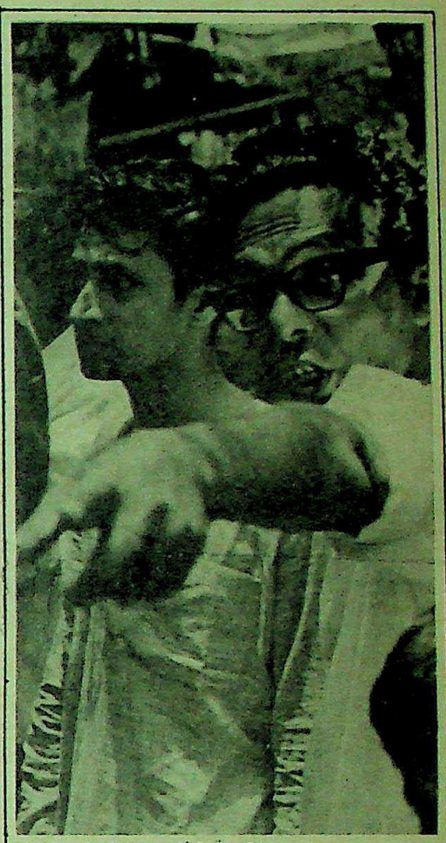
Satya Banerjee as the father and Sreela Majumdar

Sen's best

By AIN RASHEED KHAN

"I always give great deal of importance to the feminine characters because I believe that I know women better than I do men. I think that reality can be filtered better through women's psychologies. They are more instinctive more sincere."

Michelangelo Antonioni



Nimai Ghosh

Mrinal Sen (right) directing Ranjit Mallick in Interview

ALTHOUGH the emergence of the middle-class/lower middle-class working woman in our urban set-up has created distressing problems and new situations, it has not attracted the attention of very many film-makers in our country. Satyajit Ray's *Mahanagar* (made almost two decades ago) was the first serious and significant attempt to understand "her" problems. And the film moved us. Mrinal Sen in his attempt to understand and portray this problem has not only made what is undoubtedly his best and most subtle film so far but also probably his first where the film speaks for itself, not like theatre, nor like literature. It speaks in pure cinematic language. One might say that Sen has come out with totally unsuspected depths. I think Derek Malcolm of the *Guardian* put it beautifully when he said that: "the new film (*Ek din Pratidin*) is a magnificent example of a control and restraint we were beginning to think he might not possess." Well, one saw signs of this restraint and control in *Oka Ori Katha*, another well-made film of his which, unfortunately, never got a chance of public exposure.

What distinguishes this film from all previous Sen films is that this film beyond doubt establishes his mastery over the film media and also displays his growing concern and acute awareness of the demands of this media. Consequently, the other features that distinguish it from his other films and make it one of the finest made in the country, are technical excellence, structural novelty, controlled acting and a general stamp of reflection and maturity. And of course, little trimming and subtler handling of the social concerns.

The scheme of the film is neat and believable. He dexterously weaves small episodic threads into the texture of the film to establish the suspense, search, hidden tensions and rifts, in the course of 125 minutes or so.

As I have said earlier, structurally the film is different from his other films. The structure evolved out of the content. Each role is different from the other. As it becomes later and later, and the family's searches around the city morgues, police stations and hospitals continue, camera and characters are continuously on the move. The screeching hoots of the distant cars and the increasing noise of the scooter indicate the deepening of the night and the crisis. (Incidentally, the search in scooter and the noise is probably influenced by Fellini's "Amarcorde"). The physical restlessness and anxiety has been beautifully conveyed by imaginative camera movements. As the night grows deeper, the camera gradually becomes slow and finally it is almost static—and that is the moment when he reveals the rifts and the tensions. Now, he resorts to some excellent cutting to bring out the inward restlessness of the characters involved. All this is very consciously created.

A word about K K Mahajan and his brilliant photography. With his smooth and intelligent camera movements, low-key lightings and some superb track shots, he helps Mrinal Sen in revealing the "expressionist strength" of his images. In spite of the massive darkness that envelops this city every night he has been able to bring out the unreality of the city night and build a poignant contrast with half-lit indoor shots where the drama takes place.

While seeing a film like this one wishes one could share the maker's journey from the script to the cinematic execution, which must have been extremely exciting, and in this particular case, rewarding too.

Photographs by Subhash Nandy

sigent landlord makes a rude insinuation in public, the entire family once again comes together, as a solid phalanx to face the onslaught of moral censure. Fuck your *bhadralok* culture, screams Chinu's brother in frustrated anger, echoing the feelings of the audience, who by now have completely identified with the loss and the loneliness of each and every member of Hrishikesh Sengupta's family. The quiet exile of the pensioner father, who always looks lost and forlorn; the tired drudgery of Chinu's mother, who finally breaks down under the tension; Minu's vivacity and despair; her bewildered brothers, not knowing what to do and yet trying desperately to hold the family together. And yet, overriding all this is hope. That hope which unites the family against the marauding eyes of the neighbours, against society's brutal, uninformed censure. It is this incredible strength that finally holds together the Sengupta family, lends each person courage and dignity. And as the new morning arrives, and everyone returns to their predictable drudgery, the quiet sunlight heightens the grandeur and the sorrow of their lives.

Yes, this is a truly unforgettable film. With memorable acting by Satya Banerjee as the father, Gita Sen as the mother and Sreela Majumdar as Minu. Mamta Sankar has not much to do as Chinu but looks exquisitely beautiful whenever she is on the screen. She is undoubtedly one of the most lovely women that the Bengali screen has ever thrown up and one of the very few who look intelligent. And all this is heightened by some remarkable photography by K. K. Mahajan, who starts off the film with an exquisite visual sequence of a rickshaw entering the lane just outside the house. That sets the mood for the entire film.

Even if a film like *Ek din Pratidin* is made once in a long while, Bengali cinema has nothing to be despondent about.

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Infighting plagues Congress (I)

By BARUN SENGUPTA

WILL Mrs Gandhi be able to control the infighting in her Party? Of the three or four major internal problems she is facing today, factionalism in the Congress(I) is one. In almost every state, even where they are not in power, Congress(I) leaders are more busy with intra-Party feuds than with anything else. Not that this infighting is a new development in Indian politics. Most Indian political organisations are afflicted by the disease which has assumed serious proportions since the fall of the Janata government. The Janata Party and government collapsed within three years mainly because of infighting. During the whole of the Janata rule and at the time of the parliamentary election campaign Congress(I) leaders repeatedly stressed this serious weakness of the Janata and questioned its ability to govern. This campaign issue fetched the Congress(I) a lot of votes.

Now, if people see that the Congress(I) men are no different what will it do to the image of the Party? Mrs Gandhi is quite aware of the seriousness of the problem and is getting frantic in her bid to control it as far as possible.

But, for various reasons it is a difficult task—no less difficult than even the problem of controlling inflation. First, intra-Party feuds are not a peculiarity of the Congress(I). So the malaise lies deeper. In the case of the democratic Parties their internal squabbles can be seen by everyone, because most of the time fights are conducted through the Press. In the case of the others the fighting goes on mainly inside the Party away from the public eye. The Congress(I), however, is a strange Party. It is neither absolutely democratic in its internal functioning nor is it a hundred per cent autocratic organisation. No one in it today will dare to oppose the supreme leader or even whisper against any of her firm decisions; but even an ordinary worker can abuse a PCC president or a member of the Party's parlimentary board without being afraid of any disciplinary action.

Once Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury was assaulted by Congress workers in the presence of Mrs Gandhi at Calcutta airport. Mr Choudhury was then the West Bengal PCC president. No action was taken against those workers. A few days after that incident Party workers belonging to the opposite camp insulted Mr Pranab Mukherjee at the state Party headquarters. Again no disciplinary action was taken. Although these incidents took place in 1979 the present situation remains largely unaltered. In such an organisation though there cannot be a scramble for the post of the supreme leader while the leader is still alive, there can very easily be fights for other coveted posts.

After Sardar Patel's death Nehru was the unquestioned supremo. The situation changed after his death and again reverted to the original pattern with the emergence of Mrs Gandhi as the undisputed leader after her massive victory at the 1971 polls. In 1977 some leaders tried to change that situation but they failed miserably.

Second, after the last Assembly elections, mainly on Sanjay's initiative, certain persons were installed as Chief Ministers inspite of strong opposition from powerful factions in those states. Now, after Sanjay's sudden death those powerful factions are trying to oust those Chief Ministers. This is bound to create tension inside the Party. Almost all the Congress(I) Chief Ministers are facing such a situation.

Third, for various reasons some senior Party-men were left out of the central and state governments. Even if they do not have any mass following or standing inside the Party, they are masters in the art of intrigue and they have the support of some powerful business houses. These people are also very active now.

Fourth, some very ambitious bureaucrats are also encouraging the internecine quarrels of the Congress(I). To give a classic example, an IAS special assistant of an economic Minister was trying to get his Minister changed and bring in another man from the same state with the help of some politically powerful business men. The special assistant went to the extent of requesting MPs and leaders of the Party to speak against his Minister to the PM. Fifth, a large number of Congress(I) leaders have no political conviction or sense of dedication. Their only motto in life is to occupy gainful and powerful positions. In an organisation where discipline has been much devalued for about 11 years, such self-seekers can always create havoc. And, that is what they may do if they cannot be controlled immediately.

Mrs Gandhi's problem is that, whatever a large number of Indians may think, she is no reincarnation of the goddess Durga. She cannot solve singlehanded all the problems, fight all the enemies and defeat all the intrigues simultaneously.

Mrs Gandhi's problem is that, whatever a large number of Indians may think, she is no reincarnation of the goddess Durga. She cannot solve single-handed all the problems, fight all the enemies and defeat all the intrigues simultaneously. But, for the survival of her government and Party she will have to thwart all the attacks. If her own Partymen do not stand by her during these days of crisis she is bound to fail. Because, the continued infighting in the Congress(I) will not only tell upon the prestige of the Party, but reduce the authority of the Government and weaken Mrs Gandhi's personal political position.

Will Rajiv be able to help her control the infighting in the Party? If he has the personality and the tact there is no reason why he should not be able to. After all, as the supreme leader's son he will have unlimited authority and with that authority he can first eliminate the cent per cent self-seekers from the Party, clear out the intriguing and ambitious bureaucrats from vantage positions and then proceed to impose discipline within the organisation slowly and steadily. If he does this then there is no reason why he should not be able to help his mother control intra-Party feuds. Definitely it requires personality, tact and judgment. No one can stop the squabbling of thousands of self-seekers only with the help of a *danda*.

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"India is not our country"

Jamaat presents a blueprint for secession

THE Jamaat-e-Islami's threat to start a Khomeini type fundamentalist movement has added fresh tensions on a state and a government which already has more than a fair share of them: Jammu and Kashmir. Sheikh Tajamul Islam, (the president of the Jammat-e-Tulaba the youth wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami), preaching secession openly at a Press conference in Srinagar on August 5, declared that his organisation was all set to launch an Iran type Islamic revolution for the liberation of Kashmir. "India," he said, "is not our country". Nor was he willing to accept the validity of the Indian constitution for the state of Jammu and Kashmir. "Our allegiance is to the Islamic constitution and the Islamic constitution alone," he asserted.

While fringe secessionist views are not unknown in Kashmir, and in fact, are mostly dismissed with a yawn, what made everybody sit up was Tajamul's claim that the movement had the backing of the Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah. The Sheikh decried the allegation as one more attempt to malign him. "It is a deliberate and calculated move to sour my relationship with the centre," he said. The very next day he summoned his cabinet to discuss the matter, on a prescription: crackdown on the 'anti-nationals'. By August 7 morning 64 persons were taken into custody, one of them under the State Public Safety Act. The first impression was the arrested persons were either the activists or the supporters of the Jamaat-e-Islami. But the police kept the identities of the arrested persons a closely guarded secret.

Whatever the Sheikh's calculations may be, there is no denying that the Jamaat-e-Tulaba has thrown up a challenge to his authority. Tajamul's claims that his organisation had the active support of more than 100,000 Kashmiris, if true, must cause some serious anxieties to the Sheikh. The 100,000 is an exaggerated figure, but even if they are one-tenth that, it is still a problem, as they are well-organised. Tajamul says that 250 active units of his organisation have already been set up in the schools, colleges and the universities. Apart from this the organisation has about 12,000 associate members known as *Rafiqs*. The policy making council has 54 members.

Their plan of action goes like this: First, the organisation will launch what it says will be a massive education campaign to impress upon the people that their salvation lies in an independent sovereign state of Kashimr. "Once we succeed in this, the people themselves will rise in revolt," Tajamul explains. He also asserts that his organisation is not averse to assistance from foreign countries. "Why not? After all Kashmir is a disputed territory," he argues: To him, India is occupying the state illegally and has violated her commitments for determining the status of Kashmir through a plebiscite. He, however, does not think that Pakistan too is occupying Kashmir illegally. His reasoning: Pakistan is still committed to holding a plebiscite and that clears her of the charges of occupation. Nor does he think vacation of Pakistani occupation an important requirement for holding a plebiscite.

O.N. GANJU, Srinagar

The blind: showing the way

The government is no help

"The government is apathetic towards the blind. We are not like the other backward classes who constitute a vote bank. And, therefore, we do not have enough political backing to get our demands conceded," said S. K. Rungta, acting general secretary of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), who went on hunger strike from 1 August to 5 August, in front of the Prime Minister's Safdarjung Road residence to press home demands for better facilities and more employment opportunities for the sightless. Their demands were, however, not new. Most of them had been included in the charter of demands they had intended to present to the Prime Minister on 16 March, the day the police lathi-charged the blind demonstrators proceeding towards the Prime Minister's house to present their demands.

Their chief demand is that blind persons, registered with the special employment exchanges for the physically handicapped, for one year or more be given employment immediately, and that blind persons should be treated as a backward class and given appropriate job reservations. "The government spends so much for our studies and our education and when we are finally educated there are no jobs available to us. We are also human beings, we too, have to earn a living," said Rungta. As a matter of fact, since March the NFB has been trying to negotiate with the government to ensure increased reservation of jobs for the blind in government offices. In reply to the charter of demands presented by the blind in March, the department of social welfare had stated on 25 April that a task force would be constituted to look into the matter. According to Mr Rungta, nothing more was heard. Finally, they wrote a letter to the Prime Minister to look into the matter. It was only in response to this letter that between 14 June and 31 July five senior officials in five different Ministries were appointed to look into the matter. "The government has no interest in the blind otherwise they could not have taken so long to appoint five officials," said R. Gupta, another blind agitator. According to Mr Rungta, out of a total of ninety lakh blind persons, only 1,200 are employed.

When there was no progress, S. K. Rungta decided to go on a fast unto death. It was at this point that the government woke up. First, on the eve of their fast unto death, representatives of the NFB were approached by officials of the Ministry of social welfare. The same evening the representatives of the NFB had talks with Mr Shankaranand, the Minister for social welfare. The talks failed as the Minister did not commit himself to a time-bound programme. The fast was then launched. Next, the representatives of the NFB had talks with the Labour Minister, T. Anjaiah. After two days of deliberations an agreement was reached which in effect conceded nothing. According to the agreement, all the Ministries have been requested to nominate an officer of the rank of deputy secretary for monitoring the reservation orders, especially to the physically handicapped.

As far as the time-bound programme for employment of the blind is concerned it has been agreed that letters would be sent to Chief Ministers emphasising the need to take all possible measures to rehabilitate the

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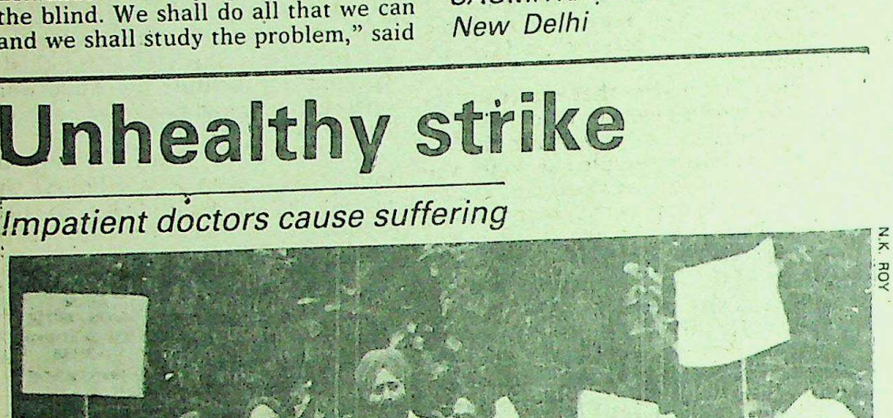
blind registered with special employment exchanges. A meeting of the employing Ministries and private employers would be called within a month to "impress upon them the need to employ at least one blind person immediately with ultimate objective of absorbing all blind persons registered at special employment agencies." The agreement has been reached without the government conceding any of the demands which the NFB had enumerated in its charter of demands. "Our sympathies are with the blind. We shall do all that we can and we shall study the problem," said the Labour Minister, Mr Anjaiah.

Meanwhile, Madan Lal Khurana has claimed that the commission constituted to enquire into the lathi charge on the blind on 16 March, has held the police guilty. According to him, though Delhi's Lt Governor Mr Jagmohan had asked for departmental action against the police officer, the request has not only been ignored, but the officer has been given an important portfolio in the crime branch.

SAUMITRA BANERJEE,
New Delhi

Unhealthy strike

Impatient doctors cause suffering



N.K. ROY

Junior doctors demonstrating outside Nirman Bhavan, Delhi

Since 5 July, around 1,600 junior doctors of Delhi's six major government hospitals have gone on strike. As a result, medical services in the capital may soon be paralysed. Only 600 senior doctors and about 220 doctors, appointed after the strike to help the former, remain to take care of the patients admitted to these hospitals. Some of the outdoor departments have already been closed down. The rest are able to cope with only half the number of patients (about 13,000 daily) requiring diagnosis and treatment. The Health Ministry, on receiving a fortnight's notice by the Junior Doctors' Federation of Delhi, took steps to prevent the strike from crippling the health service altogether.

Essential services such as maternity and emergency units are being run efficiently by overworked senior doctors and the newly appointed doctors. Small hospitals and dispensaries all over the city have been asked to accommodate and treat patients diverted from the major hospitals. However, these measures are at best palliative, not curative, and if the situation is to be prevented from turning into a crisis, the strike will have to be called off or new doctors will have to be found to replace the striking doctors.

The strike is fast turning into a nightmare for the poorer sections of society who form the majority of patients in these hospitals—the Lok Nayak Jaya Prakash, Govind Ballabh Pant, Sucheta Kripalani, Kalavati Saran, Ram Manohar Lohia and Safdarjang hospitals. Ramwati, a 31-year-old labourer was on the verge of tears because she could not have her infant who was suffering from a stomach upset and fever, treated at the Safdarjang hospital. The autonomous All India Institute of Medical Sciences which is cheaper is already overcrowded, with patients spilling in from all parts of the city and outside. So are the small health centres and dispensaries in Delhi. "If we are to go to a private practitioner, it means not giving my children food for the next few days—what am I to do?" she moaned.

Hospital wards which remain overcrowded with patients lying in the aisles and corridors, now have four out of ten beds vacant. Ironically, patient care has improved at these hospital wards simply because there are fewer patients to attend to and the same number of senior doctors are on the rounds. However, with barely 35 per cent of doctors' workforce in action,

Blinding carelessness

On 6 July 30-year-old Baban Vithoba Ughade was admitted to Ward No 20 of the Ophthalmology department of the Medical College Hospital, Nagpur with a minor eye complaint. Next morning, a senior doctor informed him that his left eye had developed an infection and had to be operated. The operation was performed. Baban lost his left eye. He is now having trouble with the right eye and fears that he might lose it too. Baban, a clerk in the retail sales of the Empress Mills is the sole breadwinner of the family consisting of five dependents.

The tragedy that struck the Ughade family is not a lone instance. Officially, some 20 patients have been affected by this infection described as "pseudomonas pyocynic—a very virulent type of infection even immune to antibiotics". No sooner was the infection detected, when the Ophthalmology department of the Nagpur Medical Hospital shut its door to fresh operations. But all too late, for already a dozen or more patients were partially or totally blinded.

What caused the infection to invade the operation theatre of the Medical Hospital? In Nagpur, improper autoclaving sterilisation of surgical instruments, inadequate cleaning of laundry and carelessness on the part of the operating surgeons combined together to cause the tragedy. Doctors agree that once the infection sets in there is hardly any cure other than removing the infected eye to prevent the infection from spreading to the other eye. The tragedy has been aggravated by the apathy of the hospital authorities to conduct an investigation. Their argument was that the investigation would involve a lot of expense: the investigation consisted of sending the eye swab for examination to Bombay!

The episode has caused a flutter in the Maharashtra legislature. Angry members rebuked the government for its indifference in dealing with human lives. Meanwhile, a staggering truth has come to light. It has been found that the Dean of the Medical college is allowed only Rs 250 (a month) for any purchase, and to make other purchases he has to obtain the permission of directors of various health departments stationed at Bombay. Small wonder then, that the sprawling complex of the Medical College at Nagpur lies in filth and dirt and in dire need of good management.

MEGHAND BODHANKAR,
Nagpur

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hospital work has been affected seriously, in spite of senior doctors putting in nearly 12 hours of work daily in place of the normal six hours.

All these problems have been created because the junior doctors have demanded better salaries (class I gazetted officers' grades), a curtailment of working hours, better working conditions and some other facilities, and the government refuses to budge unless the strike is called off. A junior doctor is one who does his or her house-surgeonship, or postgraduation in medicine or surgery. In Delhi, as in seven other centrally-run medical colleges, a junior doctor is paid between Rs 760 and Rs 1300, depending on his or her seniority. In the other states, their counterparts receive between Rs 200—Rs 500. The hours of work put in by a junior doctor in India are around 80-100 hours per week. The Junior Doctors' Federation now demands parity with doctors employed by the government in one of the services as Class I gazetted officers, who start on a salary of Rs 1,350 plus house rent and other allowances. Their working hours are 42 hours a week.

The Health Ministry refuses to grant their demands unconditionally because it claims that the JDF is not a registered body, has no bye-laws and hence is not justified in claiming to be a representative body. Their demands are therefore unreasonable. Says Dr(Mrs) S. K. Sandhu, assistant director-general of health services: "Compared to their cousins in the (other) states these doctor-students known as resident doctors are much better off". Her view that resident doctors all over the world are paid less than doctors employed in the health services, is backed by a house-surgeon who has little sympathy with the striking doctors. Dr Sandhu who is in charge of the Control Cell for Strike Purposes in Nirman Bhavan, feels that the motivation for the strike is partly related to the fact that doctors in India are no longer able to go to the West after graduation because of various restrictions placed on them by foreign, (mainly the American, British and Canadian government)."Moreover they are not willing to work in rural areas. Now since they have to stay in the country, they want a deal better than what they deserve", added Dr Sandhu.

Though it is true that resident doctors the world over get a smaller pay packet than their graduate batchmates who are employed with the national health services, an Indian doctor works twice as many hours daily. The JDF's demand for better working conditions could well be a war-cry of all working people in India. The demand cannot be an issue to strike. However, the government seems to be playing it cool, with the Health Minister, B. Shankaranand having found time to spend five days in Moscow watching the Olympics while his Ministry was embroiled in a situation affecting the lives of thousands of people. The situation has now became a prestige issue with neither the government nor the striking doctors willing to give in: the worst casualty is the poor patient who is not dying but needs treatment

DEBASISH CHATTERJI, New Delhi

A cruel trade

in Nepali girls

"MEIN shadi nahi karugi, kabhi nahin" (I shall never get married, never) said 19-year-old Mala, one of the 50 Nepali girls held by the Lucknow police under the Immoral Traffic Act recently. Tears started rolling down her cheeks as she talked about home, family and friends. It was a sordid story. She had been forced to became a prostitute by underworld operators who had smuggled her out of Nepal two years ago.

In the shadowy lanes of Chowk, the old city of Lucknow, are houses that closely match pigeonholes in their dinginess and stuffiness. Beyond the walls of these houses are the centres of the age-old profession. The dancing girls of the era of nawabs have disappeared and their place has been taken by the innocent-looking Kanchees of Nepal.

These unfortunate girls come from poverty-stricken mountainous areas of Nepal. Males of the family are generally employed away from homes as daily labourers and house servants. Employment opportunities for women are almost nil as the areas lie on a high altitude with almost no means of cultivation. The mode of operation to acquire the Kanchees is simple. A Nepali girl in the profession and belonging to the same area acts as a decoy. With ostentatious display of her costly belongings she impresses the girls. Word spreads around that she has a lucrative job in Lucknow.

The girls, belonging to the age group of 12 to 16 years, are organised into lots by the procurers, who are introduced to the girls by the decoy. Respectable jobs are guaranteed to the girls, while the parents are paid Rs 100 to Rs 150 for each girl.

Normally, during the first six months, a girl does not get paid at all. All their earnings are kept with the *didis*. The girl who earns the most gets a bonus, while others are beaten and raped by the 'bouncers'. Every month a new lot of Kanchees are smuggled in from Nepal, and for each 'new' girl the police is paid a fixed *nazrana* (sum of money). A girl is not kept in one place for more than six months. The sex racketeers keep the girls circulating from one 'kotha' to another and from one city to another. A girl is made to retire at the age of 25, after which she becomes a *didi*. The new *didi* in turn, traps 10 to 15 girls and starts a thriving business. All efforts made by the police to check prostitution have proved futile. The numbers of Kanchees are multiplying and business is booming in the city

DILIP K. AWASTHI, Lucknow

NEXT WEEK
SUNDAY
Who do legislators think they are?
By ARUN SHOURIE
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION:
The Mystery of Nehru's Birthplace

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Racism at Britain's Grays Inn

The lawyers are also prejudiced

ASPIRING BARRISTERS, as is well known, must eat their way into their profession. It is one of the central vertebrae in the ancient spine of the British legal system that pupils will not be called to the bar until they have eaten enough meals at the Inns of Court.

Not that one can just pop in, on a whim, for egg and chips at tea time. One must put on one's gown and turn back one's mind to the days—not so long past—when a successful applicant to the bar had to be 'a gentleman of good standing, not engaged in trade'. One must rigorously abide by the customs of one's Inn (and each is a law unto itself), or one may find oneself at a grim disadvantage later on in one's career.

If the quality of the legal service provided by each Inn were to be judged by the loving care with which its dinner-eating rituals were preserved, then we could be sure to find the most skilled advocates at Grays Inn. For there, when the food has been eaten, when the judges have retired to their private rooms, when permission has been given to smoke, and when the port has started to circulate...the splendid game of 'challenging' begins.

Imagine, if you will, a hall full of grown-up lawyers who have just eaten dinner. One of them may suddenly leap on to the bench on which he (or she) has been sitting, and challenge another to recite a poem. There will need to be a reason for the challenge: perhaps the other person has mispronounced the challenger's name. And it must be addressed to the most senior barrister in the hall. 'Master Senior, I wish to challenge X, on account of Y, to do Z...' (in suitably eloquent courtroom phrases, of course). Master Senior will call upon X to make a speech in self-defence and if that is unsuccessful, then X must pay a fine, in the form of a bottle of port, or else recite the damn poem.

The port flows; challenge follows challenge as barristers and their pupils leap up on to their benches and down again; and phrases are turned ever more wittily as the evening wears on. At a recent guest night, for example, avocado pears had been served for dinner. A young man who had brought his girlfriend to dine with him wished to challenge another young man who was sitting near by: it was alleged that the latter had remarked that the lady had 'a lovely pair'. In defence, he protested that he had been referring to the avocado and to the avocado alone. Master Senior declared that he could not judge the merits of the case until he had seen for himself. So the unfortunate young woman was marched to the top of the hall to show her 'pair' to the eminent barrister. All good, clean fun.

Sometimes things get a little out of hand. On Thursday, 10 July, the after-dinner rituals were in full swing. Songs had been sung, poetry had been recited, and everybody was talking and laughing and drinking and smoking in the usual fashion until a prominent and influential member of the Inn, Ms Clarissa Dickson-Wright, addressed the senior barrister. Master Senior, Sir, she said, these people (indicating a group of eight students) had not been contributing to the evening's entertainment; she moved that they be allowed to sing a song.

One of the eight protested that they did not know any songs to sing. Master Senior replied, in a light-hearted tone, that he found their behaviour offensive nonetheless; he would give them five minutes to come up with a song. Another of them rose to offer, on behalf of the eight, to pay the customary fine. Ms Dickson-Wright objected: Master Senior should order them to leave, she said. Master Senior ruled that the case was proved and the eight students must leave.

Diners at Grays Inn sit in 'messes' of four. Of the offending group one 'mess' consisted of two Africans, a West Indian and an Indian. A quick glance around the hall would have suggested that they were the only black students present.

They were not keen to go. They asked for leave to appeal to the judges (a part of the 'challenging' ritual which is rarely used). Ms Dickson-Wright got up on her bench again. If they wanted to appeal under the Race Relations Act, she said, they were welcome to try. But if they were not going to leave, then let a round of *Rule Britannia* be sung for them. Most of the diners joined in a rousing chorus of *Rule Britannia*. The eight students had no alternative but to walk out.

As the final verse drew to a close, the West Indian and one of the Africans returned. The West Indian stood up to express his disgust—but was jeered and shouted down; then the African student rose to his feet. He felt it was his duty, he said, to report the matter to his father, a high-ranking official at the Nigerian embassy. He would insist that a top-level complaint be made. He demanded the name of the senior barrister—that night a Mr Andrew Pinder.

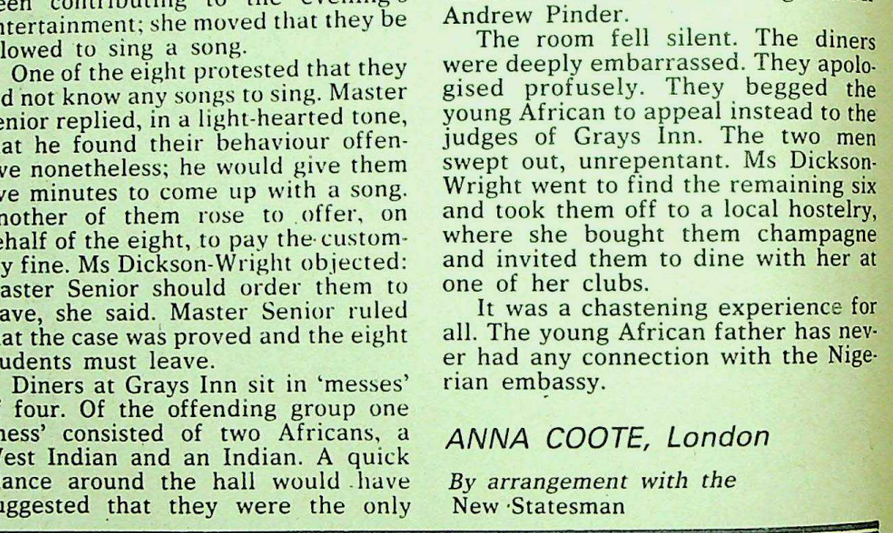
The room fell silent. The diners were deeply embarrassed. They apologised profusely. They begged the young African to appeal instead to the judges of Grays Inn. The two men swept out, unrepentant. Ms Dickson-Wright went to find the remaining six and took them off to a local hostelry, where she bought them champagne and invited them to dine with her at one of her clubs.

It was a chastening experience for all. The young African father has never had any connection with the Nigerian embassy.

ANNA COOTE, London

By arrangement with the New Statesman

THE STEADFAST ONE



Vijyendra Tyagi

Maya Tyagi, the victim of Baghpat, garlanded Raj Narain when he went on a fast at Delhi's Boat Club lawns on 3 August to protest against police atrocities on women and establish the right of women "to live and to live with dignity and honour". And she gave him a glass of orange juice to break his fast on 10 August following appeals by opposition leaders including Bhupesh Gupta of the CPI, who was present when the fast was broken. Raj Narain lost ten kg in weight and managed to focus attention on this serious problem.

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Bombay liquor lords settle with political lords

Hush money soothed the Government

THERE is a temporary truce between the Government and the 350 licensed liquor vendors in Bombay. On 28 December, 1979 the Collector of Bombay had passed an order discontinuing the licence of one Ganji Vijpal Visharia, a licensed foreign liquor vendor, on the grounds that his shop was within the prohibited area, being in the vicinity of a Parsi fire temple. The Collector said that the licence would not be renewed if the premises were not shifted by 31 March, and this date was subsequently extended to 30 June.

Ganji filed a petition challenging the order of the Collector after the latter sent him another notice on 1 July, 1980.

In fact, 350 shops in the city were issued orders to explain why they should not be closed because they were in the vicinity of 75 metres of schools and temples. The liquor vendors were shocked as many of them had only recently renewed their licences without any trouble. Under Sub-rule(2) of Rule 25 of the Bombay Foreign Liquor Rules, as amended in 1979, no licence could be granted in respect of any shop situated within the jurisdiction of any municipal corporation which was within the distance of 75 metres of any educational, religious institution and maternity home.

Justice Mody of the Bombay High Court who heard Ganji's appeal this week, granted an ad-interim injunction pending the admission of the petition. The counsel for the state applied for time to put in an affidavit in reply to oppose admission of the petition. The judge adjourned the matter till 25 July, but directed the respondents without prejudice to the rights and contentions of the parties to remove the seal on the shop and allow the petitioner to carry on his business in the mean while and to return the records seized by them.

Meanwhile the liquor vendors set in motion the wheels of their powerful lobby in the city. Two groups, the Maharashtra Wine Merchants' Association and the Maharashtra Rajya Deshi Daru Vikreta Mahamandal(MRDDVM), met the Chief Minister Mr A.R. Antulay to find out what the order was all about. They also took this opportunity to mint money by raising their prices. There was a scarcity of liquor since 150 shops were actually seized. A bottle which cost between Rs six and Rs seven was sold for Rs 12 after 1 July. The liquor vendors were angry. They alleged that they had made big payoffs to get the licences in the first place. The minimum under-the-table figure was Rs 15,000 and sometimes it went as high as Rs 2 lakhs, where permit rooms were involved. Members of the drinking public were equally incensed. Angry letters to the editor in newspaper columns said "Closing liquor shops on flimsy grounds is not at all surprising. Every year some kind of gimmick is thought up on equally flimsy grounds when a 'settlement' is reached. Last year it was enforcement and subsequent withdrawal of two dry days a week. It doesn't need an astrologer to predict that once the concerned shop owners meet the Government authorities across the table and come to a settlement under the table, the shops will reopen in the very near future."

The bigwigs in the liquor trade like Nandi Kapai of Mohan Meakin, K.C. Kapur of Metro Wines and Pratap Kolhe of Mayur Wines and Killedar and Jaiswal of the MRDDVM met the Chief Minister Mr Antulay. The legislator from South Bombay Mr O.P. Bahl who has a permit room that does roaring business, was also present. They have got a reprieve for two months from 11 July to 10 September on existing conditions. The citizens are waiting for the outcome with curiosity. If liquor vendors get a reprieve and continue in the 75-metre vicinity of temples and schools, then it can mean only one thing, that 'under-the-table business' rivals the flourishing hooch trade.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

Misused freedom ?

THE Kerala government has for long been watching the movement of the Police Association with concern. Increasing restlessness and indiscipline among the policemen including the constables and the officers will perhaps be the first major problem which the Left Front government will have to tackle. The agitation was triggered off by the government's decision to transfer the sub-inspector and the two constables on the charge of arresting a person. The Police Association reacted to this sharply and held a meeting to voice protest. The venue of the meeting was a place close to the bus station at Iddukki district.

As a retaliatory measure, the government suspended Rajasekharan Nair and Vijayan, two constables for taking the lead in organising a public meeting against official orders. The head constable of the Armed Reserved Camp, Bhaskaran and two other head constables, Jose Matthew and Feroze Khan who addressed the meeting were transferred. Ironically the Police Association had been launched with the blessings of the Marxist Home Minister, T. K. Ramakrishnan who had little idea that it would ultimately boomerang on him. From its inception there were differences of opinion among the ruling front Parties as to the freedom of the Police Association. A. K. Anthony, the KPCC president had warned that it might lead to indiscipline and trade unionism was the last thing the government would permit. There had been allegations from all quarters against the CPI(M) that it was organising policemen along trade union lines. Although the Party brushed off these allegations yet the slogan 'Inquilab Zindabad' that greeted the Home Minister at the inaugural function of the Police Association corroborates this view. They have also cited a few more instances.

The policemen with their newly achieved freedom were possibly under the impression that their Association was as effective a weapon as any trade union. They had allegedly defied orders from the high-ups especially that of transfer orders. The Association of the constables took another step by charging the officers for harsh behaviour. The officers in turn charged them with insubordination.

Recently the Police Association of Tellichery, northern Kerala, held a meeting to protest against the CPI(M)'s interference in their work. They also met the DIG northern range, Kumaraswamy, and pointed out the inconveniences faced by them because of such interference. Since the CPI(M) took over the home department there has been largescale transfer of police personnel.

BINOO JOHN, Trivandrum

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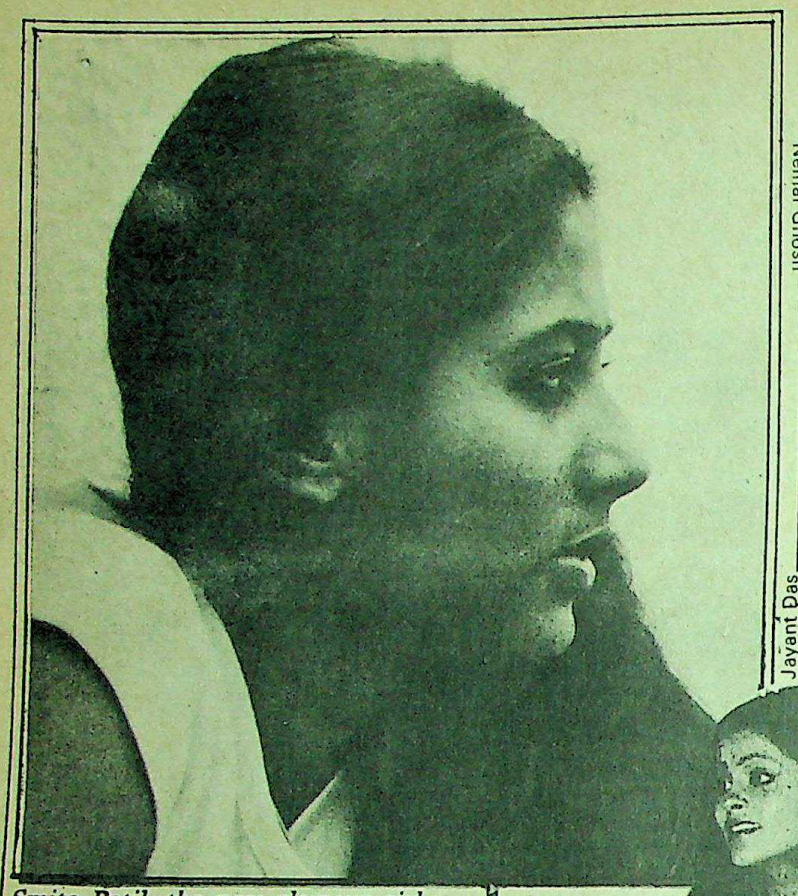

Nemai Ghosh — Jayant Das

Smita Patil, the new glamour girl

THESE days *Simple Kapadia* is looking after her *didi Dimple* almost like a mother-hen. But stories continue to circulate about her marriage to *Manoj Kaytee*, son of the producer of *Neeyat* in which she has a role. They have been seen going around together a lot , and she has even been mysteriously wearing a *mangalsutra*. When questioned about it, she has told people, *"No Yaar,* I am not married.„ May be she thinks wearing a *mangalsutra* is the in thing to do or maybe she is staying with her parents in spite of marriage. So the mystery of Simple's marriage still remains.

HAVE you seen the way *Smita Patil* looks in the commercial films? Nothing short of a stunner. With her new glamour, she has created "face-history" ! Already co-stars like *Amitabh*, who is a perfect match for her, and other heroes are seeing the magic done to their own jaded looks merely by being cast with her. The girls are beginning to squirm in their seats about the definite rise of Smita.

IT IS confirmed news that *Dimple* has signed on for the grand film *Chanakya Chandragupta*. The film has been in cold storage for the past two to three years and you only hear of it when a new big star is added to its cast. In the recent past Dimple's entry has been the only new step the film has taken by way of progress.

RAJESH is certainly seeing a lot of *Dimple* these days. In fact, when a friend jokingly told Dimple that Rajesh is having a roaring affair with his own wife, she threw her head back and laughed in with honest glee, acknowledging the truth of the rumour.

THE last time *Amitabh* and *Shatru* got together in a film, which had the word *patthhar* in its title, along with writers *Salim-Javed* and the superstar got the first jolt in a fairly smooth reign of a couple of years. The film *Kaala Patthar* was released and fell on its face.

Now the film, *Patthar Ke Log* has that strange Amitabh-Shatru-Salim-Javed combination. Amitabh felt wary and it seems he has walked out of the film. Apparently he has date problems and the writer-duo, themselves very insecure, are working on a new strategy: that of getting their scripts filmed within a year to also insure topicality and freshness. So they couldn't possibly wait for the hero who would take his own time. More important perhaps is Shatru's role, which seems to be longer and better than Amitabh's. So the superstar has wisely chosen to step out of it rather than grumble about it later.

DO YOU know that the topmost heroine who has been stripped to her almost-nothings by makers like *Raj Kapoor* and *Feroze Khan*, almost dies each time she has to don her skimmy attire? She admits herself that she is basically a shy person and has a lot of hassles before coming in front of the camera dressed — rather undressed — as she does. And as for those hip-swinging dances she is forced to throw in, it is not without embarrassment that she goes through the prescribed steps ! Strange, but true !

Simple Kapadia: sisterly inclined

Shatrughan Sinha: again with Amitabh

Tapas Roy

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KHAAS BAAT

Deepa in O Inti Baghotsm

DURING *Rathi Agnihotri's* recent visit to Bombay a journalist asked her if she was one of the top heroines down South. "I'm the top one," said Rathi. This remark has caused much consternation among her female colleagues. Rathi is no doubt a very successful actress: her three recent films in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada have done remarkably well and she has also signed a couple of big Hindi films opposite *Sunil Dutt* and *Vijay Anand*. But a heroine like *Sridevi* who starred in *Guru* along with *Kamalahasan* is doing excellently at the box-office and she's confident that her *Johnny* opposite *Rajnikant* will be a super hit too. *Sripriya*, despite a lean period last year has bounced back into the top bracket. Director *J. Mahendran* who has just completed *Johnny* has signed her to act opposite Rajnikant in his next film. She's also there in *Devar's* new Tamil film. After all, Rathi, for all her charm and grace, has been around only for two years.

DESPITE his many film assignments, actor-producer *Sivaji Ganesan* is taking an active interest in the production of a historical play on *Tippu Sultan*. Although it's been a year since his unit has been working on it, it may not be staged before the middle of next year. It's more than three years since Sivaji staged a play. His last play *Thangapadakkam* was a smashing hit on the screen too. Presently it's being made into a Hindi film by *Ramesh Sippy* starring *Dilip Kumar* and *Amitabh*. It's titled *Shakti*.

FOLLOWING the success of *Guru* producers are showing extra enthusiasm in signing *Kamalahasan*. He's now acting in, apart from a dozen other films, in a *Devar* film which stars *Sripriya*. The previous Devar hit starred *Rajnikant* and *Rathi Agnihotri*.

KAILASH SARAOGI the man who made a fortune by dubbing *Jayabharathy's* Malayalam film *Man Ka Angan* into Hindi is hoping that his next dubbed venture *Pratisodh* will also be a big hit. But what happened to his dream of making a soft porno film in Hindi with Jayabharathy in it? After her marriage the "sexy" actress refuses to strip, it's reported. Not even for Kailash Saraogi.

WHAT happened to the Hindi version of *Shankar Guru* in which *Amitabh* was to enact three roles? The producers seem to have dropped the film after realising the declining popularity of Amitabh. According to director *S. Ramanathan*, the project is still alive. Incidentally, Amitabh has never clicked in a Madras-made Hindi film . The flop list includes films like *Pyar Ki Kahani*, *Sanjogh* and *Do Aur Do Paanch*.

PRODUCERS and directors come out with strange explanations when their films flop. *Solwa Sawan*, the Hindi remake of the super hit *16 Vayathinile* flopped because it used Bhojpuri lingo apart from miscasting, according to one of its producers. Didn't *Dilip* use the Bhojpuri dialect in *Gunga Jamuna?* Did anybody boycot the film because of that?

PIOUSJI

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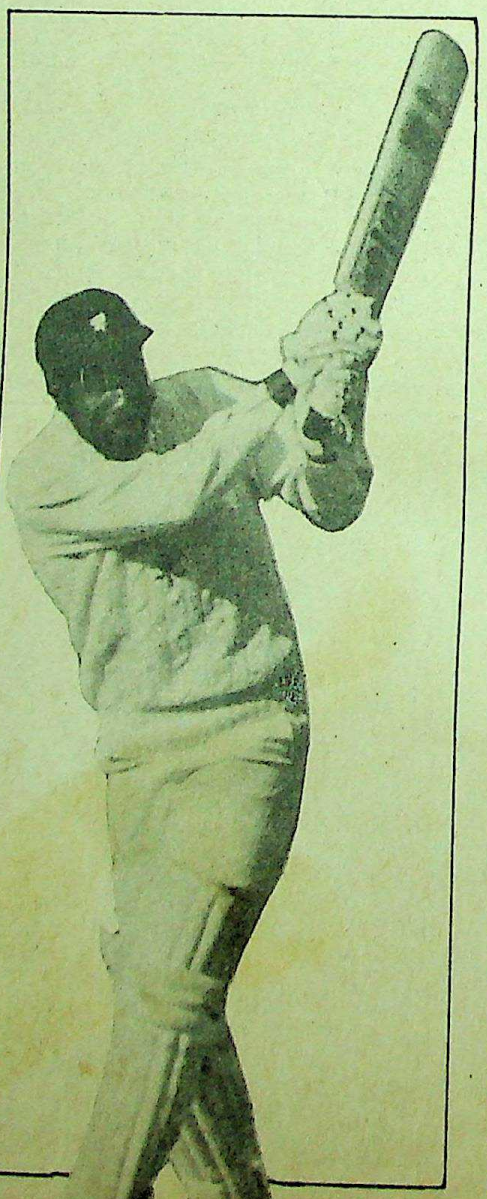
Big game hunter

ASHIS RAY from London reports on the latest West Indian batting wonder, Vivian Richards



IT was in 1943 that Christopher Columbus discovered the island of Antigua. Set over 108 square miles in the heart of the Caribbean sea, it had been a much fought for prize between Spain, France and England. But, except for a brief occupancy by the French, it has always remained British, currently enjoying a dominion status of sorts.

The population in Antigua is only 75,000 and the terrain quite typical of the region—partly volcanic, partly coral surrounded by superb sandy white beaches, which are almost entirely reef-protected and with the replenishment of sunshine, ideal for swimming, snorkelling and all forms of acquatic recreations. In fact, very much in consonance with the territories in this area, the main industry is tourism and the island is generally teeming with American and European visitors all the year round. But contrary to the character of the neighbouring nations, Antigua, traditionally, has not staked claims of being a nerve-centre of real competitive sport, nor, in the past, has it boasted of exceptional talent in major games. Not even cricket, which is as synonymous with this part of the world as calypsoes and Reggae music. Indeed, even ten years ago, the island did not figure in the regular rota of first class touring engagements.

However, in 1971 a coaching body in St John's — capital of Antigua—picked two boys just out of Grammar School for a six week course at Alf Gover's institute in London— Anderson Roberts, a fast bowler, and Vivian Richards, a batsman. "It was bitterly cold. We were very lonely," the latter recalls in his book. "Once we went to see Arsenal play Leeds at Highbury. That was the highlight of the stay." But sharp and receptive, he also picked up useful tips relating to his batting. Gover, quick to size up the admixture of rare ability nurtured on hard wickets, refrained from altering Richards' basic approach but advised him to "keep his bat nearer his pads." Richards never forgot the suggestion, making it infinitely difficult for bowlers, since, to drive a hole in his technique.

ISAAC Vivian Alexander Richards was born in a wooden house in St John's on 7 March, 1952. His lofty standards he imbibed from his father, a prison officer and cricketing all-rounder for the island. "He taught me dominance," he says, "the idea of 'well played' was not convincing to him." As for his gentleness, this he inherited from his mother and so ingrained is this trait in his personality that his answer to any provocation is infrequently with abuse or physical violence, but with temperate yet hardhitting methods. In the cricket field, it is inevitably with the bat, although quite recently he was noticed muttering at Bob Willis, when a bit of "aggro" took place at Old Trafford, laced as it was with an incredible offensive with the willow.

This quiet defiance he also demonstrated when deciding to take up cricket as a career. His father wanted him to emigrate to New York and settle for an office job which would pay him enough for night school. But without refusing the offer, he stuck to his inclination and no one will disagree that it was the right choice. It was, perhaps, based on the sure knowledge of his knack for the game — a conclusion he must have reached not merely from his showing in first class cricket, but also from the way he had performed in the makeshift circumstances of his boyhood. Referring to the one-against-one cricket he would play with his brother, Mervyn, in the dirt-yard behind their house when he was very young, Richards remarks: "We would try to keep the ball down because if you hit it over the fence you would collect six runs, but you would be out maan, because there were wild dogs waiting on the other side." Needless to say, he would emerge from the fray more successfully as he would even in larger company and a broader setting: "Everybody wanted a game and it was every man for himself. If a fielder ran a batsman out or caught a ball on one hop, you were out and he went into bat. It was a sweet game. You'd have upwards of 15 people round the bat, so you didn't take many chances."

RICHARDS' first class debut was for Leeward Island against Windward Island in 1971; in the same season he turned out for the Combined Islands in the Shell Shield. A year later he was "spotted" by Colin Cowdrey, who mentioned the lad in an article in *The Cricketer* and that paved the way for a certain Len Creed to rope him in for the Lansdowne Club in Bath for the following summer. This, as was to be expected, proved to be only a stepping stone; Somerset soon sensed a valuable asset in Richards and signed him up for the 1974 semester. And to this day he has remained loyally with this county. Somerset have the unique distinction of bearing in their ranks, at one time or the other, the three most distinguished batsmen of the present era—Greg Chappell, Vivian Richards and Sunil Gavaskar. But among them, the West Indian has, unarguably, rendered them the best service, notably in the one-day games. Thrice he has won the 'Gillette Man of the Match' award, an equal number of times he has picked up the 'Benson & Hedges Gold' award. Last year, with an innings of 117 in the Gillette Cup final and several timely efforts in the John Player Sunday league, he steered his side to

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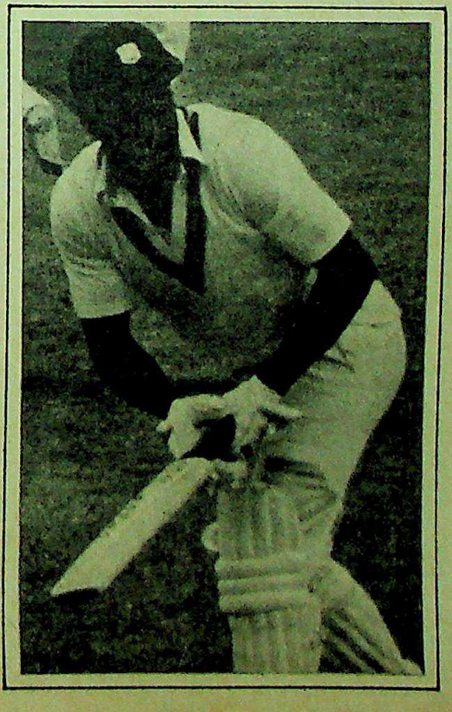
first-ever victories in the two tourneys. In the Schweppes County Championship, his most remarkable essay erupted in 1977 when he accumulated 2,161 runs at an average of 65.48.

His performance for West Indies has been even more impressive. He set the ball rolling with an undefeated knock of 192 at the Ferozeshah Kotla in only his second test and, his display in the series overall, left no one in doubt about his future prospects. True, he was in some difficulty negotiating the terrifying propensities of Dennis Lillie and Jeff Thomson in Australia in 1975-76. But by the end of that confrontation had gained the measure of the threat, notching up almost two centuries in the ultimate encounter at Adelaide. So much so that Queensland extended to him a contract to play in the Sheffield Shield the next winter. Back home, he plundered three centuries against India in no more than four Tests. Admittedly, Syed Kimani's shoddy work behind the stumps contributed immensely towards the flourish, but in the periods when he was on top, Richards looked most permanent. Moreover, this gave way to a run-riot in England, where he posted 829 runs despite missing one of the five tests — the fourth highest aggregate in a series in the history of cricket. And contained in the havoc were three hundreds, including a top-score of 291 at The Oval. Indeed, in 1976, Richards had registered 1,710 runs for the calendar year—an all-time record which was later broken by Sunil Gavaskar.

AFTER only a couple of Tests against Bobby Simpson's Australians, the world of "establishment" cricket, perforce, lost this master-batsman to Kerry Packer and it was not until the Prudential Cup last year that he resurfaced on the conventional stage. But a word on his feats in World Series Cricket. The contests under its auspices, as is well known, were conspicuous for their low scores. Whether this was because of the unsuitability of the artificial wickets or because of the insurmountability of tackling genuine fast bowlers in floodlit conditions, Richards' pre-eminence remained unscathed. Versus the WSC Australians alone—and this represented, if not anything else, an international-class bowling attack—he hit up 1,786 runs in fourteen "super tests" spread over two seasons.

His return to the official West Indian fold was as riproaring, if not more so. A memorable unbeaten 138 in the Prudential Cup final against England last summer was his "gift" to the tournament and, apart from the several glorious strokes he executed in course of this innings, his parting shot—a towering improvised six to square leg off an attempted yorker from Chris Old—really set the seal on his genius. Six months later, unfortunately for Australia, he improved on this form and tormented the bowlers there no end. He was plagued by a thigh injury from the very beginning of the tour, but overcame the handicap to provide a murderous 153 at Melbourne and quite a swashbuckling 62 at Sydney against the hosts in the triangular one-day internationals. Even for the third competitors—England — there was no escape. An unconquered 85 at Brisbane making sure of that. And in the Tests, scores of 140, 96, 76 and 74 in as many outings, need no elaboration though it was not the number of runs he piled up, but the manner in which he got them that bespoke his class and calibre as a batsman. Never since that battering by Garfield Sobers in 1971-72, when he was still of tender age and lacking in experience has Dennis Lillie been treated the way he was in his last encounter with Richards. To go forward change your mind and square cut a man of Lillie's pace and control over "movement" is considered impossible. And that was not the only innovation to be witnessed; hobbling about, impaired in his running between the wickets, Richards was compelled to go for boundaries and as a result uncoiled many a stroke, which left the bowlers and the fieldsmen both leaden-footed and staring in disbelief.

NOW, on to this summer. After an unfamiliar bad patch in the Shell Shield games, Richards was by no means his vintage self in the matches leading up to the Tests against England. Indeed, his lack-lustre portrayal in the one-day internationals gave rise to much elation in the English camp. But came the first Test and the sparks began to fly all over again. At Trent Bridge he was the only batsman on either side to score runs in both innings. Then, in one of the most ruthless exhibitions to be seen in recent times, he blasted 149 in the second Test at Lord's and, in the Mecca itself, installed himself as "king". There followed a most savage onslaught on Willis at Old Trafford and the much advertised plan to just contain him had misfired totally.



It is obvious that Richards is able to "read" a bowler a split second earlier than most others. How does he achieve it? Rather simple, if one accepts his view: "Really, I concentrate only on the bowler's arm. I dont't care which way he runs in or if he bowls over or around the wicket, or the way he uses the crease or his feet. Nothing. Just the arm." An exceptional coordination of the eye and body movement, an ideal physique — 5ft 11 ins height, 13 st 5 lbs weight, muscular arms and a broad chest narrowing down to a 32-inch waist — are his attributes. But what really is the extent of his devastation? His Somerset colleague and former Cambridge University captain Peter Roebulk offers an assessment: "Viv can murder any bowling at any time, but he needs some spark or reason first. He'll always succeed on the big occasion, except perhaps when he is trying too hard, and he'll fail when it doesn't matter." In Test cricket at least Richards has known no failure. Only occasionally, less success.

AND what about the man? His ruggedly handsome face is blemished by scars on his left temple and cheek-bone — a damage inflicted when he tried to prevent a man from jumping a post office queue (he was hit by an iron pipe and broke his left little finger). But it takes nothing away from a cheerful and charming countenance. He is also modest and never ignorant about his debt to the past. Other than that he has a taste for fine clothes, likes speeding in expensive cars, enjoys jazz clubs and discotheques where he normally spends time till the early hours, sleeps till late in the mornings and, more often than not, avoids breakfast. But that gum chewing, lackadaisical walk up to the wicket, the bored look on his face while batting are highly deceptive indexes of his attitude; his seriousness is second to none.

Politics is not exactly Richards' cup of tea. But he never conceals his respect for Muhammad Ali and what this boxer stands for. Nor does he hide his militant pride in his colour and his people and, if the question ever arises, will probably refuse to play against a country having links with South Africa. He has never forgiven Yorkshire for the racist comments from the crowds and if he can help it, always puts his best foot forward against them. He loves Somerset, but remains extremely attached to Antigua. That is where his fiancee comes from and that is where he intends to settle down once his playing days are over. Antigua and Antiguans reciprocate this feeling. The little island is no longer an obscure speck in the world of cricket. It has slowly and surely asserted its importance in the Caribbean sporting circle, thanks to the dynamism of Roberts and Richards, especially the latter's. Next winter when England go to the West Indies, St John's will have the honour of staging its first-ever Test match.

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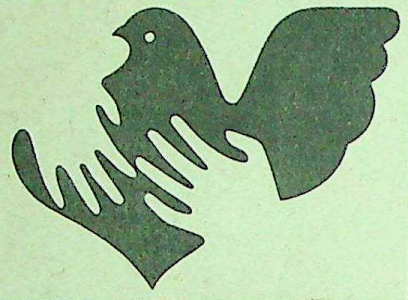
A precariously free Press

Civil Liberties



By A. G. NOORANI

THE concept of freedom of the Press commands ready acceptance but is only vaguely understood. Its implications come into sharp focus only in actual practice, especially when borderline cases arise. Some of the implications have been spelt out by the Supreme Court.

Unlike the US Constitution which lays down, in the First Amendment, that "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech or of the press", the Constitution of India makes no such express provision. However, Article 19(1) (a) provides that "all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression" and the Supreme Court ruled in 1950 in Romesh Thapar's case that "there can be no doubt that freedom of speech and expression includes freedom of propagation of ideals, and that freedom is ensured by the freedom of circulation."

The court struck down the order of the Madras government which had banned the entry into the state of the weekly *Crossroads*. It upheld the view that liberty of circulation is as essential to Press freedom as the liberty of speech. In another case decided in 1950 the court ruled that imposition of pre-censorship on a journal is by itself a violation of the liberty of the Press.

Seven years later, however, the court upheld a Punjab Act empowering the State government, for a period not exceeding two months, to prohibit publication of "any matter relating to a particular subject". The court had in mind inflammatory publications in conditions of communal strife but, as Mr M. C. Setalvad remarked, "It was somewhat disheartening to see the court upholding the conferment of such a power though its exercise was left solely to the subjective determination of the Executive." It is an unfortunate ruling which, one hopes, will be revised some day.

In the Express Newspapers case the court ruled that no measure can be enacted which would have the effect of imposing a pre-censorship curtailing the circulation or restricting the choice of employment or unemployment in the editorial force." The court upheld the Working Journalists (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955 as a measure essentially for the benefit of working journalists which did not affect the freedom of the Press by reason of the greater financial burden it imposed on newspaper owners or otherwise.

Later, in the *Sakal's* case the court held unconstitutional the Newspaper (Price and Page) Act which regulated the number of pages and prices of newspapers. It rejected the argument that the act imposed reasonable restrictions on the business of publishing newspapers and fell within Article 19(2) (6) which enables the state to impose, in the interests of the general public, reasonable restrictions on the right to carry on a business. "It may well be within the power of the State to place in the interests of the general public, restriction upon the right of a citizen to carry on business but it is not open to the State to achieve this object by directly and immediately curtailing any other freedom of that citizen guaranteed by the Constitution and which is not susceptible of abridgement on the same grounds as are set out in Clause (6) of Article 19 (regarding a business). Therefore, the right of freedom of speech cannot be taken away with the object of placing restrictions on the business activities of a citizen." If the law interfered with the freedom of circulation the fact that "its object was to suppress monopolies and prevent unfair practices is of no assistance."

The last of the series is the Bennett Coleman case decided in 1972 in which the court, by a majority of 4:1, held the Import Policy for Newsprint 1972-73 void. Mr Justice K. K. Mathew dissented. Four features of the policy were questioned. First, no new edition of a newspaper could be started by a common ownership unit even within the authorised quota of newsprint. Secondly, there was a limitation on the maximum number of pages—ten. No adjustment was permitted between circulation and the pages so as to increase the pages. Thirdly, no inter-changeability was permitted between different papers of common ownership unit or different editions of the same paper. Fourthly, allowance of 20 per cent increase in page level up to a maximum of ten was given to newspapers with less than ten pages.

The issue was whether it all added up to newsprint control or newspaper control. Rationing of newsprint is newsprint control. But restriction after the quota is assigned could well be newspaper control. The majority held that "Government could not determine thus which newspaper should grow in page and circulation and which newspaper should grow only in circulation and not in pages. Freedom of press entitles newspapers to achieve any volume of circulation. Though requirements of newspapers as to page and circulation are both taken into consideration for fixing their quota, the newspapers should be thereafter left free to adjust their page number and circulation as they wish in accordance with the dictates of Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution."

Mr Justice Mathew dissented. He remarked: "A claim to enlarge the volume of speech by diminishing the circulation raises the problem of reconciling the citizen's right to unfettered exercise of speech in volume with the community's right to undiminished circulation. Both rights fall within the ambit of the concept of freedom of speech. I would prefer to give more weight to the community's claim here especially as I think that the claim to enlarge the volume of speech at the expense of circulation is not for exercising the freedom of speech guaranteed by article 19(1) (a) but for commercial advertisement for revenue which will not fall within the ambit of that sub-article."

One hopes the new Press Commission will recommend making freedom of the Press a fundamental right by itself instead of leaving it to be spelt out from the right to freedom of speech and expression. Press freedom is the right of the institution; free speech of the individual. A citizen, for instance, may not demand access to prisons. But have we not reached a stage where prisons should be thrown open to inspection by the Press subject to certain regulations?

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LIVING

Slap-stick

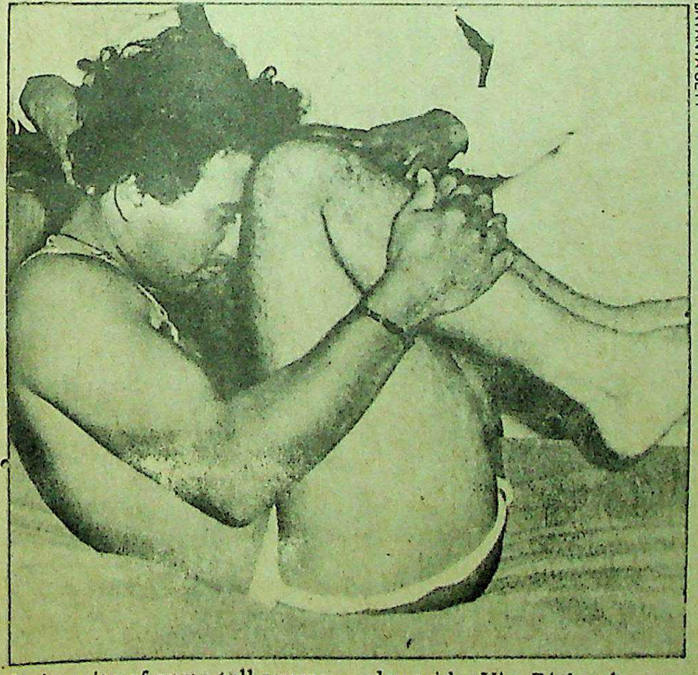
Professor Bhattacharya of BE College, near Calcutta had visitors at his first floor apartment recently. The time was around 8.30 pm and it was the professor's 10-year-old son, Sumit, who answered the knock on the front door. Three miscreants barged into the apartment while Sumit yelled, "Daddy, there is someone with a gun !" The professor was studying and his wife, Roma Bhattacharya, was engrossed in her needlework.

They received the visitors well enough, conceding their demand that no one should raise an alarm. But the hospitality of the Bhattacharyas was shortlived. Roma dashed forward, pushed aside her husband and planted herself between him and the man who was brandishing a revolver. Sumit looked fearfully as another man flourished his *bhojali*. And then Roma let fly a resounding slap at the man with the gun. Taking the cue from his mistress, the family dog pounced on the three visitors. The alarm had inadvertently been raised and the three "visitors" bolted. A slap in the face, if there ever was one.

Peaches on the beaches

Baina was once a lovely beach in the port town of Vasco da Gama; it is now Goa's single largest brothel with over 600 prostitutes doing brisk business. According to a subdivisional police officer, these prostitutes are the main identifiable source of income for Vasco da Gama's clothiers, cinema houses, bars and restaurants, hotels, cabs, chemists, doctors and, of all people, *pujaris*. So the authorities are turning a blind eye. And why not. They argue that there are times when 30 ship-loads of insatiable sailors invade Vasco da Gama; imagine the havoc that might be wrought if the good women of Baina were not there !

Sunil spins—a yarn



JAYANTA SETT

So in spite of some tall scores and a reasonably good season with Somerset, Sunil Gavaskar has decided against another summer in England. Not quite his brand of cricket it seems. Sunil had some regrets though: "I'm so disappointed I won't be playing alongside Viv Richards next season. That would have been a deadly combination !" And then, realising that he wasn't being modest and remembering his image, he quipped: "I'm talking about his off-spinners and my leg-spinners of course".

Phoney burial

Illustration /Ahi Bhusan Malik

Ever heard of a telephone being buried? Well, this is precisely what S. Srinivasan, a subscriber to the Delhi Telephones, has decided to do. Reason: his telephone, in spite of repeated requests for repair, has been "dead" for a long time and therefore an honourable burial is only befitting. The instrument, reports Saumitra Banerjee, will be buried within the premises of the Karol Bagh Telephone Exchange. And Srinivasan, having made all necessary arrangements, has also written an interesting letter to the general manager of Delhi Telephones. In it he has claimed that his telephone used to stop "breathing every now and then and this time it failed to revive".

Bachelor boy: not the way to stay

Rizk Ram created another stir in the Haryana Assembly recently. Earlier, this Congress (I) MLA from Sonepat had unravelled the *Immortal Ploy* (*Sunday*, 17 August) of Chief Minister Bhajan Lal. This time, visibly troubled by the growing incidence of rape in the country, he demanded legislation to make marriage compulsory for all young men of 24 and above. This, according to him, was the only way in which the problem of rape could be solved.

'Kiss-n-go'

Calcutta's traffic police have decided to encourage the "kiss-and-go" system. Yes, you read correctly: "kiss-and-go". This means that the office-going husbands who have cars will be expected to have their wives drop them to office every morning. Then wives can drive back home.

Joint commissioner of traffic, S. K. Ramachandran, who has just returned from abroad after studying traffic problems, apparently hit upon this idea and feels it to be the solution to the city's traffic problem which has reached a "point of no return". He argues that the idea is successful enough in the USA. Actually we are left speechless at the stupidity of this enterprise. Question: How many office-goers in Calcutta have cars ? Question: How many wives know how to drive?
Question: Anybody know the price of fuel ? Question: Is Calcutta being run by a Marxist government? Question: Why are such lunatic suggestions made?

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Beginning August 31
This week the Sun, Mercury and Jupiter are all assembled in a single house. Saturn alone is in Virgo, Mars and Uranus are in Libra, Neptune is in Scorpio, Kethu is in Capricorn, Venus is in Gemini, Rahu alone is in Cancer. The moon will be moving through Taurus, Gemini and Cancer from Aries.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Guard against trickery and deception in money matters. You will incur medical expense. Your health needs attention. A new friendship may develop this week. You are advised to utilise your energy and initiative in your work. Success will depend on a vitally important decision which you will have to make by the end of the week. Be careful in your dealings with persons in authority. **Good dates:** 1,3,4, and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 2,3 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Your work provides you with hope and confidence initially. But in the end you will not be satisfied with the results of your efforts. You will be faced with some perplexing problems as a result of sudden, unexpected events which would be beyond your control. You are therefore advised to follow your hunches, especially in business matters. Be cautious and do not rely on speculative enterprise. **Good dates:** 2,4 and 31. **Lucky numbers:** 2,4 and 6. **Favourable direction:** South.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Fortune will come your way this week. But you are advised to take care in business, legal and property matters. Dealings with elders should also be handled carefully. Your domestic life will be very peaceful. Take interest in the letters you receive and reply to them as they will be helpful to you later on. Do not be afraid to adopt novel ideas in business, but beware of arousing hostility through impulsive actions. This week is not favourable for romance. **Good dates:** 1,2,4 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 1,3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** West.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) The first three days of this week are bound to be cheerful as you will gain substantially in business. There are indications of success and happiness, especially with the help of younger people. Elders, on the other hand, may cause you anxiety. The time is good for attempting new schemes. New friends, fresh interests, successful changes and travel are foreseen. Some of your unfinished ventures are likely to materialise. **Good dates:** 2,3,5 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 4,7 and 8. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) You are indeed very swift and serious in your actions, yet you will suffer from an acute shortage of funds. You may have to go in for new loans. There may be other difficulties as well which you will have to face with faith, patience and self-confidence. Do not be dismayed by slow progress and indifferent health. Avoid dejection and that will help you to overcome your present problems. **Good dates:** 4,6 and 31. **Lucky number** 8. **Favourable direction:** North.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Face good and evil with uprightness and wisdom. Your professional and social activities are well signified this week. Follow new business methods without any hesitation but at the same time exercise some caution. Your domestic life might be troubled by one or two awkward problems concerning womenfolk. Some unreasonable opposition to your plans is to be expected. Therefore think before taking the advice of an elder person or a member of the opposite sex. **Good dates:** 3,4 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 3,6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) This is a lucky week for you. Your finances will increase, often unexpectedly, through speculation or secret means. Your social and professional affairs are well signified. Follow your intuitions in professional matters. Courtship and marriage are best deferred this week. Be careful of deception by a member of the opposite sex. Do not be afraid of or hesitant in adopting new professional methods as these will bring good returns in the future. **Good dates:** 1, 3, 6 and 31.**Lucky numbers:** 1, 4 and 6.**Favourable direction:** South-west.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21)A week full of tension. Your home front will not be as calm and peaceful as you think. Your servants or subordinates might betray you. Gradual improvement in financial matters, are expected. A journey is the answer to some of your delicate problems. At all costs, avoid controversy with your parents, partners or spouses. This is not a good week for speculation, gambling or sports.**Good dates:** 3, 4 and 5.**Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 10.**Favourable direction:** North.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You will work restlessly this week and, as a result, succeed in gaining a contract which will be to your advantage. This week is also good for love, matrimonial and speculative affairs. An old friend will come to your rescue in a matter of great importance. Do not hesitate to take his help or advice. Take this opportunity to plan new ventures and try and finish incomplete jobs. You may have to cancel a journey at the last moment. Your social affairs are well signified.**Good dates:** 3, 5, 21 and 31.**Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 7.**Favourable direction:** South-west.

CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Substantial financial gains will outweigh your previous losses. But in matters relating to love and matrimony the greatest caution must be exercised. A letter from a distant place will bring you good tidings. Do not, at any costs, be complacent this week. **Good dates:** 2, 3, 4 and 6.**Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 9.**Favourable direction:** East.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Your financial and business affairs make steady, though not exactly rapid, progress. Domestic life is also well signified. But do not let your domestic affairs interfere with your business or financial matters. Be careful in your dealings with seniors or those in authority as well as members of the opposite sex. Take the advice of friends in such crucial matters but the decision should eventually be yours.**Good dates:** 2, 4, 5 and 6.**Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9.**Favourable direction:** South.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Good and steady progress in all your important affairs will earn you a lot of praise and appreciation from friends and relatives. Your domestic life may not be too satisfactory. womenfolk might create problems for you. The health of an elder member of the family may also cause anxiety. But be patient and do not hesitate in spending money as when necessary. Pay attention to service details.**Good dates:** 2, 4, 5 and 31.**Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 8.**Favourable direction:** West.

M. B. RAMAN

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this india

prize rs 30 for the entry given first

CALCUTTA: A Japanese tourist used karate and injured three people on S. N. Banerjee Road in Central Calcutta on Monday (4 August) evening after he had picked up a quarrel with a group. They had objected to the tourist taking photographs of some bathers at a roadside tap. A senior police official said on Tuesday (5 August) that two tourists were taking photographs of half a dozen people taking bath at the tap. A medical representative objected, saying that there were so many other objects of interest in the city. One of the tourists hit him in the face with a karate kick, and knocked off three of his teeth. When two others went to the rescue of the man they met with a similar fate. Then, a large group of people gathered and took the tourist to a police station. The second tourist made off in the melee. The police informed the Japanese consulate— *The Statesman* (C. P. Singh, Sambalpur)

BANGALORE: As the noisy debate on the violence in Dharwar District was going on Education Minister G. B. Shankara Rao dozed off for a few minutes. Mr M. C. Perumal (C-U) who was then attacking the Government for its inaction, pointed his finger at the sleeping Minister and shouted: "This is how the Government is sleeping". Mr Rao was woken up by his colleagues. Members had a hearty laugh and made several digs at him. Incidentally, Mr Rao comes from Dharwar District and is the Minister in charge of the district. Earlier, several members had wanted him to rush to the riot-torn areas and help bring the situation under control. His reaction was: "What should I do there? (Ladhhai war)"— *Indian Express* (Muthuraj. G., Chamaraja Nagar)

UJJAIN: The face of the vice-chahcellor of Vikram University was blackened by students of a local college. According to university sources, about 100 students of Madhav College yesterday (30 July) entered the office of the vice-chancellor, Mr P. N. Kavthekar, and blackened his face with the ink of a duplicating machine. By the time the police arrived on the scene, students had escaped. The students had been demanding the filling up of the post of college principal and other teaching staff—*Times of India* (Laxman Nihalchandani, New Delhi)

NEW DELHI: At a recent, informal lunch in New Delhi, a senior Union Cabinet Minister sat chatting to a group of journalists. The food was lavish. One of his *chamchas* ventured feebly, "*Aajkal ye rape ke bare me kafi charcha ho raha hai.*" It was an unsavoury topic, especially when the food was delicious. But, in his inimitable style, the Union Minister retorted, "*Ye sab bakwas hai. Rape to hazaro saal se ho raha hai, aur aakhir aurat to bhogne ki cheez hai.*" There was mild, approving laughter. Then the topic drifted. One of the women around began to talk about the food habits of her dog: "*Jimmy to aajkal ek dam meat pasand nahi karta hai.*" Another replied half-seriously, "*To chicken khilaiya.*" The Union Cabinet Minister was one of those to troop down to Baghpat in Western U. P. after the alleged rape of Maya Tyagi— *Weekend Review* (M. K. Saraf, Calcutta)

HARYANA: In one school in Haryana, a young male teacher was ordered to put on a terene (transparent) saree and stand on top of a tractor representing the *Bharata Mata* for the whole hot day. This peculiar spectacle was enacted because the manager wanted to express his regards for the *Bharat Mata:* the manager, of course, drove about in his Fiat sipping cold drinks while the teacher suffered in the sun— *Sunday Standard* (Amal Chakraborty, Calcutta)

india abroad

DOHA: The Abu Dhabi police have arrested nine members of a Hindu organisation that allegedly opposes Islam and spreads Hinduism in the United Arab Emirates. The newspaper Al Fajr said a pirate radio ship making Hindu missionary broadcasts was anchored in the Gulf. The accused persons had been remanded in custody for 21 days and their trial would begin shortly— *The Tribune* (Har Shiv Rai, Kathua).

Illustration/Ahi Bhusan Malik

without comment

(The centre is) contemplating promulgating through an ordinance after the current Parliament session, a new kind of preventive detention law and MISA designed to ban political Parties and crush political protest—Madhu Limaye, general secretary of the Lok Dal

He (Sanjay) certainly did lend a sense of direction. The river was there but he built the banks, so to speak, and saw to it that the Partymen stand united—Mrs Indira Gandhi in *Surya*

Those who would have prayed for his (Sanjay Gandhi's) political death have now got him literally dead—Kamal Nath, MP and Youth Congress leader in *The Statesman*

Charan Singh defected 18 times, Devi Lal defected 22 times...I committed the mistake once—in leaving the Congress. But it was like a child who gets annoyed, leaves home for sometimes, and returns—Bhajan Lal, haryana Chief Minister, quoted in *Weekend Review*

Like a donkey when it goes among cows and teaches them bad habits like kicking, without the cows learning a single good habit from the donkey, Mrs Gandhi carries confrontation and chaos everywhere—Morarji Desai in *Organiser*

Ministers have just stopped giving information in Parliament. Is it because they do not do their homework? Is it because they have too much to confess? Or, is it because they are just playing dumb?—Piloo Mody

The Provincial Armed Constabulary treats Harijans and Muslims like flies—Syed Shahbuddin, MP

The PAC is a communal-minded force—Bhupesh Gupta, CPI MP

Even after being Prime Minister for II years I have never once tried to have only views of my own—Indira Gandhi quoted in *The Statesman*

(Air-India)...has become the biggest, densest cesspool of corruption—Jyotirmoy Bosu in a letter to A. P. Sharma, Minister for Shipping and Transport

China and the US encourage each other in almost everything when it comes to abusing the will of the peoples of Indochina—Leonid Brezhnev

I love Billy. I can't control him—President Carter

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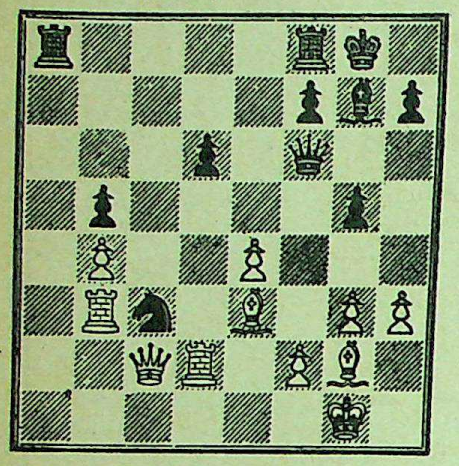
VARIETY

chess

Balashov (Black)



Hubner (White) to move

Game of the Month: A touch of class

There is a certain almost undefinable quality which some players clearly have and others equally clearly lack, commonly known as class. It is perhaps not so much the ability to achieve near perfection, as the ability to make it seem easy. It was the nonchalance with which Muhammad Ali made trained fighters look like inebriated gorillas which impressed the world of boxing so much, rather than his mere ability to duck a punch. Similarly in chess it is difficult enough to beat one of the best players in the world, but to do so as if giving a lesson to a talented 15-year-old is a clear demonstration of class.

I give the following game as an illustration. Note the simplicity and power of White's play, and particularly the total absence of threats. It is as if Black spends the entire game swinging into thin air only to be floored by his opponent's first punch. By the way, in case you have any doubts may I assure you that the player of the black pieces Yuri Balashov, is one of the strongest grand masters in the Soviet Union and, arguably, in the world.

White: W. Hübner. Black: Y. Balashov Rio de Janeiro 1979. English Opening

1. P—QB4, P—K4; 2. N—QB3, P—Q3; 3. P—Q4, White is willing to lose some time with his queen in order to gain space in the centre.

3. . . P x P; 4. Q x P, N—QB3; 5. Q—Q2, N—B3; 6. P—QN3, B—K3; 7. P—K4. To prevent the freeing . . . P—Q4.

7. . . P—QR4; 8. KN—K2, P—R5; 9. R—QN1, P x P; 10. P x P, P—KN3; 11. P—KN3, B—N2; 12. B—N2, 0—0; 13. 0—0, N—Q2; Hoping to plant knights on the squares QB4 and QN5.

14N—Q5! Positionally very strong. If ever the knight is taken White recaptures with the BP both increasing his advantage in space and opening up the possibility of applying pressure on the QB file.

14. . . N—B4; 15. P—QN4, N—R5; 16. Q—B2, N—K4; 17. N(2)—B4, B—Q2; 18. R—K1, P—QB3; 19. N—K3, N—N5; 20. R—N3. Preventing any possible invasion of his QB3 square and preparing one day to triple on the Q file.

20. . . Q—K2; 21. R—Q1, N x N; 22. B x N, B—N5; 23. R—Q2, P—KN4?! Becoming desperate for counterplay. White was threatening a gradual build-up on the QP with P—KR3, R(3)—Q3 and Q—Q1.

24. N—K2, B x N; 25. R x B, Q—B3; 26. R—Q2, B—B6; 27. P—KR3! Refuting Black's play with almost arrogant simplicity. With the back row weakness eliminated Black's counterplay fizzles out.

27. . . P—QN4; 28. P x P; P x P;

DIAGRAM

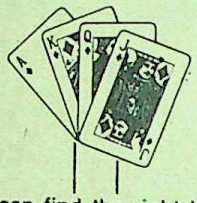
29. K—R2! The killer! There is no reply to the combined threats of B—Q4 (played at once Black could reply N—K7+) and P—K5 (played at once Black has . . . R—R8+).

29. . . QR—B1; 30. B—Q4, Q x B; No choice. If not the knight is lost.

31. R x Q, B x R; 32. Q—Q2, B—B3; 33. Q x P, B—N2; 34. P—K5, KR—Q1; 35. R x Nl Resigns, for if 35. . . R x Q 36 R x R+ and P x R.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge



SEE if you can find the right lead on this hand, held by West in the Cavendish Invitation Pairs:

♠ 7 5 ♥ K J 10 5 ♦ J 4 2 ♣ 8 6 5 3

Both sides are vulnerable and the bidding has been:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♣	No	1 ♦	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♥	2 ♠	No
4 ♠	No	No	dble
No	No	No	

The significant call is East's double of Four Spades. He cannot have much in the trump suit and cannot be confident of making any tricks in hearts, which have been supported. So the double must ask for an abnormal lead. Correct—a club. This was the full deal:

	♠ J 6 3 2 ♥ 6 2 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ A 9 7 2	
♠ 7 5 ♥ K J 10 5 ♦ J 4 2 ♣ 8 6 5 3	N W E S	♠ 10 9 4 ♥ A 8 7 4 3 ♦ A 10 9 8 7 ♣ —
	♠ A K Q 8 ♥ Q 9 ♦ 6 3 ♣ K Q J 10 4	

Manfield, West, led the 8 of clubs, indicating that his entry was in hearts. Woolsey ruffed and returned a low heart to the Queen and King. After another club ruff he took his two Aces, judging rightly that 500 would produce an excellent score. This result helped them to win the event, which carries the biggest cash prize in bridge.

Events at another table provided an ironical comparison. The bidding was the same, including the final double, but here Judy Radin led the *King* of hearts, expecting to hold the first trick and to decide on her next action after seeing the dummy. When her partner dropped the 3, she switched to a club. East ruffed and, instead of cashing both red Aces to ensure one down, returned a low heart. A surprised declarer won with the Queen and so made Four Hearts doubled.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

ONE of Iceland's earliest inhabitants, the Arctic fox, is portrayed on a new 90-kronor stamp. It is believed to have been the only terrestrial mammal in the island when the first settlers arrived towards the end of the 8th century. Another recent stamp features the Icelandic dog, a descendant of dogs introduced by 9th century Norse colonists. Iceland is one of the countries whose stamps are listed and priced in the new Stanley Gibbons catalogue **Scandinavia** (150 pp, £6). This also includes the issues of the Danish West Indies before they were sold to the United States in 1916 and of the Faroe Islands, which have been issuing their own stamps only since 1975, although surcharged Danish stamps were used there during the British occupation of 1940-45. Useful features of the new catalogue include a priced list of Swedish stamp booklets issued since 1904 and an index to the designs of Swedish pictorial and portrait stamps. Among the rarest stamps are those issued in Finland in 1856, when the country was a Grand Duchy of the Tsarist empire. Their prices range up to £5,000 each. A few of the early Swedish stamps are almost as expensive.

C. W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. What would you experience if you are suffering from crystallophobia?
2. 'Yellow Submarine', the name of a famous Beatle number, is also the name given to an animated film starring the same. Who directed the film?
3. With what would you associate the Nottingham reel?
4. Who are bush-babies?
5. While minerology is the name given to the scientific study of minerals, what does petrology refer to?
6. Cannes, the city in the south of France, is famous for its film festivals, among other things. When was the first film festival held?

ANSWERS

1. An abnormal fear of glass.
2. George Dunning, (1968).
3. Angling. It is the name given to the centre-pin fishing reel developed in Nottingham, England around 1840-50.
4. Small, woolly, grey or brown mammals that live in hollows of trees and eat insects. They are found in the bushy savanna regions of Africa.
5. It is the study of all kinds of rocks, including those that come from the moon.
6. 1946.

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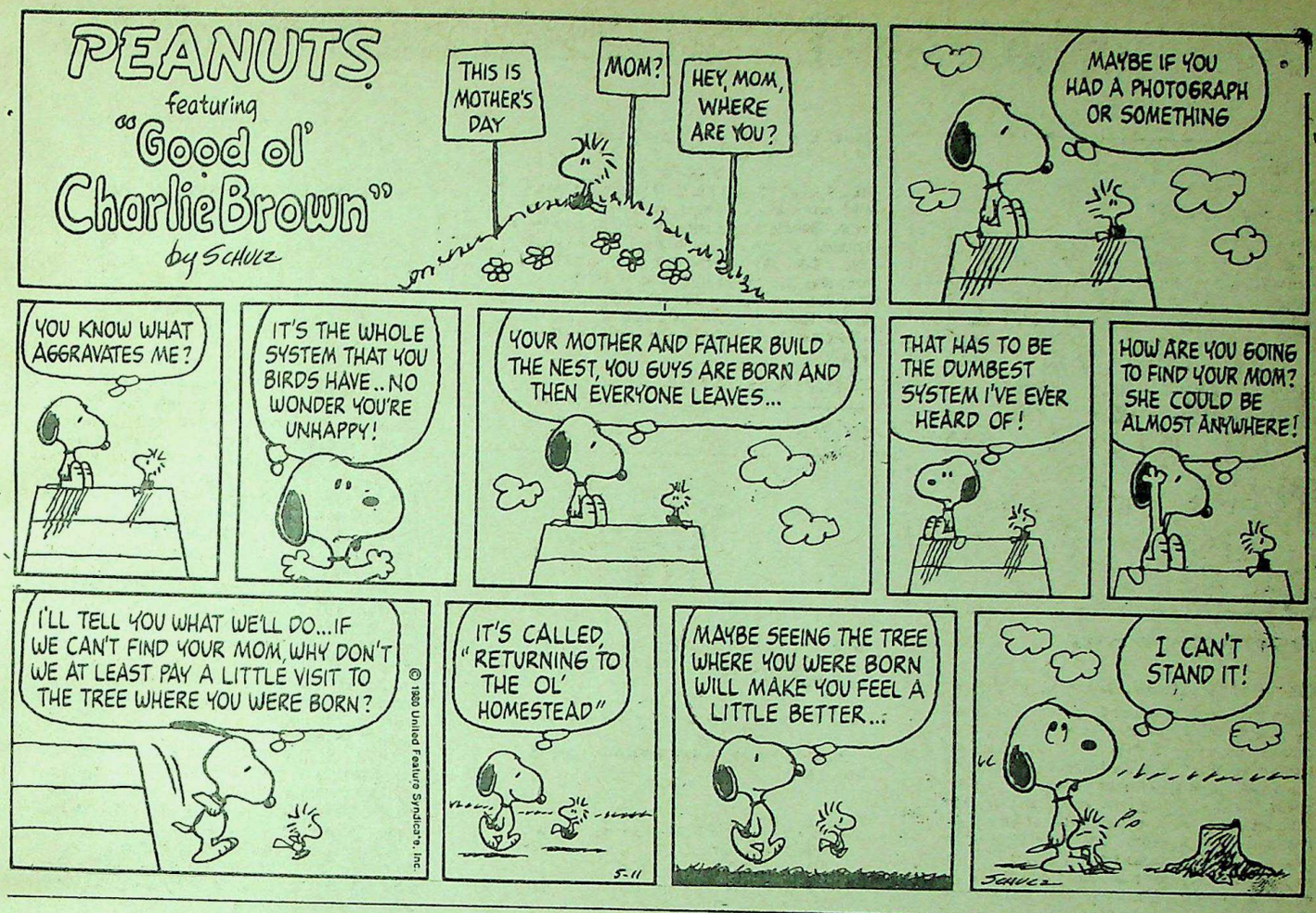

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nature of parent or guardian
(in case of a minor)

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STATE BEFORE PARTY

CONGRESS(I) MPs from Karnataka are very angry with Mr Pranab Mukherjee. The reason? The Minister is not allocating a steel plant immediately to Vijaynagar. At one point, so agitated were Mr Lakappa and a few other Congress(I) MPs that they rushed towards the Minister who holds temporary charge of the Steel and Mines portfolio during a calling attention motion in the Lok Sabha. They virtually gheraoed him on the floor of the house, demanding a steel plant there and then. It was quite unusual to see a Minister being treated in such a fashion by his own Partymen so openly. When Mr Mukherjee failed to quieten his Party colleagues, he left the house in a huff.

BUREAUCRAT-STHAN

MR JAGANNATH PAHADIA is behaving like an ostrich. He has no contact with his Partymen and no rapport with the bureaucracy also. Just after the Assembly elections this year when he was elected to lead the Rajasthan Legislature Party, he had promised to seek the cooperation of all sections of society. However, he took more than a month to negotiate a settlement with the striking sweepers of Jaipur. Besides, only three Ministers and five Deputy Ministers had been appointed till the time of writing. Even these Ministers do not have much work. And the bureaucrats are having a heyday as the Chief Minister is able to exercise little control over them.

ONE-UPMANSHIP

JOBS OF DISCORD

THERE are always two sides to a coin. So it may now seem to Sukhbans Kaur Bhinder, the parliamentarian-wife of the police commissioner of Delhi. As reported in this column earlier, the voters in her Lok Sabha constituency, Gurdaspur, were given the bounty of a recruitment drive of the Delhi Police after her husband became the capital's police chief. On 14 March a team of Delhi Police officers, comprising one deputy commissioner, one inspector and three head constables held interviews and selected some 300 new recruits for the Delhi Police from the Gurdaspur area. But while these 300 were satisfied, at least three times that number, who did not get jobs, were unhappy. This recruitment drive has now become a bone of contention in the district Congress (I) politics. It has been alleged that the recruitment drive was restricted to only three centres in the district—Gurdaspur, Dhariwal and Kanhuwan—because Mrs Bhinder's favourites were to be given Vidhan Sabha tickets from these three segments of her constituency.

OVERZEALOUS MOTHER

SOME of the prominent youth activists of the Congress(I) who are sympathetic to Maneka Gandhi say that her mother, Mrs Amteshwar Anand, is the biggest handicap in her bid to become the political successor to Sanjay Gandhi. Mrs Anand seems to be in too big a hurry, and both her haste and her coterie of friends are doing more harm than good to Maneka. They have indulged in pretty pernicious mudslinging against Rajiv Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and V. C. Shukla. In the last week of July several rounds of meetings were held at Mrs Anand's residence at which some handpicked Delhi journalists were also present. One allegation that was circulated goes like this: "The fact that Rajiv Gandhi's wife Sonia holds a foreign passport has also discouraged fierce lobbying (for) his advent into politics, for years of experience have shown that (our) countrymen would never repose complete trust in a man whose wife is an out and out foreigner."

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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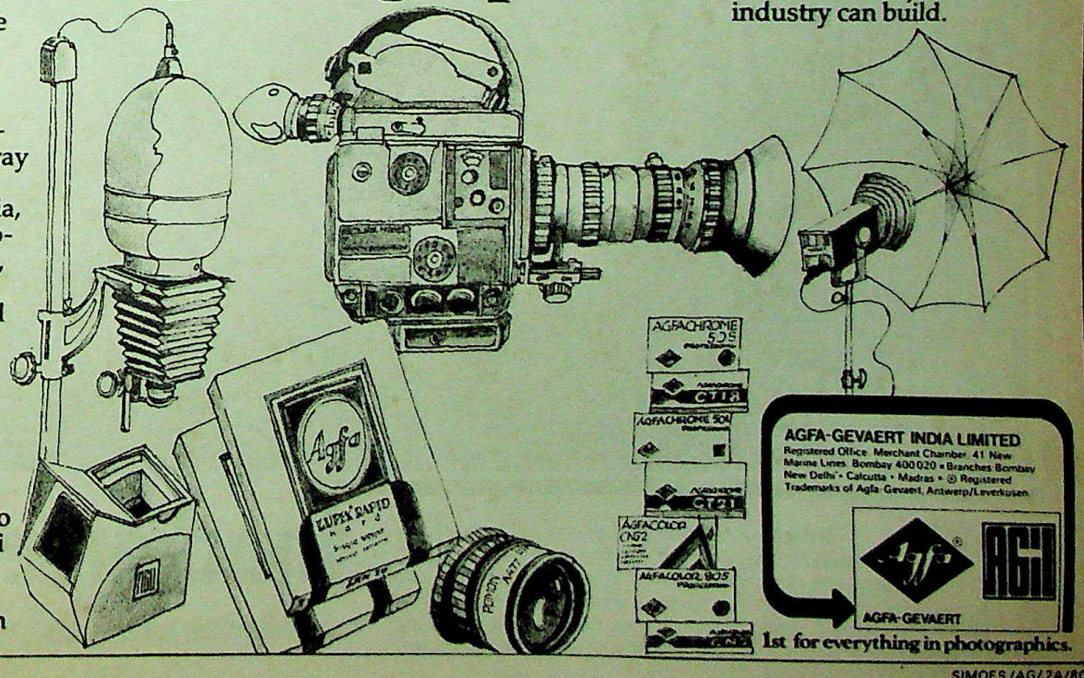

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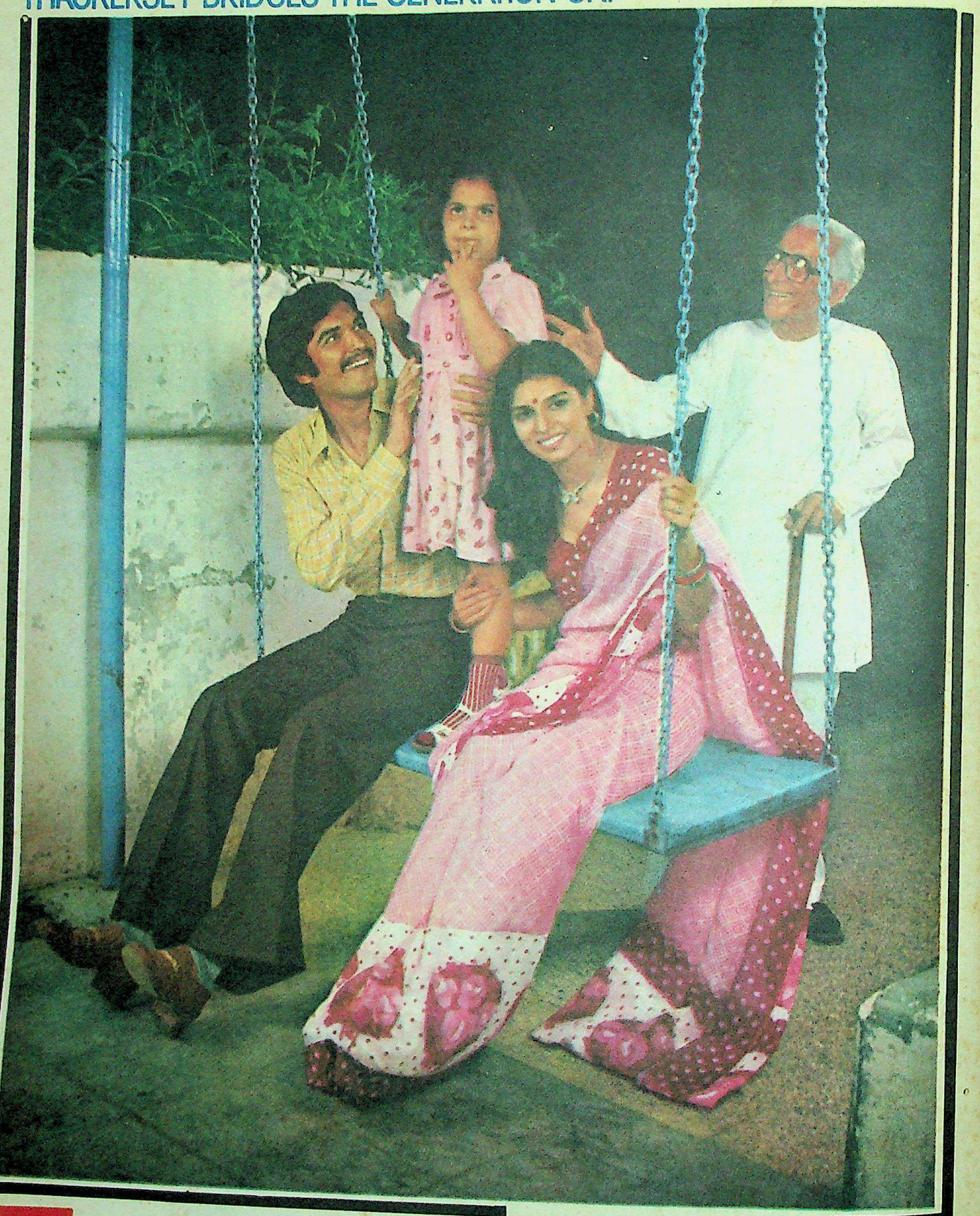
THACKERSEY BRIDGES THE GENERATION GAP



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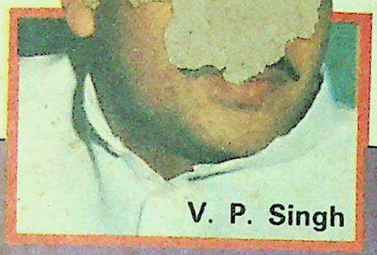
SUNDAY



V. P. Singh

UP: The troubled heart of India

EXCLUSIVE!

Extracts from
Mountbatten,
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the book which has
created a storm

NEHRU AND THE MOUNTBATTENS

Moradabad Revisited

By Syed Shahabuddin, MP

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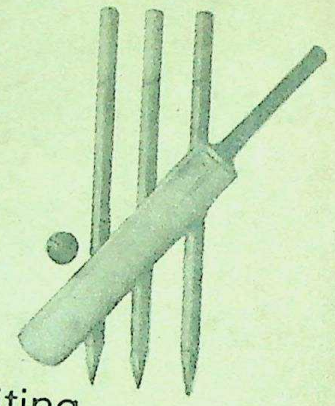
September song.

Enjoy walking in the rain. It'll soon be over.
Time to rejoice, to harvest your efforts.
The golden hint of autumn.
Tempting apples. Burnished trees.
Cricket teams coming out to play.
And crowds invoking
blessings from the
god of plenty.



Thank goodness for
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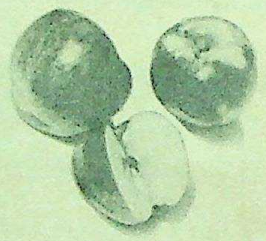
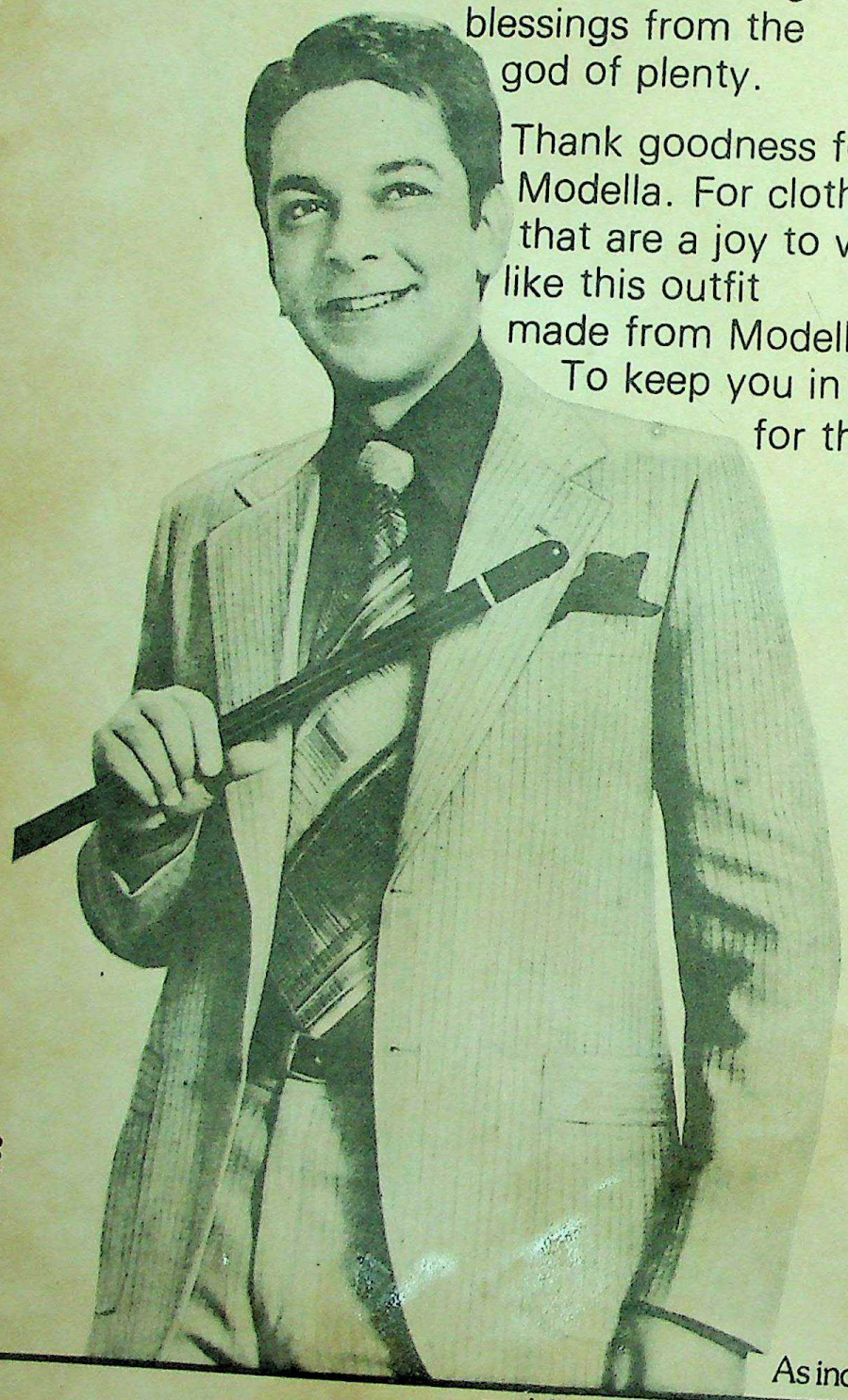
that are a joy to wear:
like this outfit
made from Modella suiting.
To keep you in perfect shape
for the season.





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SUNDAY VOLUME 8
ISSUE 12
RUPEE ONE
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

September 28, 1980

Did Nehru have an affair with Lady Edwina, the wife of India's last viceroy, Lord Mountbatten? Did this special relationship prove helpful in arranging a smooth transfer of power? We publish exclusive extracts from Mountbatten's recent biography: *Mountbatten, Hero of our Time* which throws light on the exact nature of Nehru's relationship with Lady Edwina, and narrates how Lord Mountbatten accomplished the historic transfer of power in the subcontinent. **Page 10**

The President has correctly analysed the Indian situation when he says that the rich few are benefitting at the expense of our poverty stricken masses. RANJIT SAU looks at how various classes are fighting for more in India **Page 22**

Is UP, India's most populous state, being misruled? Is the present V. P. Singh ministry the worst UP has ever had? A detailed assessment of the current situation in the state plus an exclusive interview with the Chief Minister. **Page 24**

From this week our News section takes on a new look. See for yourself. **Page 34**

Kamal Sahai

At Moradabad, the PAC continues to terrorise Muslims. Why is nobody protesting against what happened in Moradabad? Why are politicians, Sarvodayites, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, Citizens for Democracy and the upholders of civil liberties so quiet, asks SYED SHAHABUDDIN. **Page 18**

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HMT introduce The After Hours.

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Timekeepers to the Nation

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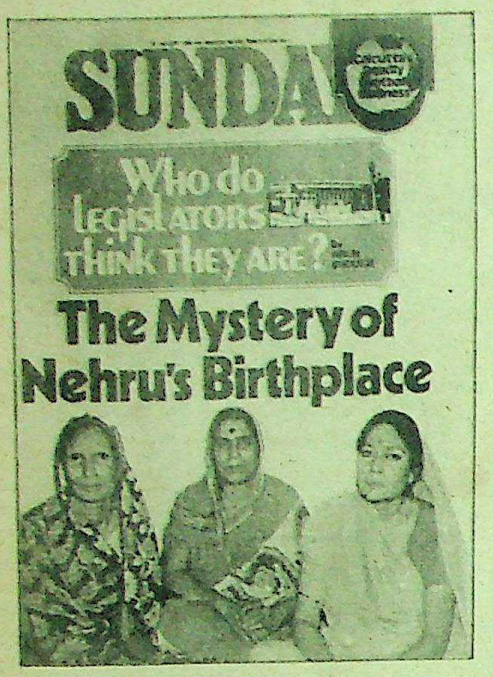

Judge and saviour

Why did police inspector Arkhit Behera treat the little child Nandi so barbarously ("Nandi's tale of torture," 31 August)? Justice Kunja Behari Panda took the right step by keeping the little girl in his custody and breaking the story of her plight. Had he not chanced upon Nandi, the little girl would have fallen into the cruel hands of other exploiters.
K. V. Satish, Gulbarga, Karnataka

A monarchy

I read "Our callous rulers" (24 August) by Chandra Shekhar. It is true that "now there is little difference between a democratic rule and a personalised one in our country." The indispensable element of a democracy, a strong opposition, has been completely lost. In fact, we are more a "constitutional monarchy in which the parliament is worthless" than "a secular socialist democratic republic."
Bishnu Prasad Dash, Cuttack

Mr Chandra Shekhar's article is moving. Double standards in public life are dangerous for a country. Thanks to the machinations of so-called democrats, Indian democracy is in peril. Our politicians' greed for power and office is almost inhuman.
Bhaskar, Hajipur, Bihar

Room enough

"His life was no song" (31 August) by Kishore Chatterjee is more of a comparison between the last days of Beethoven and Debabrata (George) Biswas. The author frequently uses the word 'dirty' to describe the room in which the uncrowned king of Rabindrasangeet lived. I had been to Georgeda'sone-room flat on Rashbehari Avenue a couple of times, but never found it dirty or suffocating, although it was stacked with books, files, medicines etc.
Pradip Choudhury, Durgapur

Dishonourable members

Congratulations for publishing Mr Arun Shourie's explanation to the speaker of the Lok Sabha in response to the contempt charge against him.("Who do legislators think they are?" 31 August) As far as insults to the dignity and honour of Parliament and legislatures are concerned, MPs and MLAs are the worst offenders. Switching loyalties, hurling abuses and coming to blows with each other, taking bribes and betraying voters' trust damages their reputation far more than any journalistic expose. Legislators do not deserve any privileges, unless they are true to their oaths.
E. P. Menon, Bangalore

Mr Shourie presented a correct picture of our legislators and did a grand job of bringing to light their actions and attitudes.
R. Ranjan, Asansol

The article is an eye-opener to all citizens of India who blindly cast their votes in elections.
M. K. Chatterji, Calcutta

Any worthy citizen of India who has read Mr Shourie's article in the *Indian Express* (28 July 1980) "A furore a day" would have been ashamed to learn about the disorderly conduct of our legislators. Instead of calling for a contempt notice against Mr Shourie, Mr Arif Mohammad Khan should reform fellow-legislators.
K. R. Krishnan, Bangalore

According to Harold Laski: "A House that is in a continuous frenzy of excitement is a House that is in a succession of crises; that is usually the index to the government in office that is on its way to the grave." Actually Parliamentary debates possess enormous importance. What is written and said about them helps the voter to form an opinion about his representatives.
M. Atyab Siddiqui, Delhi

The media deserve an encouraging pat on the back for exposing the comic behaviour of legislators. Instead, Parliamentarians charge the Press with "negative reporting."
J. M. Nair, Trichur, Kerala

Dirty game

If Calcutta soccer is always such a tense affair ("Calcutta's deadly football madness," 31 August) and if the crowds are so uncontrollable, what sense is there in organising matches at the cost of precious lives, time, money and energy?
Husain E. Beguwala, Bombay

I am surprised to see how fanatical Calcuttans can be about a game like soccer. Ironically, though many players of both Mohun Bagan and East Bengal change sides on the eve of every soccer season, the fans continue to blindly support their clubs.
Debasish Ray, Vanvihar, Orissa

Every right-thinking citizen would welcome the idea of a total ban on soccer in Calcutta at least for a couple of years. Or else, the three big clubs who are mainly responsible for this chaos should be banned from playing in Calcutta.
P. C. Bhattacharjee, Bhilai

I personally believe that Dilip Palit and Bidesh Bose are not chiefly responsible for the casualties at Eden Gardens on 16 August, as they have been alleged to be. It is the administration that is solely to blame, though it seldom takes responsibility for its failures and finds fault with others. Helmeted policemen at the ground were seen sitting idle, watching the game, while chaos prevailed. Also what use is there for the police if they cannot prevent spectators from entering the galleries with rods, bamboos, brickbats, crackers, iron chairs etc?
Shibaprasad Dey, Calcutta

What was the police doing when a major flare-up started at 3 pm in the western stands? Why were tickets for the big match given at the Mohan Bagan ground only? Why were gate numbers 12 and 13 shut when the violence broke our in the stadium?
Prabac Guha, Chabua, Assam

Problem of choice

ECONOMICS, in spite of how Dr Subramaniam Swamy views it (3 August), is and shall always be a matter of choices: as when a housewife decides whether to buy six onions and two cabbages or four cabbages and one onion with the same amount of money. Dr Swamy is being dishonest in separating choice from scarce resources by talking of economic policy as a problem of choices. Only later does he refer to this problem as one arising due to scarce resources. Economics is simply a question of how to make the best use of scarce resources.
A. K. Pandya, Pyongyang, South Korea

THE late President V.V. Giri was reported to have said at the Arundale birth centenary celebration at Madras on 15 December 1978 that corruption has become a common feature even among ministers and nothing could be done to check it at the government level. Corruption is rampant at all levels of the administration only because the politicians who are running it are corrupt.
Nazir Ahmed, Bangalore

The photographs with the cover story "The mystery of Nehru's birthplace" (Sunday, 31 August) should have been credited to "Imagemakers" and not Kamal Sahai. The error is regretted. —Editor.

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The villains: a few

Your argument that had the Muslims conspired against the police, they would not have brought their children to the Idgah holds no water since I believe that all the 50,000 *namazis* cannot conspire against the police: only a handful of communal elements started the trouble.
G.Raghava Rao, Hyderabad

In your coverage of all riots, communal or otherwise, your conclusions have invariably differed from those of other newspapers and magazines. Are all others biased?
Arun K.Khattri, Varanasi.

Sheikh's hand

"A CRISIS in Kashmir" (17 August) by M. J. Akbar was timely and complete. One cannot deny that the Sheikh had some "share" in the crisis. His speech at Lal Chowk was a mere eyewash.
N. C. R. Purushothaman, Hyderabad

PLEASE refer to "The Sheikh and corruption" (17 August) in which you have made some observations about the alleged cases of corruption involving the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. You have also made some remarks about the Works Minister, Mr G. M. Shah, which can only be described as one-sided and unfortunate. To call Mr G. M. Shah "a disliked person" is a travesty of the facts. Mr Shah , no doubt, is a son-in-law of Sheikh *sahib*, but he is not in politics and in the Ministry because of that. He made his own contribution to the freedom struggle and has suffered imprisonment on many occasions for political causes. Everybody in Kashmir is aware of the sacrifices of Mr Shah and the high position he has held in the Party. As such it is unjust to make insinuations against him on the ground that he happens to be a son-in-law of Sheikh *sahib*. Mr Shah lives in his own house, which is adjacent to Sheikh *sahib's*.

Similarly the appointment of Mr Tariq Abdullah as Managing Director of the Tourism Corporation is no favour to him. He is a young man of promise, having spent years in the west, and having acquired experience in various walks of life. The State Tourism Corporation was in the red before his appointment and it was a burden on the exchequer. Ever since he assumed charge of it, he has turned it into a profit-earning organisation, which even his worst critics admit. In the process, no doubt, he had to get rid of some old deadwood and infuse fresh blood in the Corporation.

About the charges of corruption against Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah which you have made reference to on the basis of the alleged memorandum of Mirza Afzal Beg to the Prime Minister, these are the same charges about which much hullabaloo was sought to be made during the Janata regime. These were replied to by the Chief Minister and the central government was satisfied with his replies. To level these charges again will serve no purpose. They are only intended to be used as a political weapon.
A. G. Rather, Public Relations Officer, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Calcutta

All men are brothers

I am religious Sikh. Guru Gobind Singh taught us: "*Maans ki jaat sab eke pehchanbo.*" (Recognise the unity of the human race.) Muslims have a right to air their grievances, as any other Indian. Why should there be discrimination against anyone? Guru Nanak taught us: "*Awal Allah noor upaya, kudrat ke saab bande; ek noor te saab jag upaya, kaun bhale ko mande.*" (First, God spread light, and everyone was born from nature. From one spot of light was created the universe. Who is good and who is bad?) The Moradabad tragedy was worse than Jalianwalla Bagh: while the latter was a case of firing on a political meeting, mostly of adults, the former was a case of firing on a peaceful religious congregation, which included a sizable number of innocent children.
Balindar Kaur Sohi, Jullundur Cantt., Punjab

After reading your story, I actually broke down, unable to check my tears—and not because I am a Muslim.
Ahmed Siraj Mohiuddin Farooqui, Parbhani, Maharashtra

In spite of the atrocities on them, Muslims were painted as the villains of Moradabad. The reasons, as you have rightly said, are history and Pakistan.
M.A.Aziz, Hyderabad

Most journalists reporting on Moradabad have written like PR men of the PAC—except you and Udayan Sharma in *Ravivar*. One famous journalist who went on a round of the city with the police was 'sorry' not to have witnessed any shooting. Another discovered 'hidden hands' behind the trouble. This is the state of Indian journalism.
Firoz Ashraf, Bombay

Picture of protest

Your cover picture of the Muslim youth ("Id: Day of Death," 24 August), with his blood-smeared face and clothes and the haunting stare of helplessness, is a stunningly eloquent protest against the communalism that subverts our law and order. It is also a sad commentary on the police's treatment of the docile.
Joseph John, Kottayam, Kerala

We Indians are destroying our rich social and cultural heritage by indulging in communal riots.
R.B.Chaudhuri, Bombay

We are proud to have journalists like Vijyendra Tyagi in a country where secularism is fast disappearing.
Hasibur Rahman Mallick, Calcutta

The report indicates how deftly the authorities can publicise a police-public clash as a communal riot.
P.K.Das, Varanasi

Your report and some other reports have blasted the myth that Muslims went to the Idgah armed and opened fire on the police.
M.A.Ahad, Bhubaneswar

The barbarous, violent police attacks on innocent Muslims should put every Indian to shame.
K.P.Andavan, Salem

Funnily, the country's ruling class has not reacted to the Moradabad incidents.
Amit Das, Alipurduar, West Bengal

The secretary of the city unit of the Congress(I) rightly condemned the government for its inability to protect innocent lives. Merely transferring officers cannot solve the problem. Where is the government that works?
K.K.Kaul, Delhi

My heartfelt thanks to those men of the BSF and the army for their excellent service
R. M. V. N. Ramakantha Rao, Bhubaneswar

That is him

B. Nagi Reddy

A PICTURE of the late B. Narasimha Reddy, the famous producer-director and owner of Madras' Vauhini Studios appeared on page 36 of your 17 August issue, wrongly captioned as "B. Nagi Reddy." Mr Nagi Reddy, the former's brother, is now owner of the Vijaya and Vauhini Studios, a big-time filmmaker and chairman of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam trust board.
T. Naga Ravindra, Nellore

Rich voice

Anil Grover's tribute to Mohammad Rafi "Abhi na jao chhorh kar" (17 August) was marvellous and worth preserving in a library. Rafi's voice saw many films through to the box-office.
V. Laxman Rao, Bhilai

The more one listens to Rafi's songs, the more one feels he is alive.
K. V. Udaya Shankar, Gauhati

Singers like Rafi come once in a millenium to delight weary mortals.
Binoy Sankar Deo, Bhubaneswar

An appropriate end to the article would have been a line from a Rafi number in *Muqaddar ka Sikandar: Zindagi to bewafa hai ek din thukrayegi, maut mehbooba hai apne saath le kar jayegi.*
A. R. Arland, Hirakud, Orissa

Rafi was an institution in himself; he never felt the difference between religions and languages.
Jasvinder Singh, Delhi

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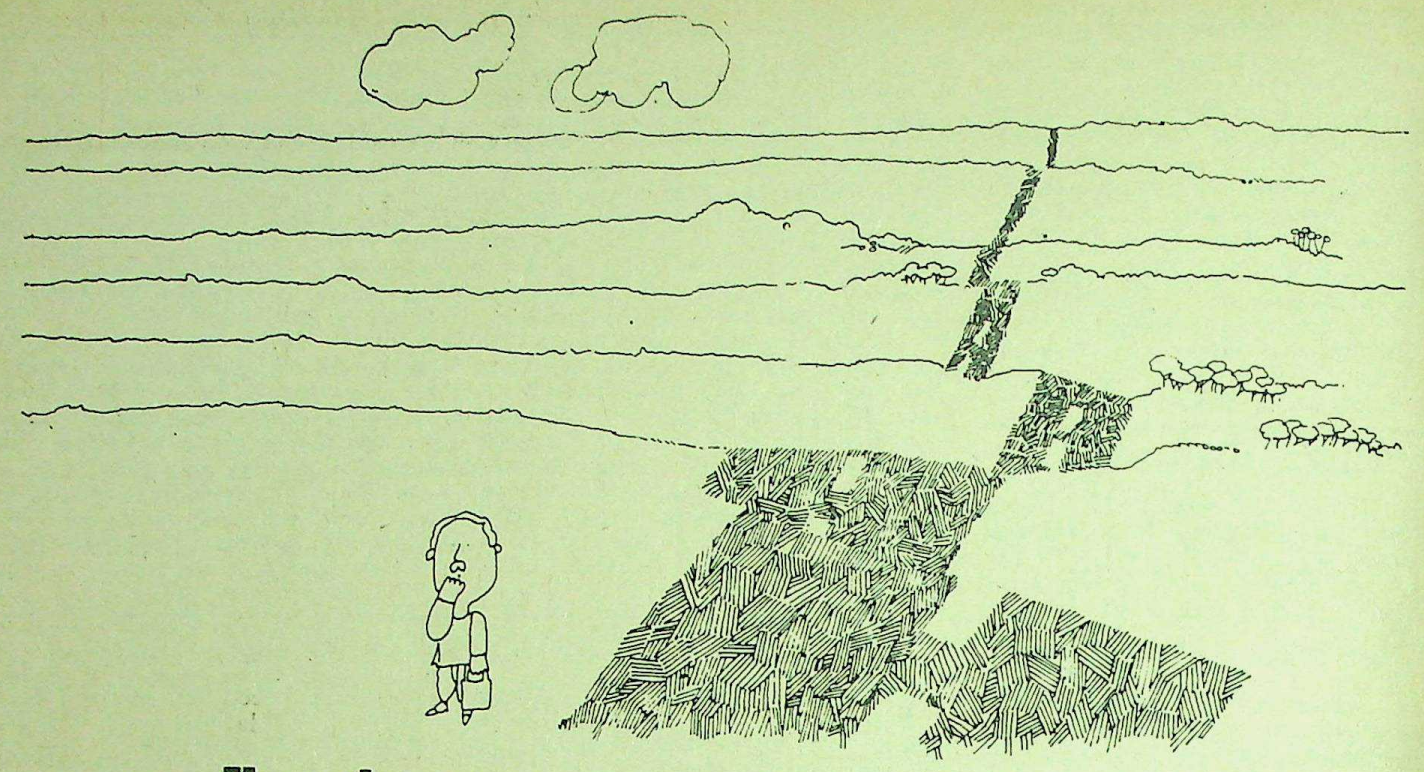


You who carry rations for half a km—

imagine carrying grains across fifteen lakh kms.

Going to the ration shop and back every week; carrying grains for your family, may seem like quite a task. But compare this to what the Food Corporation of India does. FCI carries millions of tonnes of foodgrains, everyday throughout the length and breadth of the country. From the snowbound peaks of Ladakh to the coastal backwaters of Kerala, from the deserts of Rajasthan to the dense tropical forests of Mizoram.

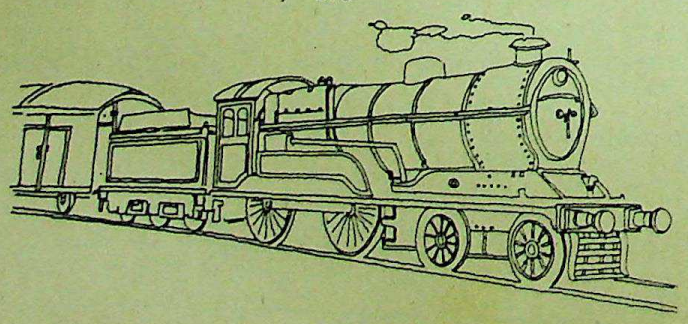
In a country the size of a sub-continent, FCI's movement of grains maintains a balance between surplus food producing and other areas. Using 45,000 wagons FCI transports more than 1 crore bags of foodgrains every month by rail alone, to assure 650 million people of a regular supply. Roads and waterways are also used for the transportation of grains. For instance, 40,000 truck trips a year carry supplies for the state of Jammu and Kashmir alone.

The movement of foodgrains from where they are grown to where they are consumed, involves heavy transport expenses. Yet, irrespective of the distance covered, these grains are supplied at a fixed price to every distributing agency throughout the country. For instance, wheat from Ludhiana will be supplied to the distributing agency in Delhi, Imphal or Kanyakumari at the same fixed price. A quintal of wheat which costs FCI Rs. 161.05 is sold to distributing agencies for Rs. 130.00. The difference of Rs. 31.05 is absorbed by the Government to make foodgrains available to the consumer at a lower price. In other words, the consumer receives from the Government the subsidy of Rs. 31.05 through the Corporation. For all these various operations, what is spent on administrative overheads constitutes only 1% of the total cost.

FCI carries out every stage of these numerous activities with the utmost economy, in the best interest of both the farmer and the consumer.

The estimated Consumer Subsidy on wheat in 1980-81 (Per Quintal)

Price paid to farmer	117.00	Administrative overheads	1.71
Statutory and other charges like mandi purchase tax, mandi labour cost of gunny bags, temporary storage,etc. on which FCI has no control	20.64	Storage, handling, godown expenses, etc.	5.92
		Interest on loans	5.54
		Total cost incurred by FCI	161.05
Freight charges	10.24	**Cost charged by FCI from distributing agencies**	130.00
		CONSUMER SUBSIDY	31.05



FOOD CORPORATION OF INDIA

In the service of the nation

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The Government

We begin a new weekly column in which we will report how the government really works.

Commerce proposes

The trade deficit for this financial year is expected to be a heavy Rs 3,000 crores, and only a serious export-drive can help reduce this yawning gap. But the Union Cabinet is sitting lazily on a number of important proposals submitted by the Commerce Ministry over four months ago to accord special facilities to export-oriented units. One of the proposals relates to the supply of duty-free imported raw materials and capital goods in order to make our exports more competitive in the international market. Another proposal envisages clearance from MRTP strictures to expanding export-oriented units, so that managements do not have to run from pillar to post to get their permissions. Though exports have shown an increase in the first quarter of this financial year, 1980-81, they have fallen short of the target: partly due to the protectionist tendencies adopted by developed countries like the USA. The government of India obviously realises how important this problem is: the Prime Minister herself heads a committee on exports. Unfortunately, the first meeting of this committee is yet to take place.

Thank you, GoI

Sometimes the government does better publicity for a private sector firm than the latter can do for itself. This is what Haldor-Topsoe, the engineering consultant selected for the ammonia section of the Thal-Vaishet fertiliser project, discovered. Word had been sent to some newspaper offices that this Danish firm would brief the press in Delhi on September 18. But on the morning of September 18 someone from the Danish embassy rang up to say that the Haldor-Topsoe executive would not be meeting newsmen as scheduled. Well, why should he? His job had already been done by the government the previous day. A five-page explanation had been issued on behalf of the Petroleum, Chemicals and Fertiliser ministry about why Haldor-Topsoe and Pullmann-Kellogg (who had been made consultants for the ammonia plant at Hazira) had been chosen, overruling the earlier selection of C. F. Braun. The national newspapers had already printed the explanation, and there was nothing left for Haldor-Topsoe to do except silently thank the government.

Train to Varanasi

The state of the Indian railways, it seems, isn't as healthy as its public relations officers would like us to believe. And despite the fact that its Minister is Pandit Kamalapati Tripathi, the man who ran the trains on time during the Emergency. To begin with, the railways, whose functioning affects and reflects the state of the economy, carried three million tonnes less revenue earning traffic in the first five months of the current financial year (April to August) than it did in the corresponding period last year. Nor is that all. We learn that top railway officials are trying to keep the Railway Minister happy by either starting new trains for Varanasi, or diverting existing ones to touch that station. Varanasi is Mr Tripathi's hometown. Perhaps an indication of the state of the railways is available in the state of the Railway Board itself. Mr Menezes, the chairman, is on extension. Two members are on superannuation. A fourth is on sick leave. And a fifth is no longer alive.

Work to ageold rule

Eight months after coming to power, "the government that works" is making valiant efforts to show that it is serious about its election pledge. Since it is the bureaucracy which is the traditional unwilling horse two important steps have been taken to flog it to greater activity. The first step decreed by the Prime Minister is to set aside one day in the week as a "meeting-less day", the logic being that civil servants spend too much time discussing what they will do instead of actually doing it. Further, another first step: 22-27 September was an "arrear clearance week." But this is how our mandarins worked during this week. First came the circular from the PM to the various Ministers setting out the idea. The Ministers discussed the idea with their secretaries and additional secretaries. That, the innocent would have thought, meant the end of discussions and the start of work with a bang. But no. Not, for example, in the Home Ministry. There, an additional secretary called a meeting of joint secretaries and the latter naturally had to talk it over with the deputy secretaries. Thus were the first two days of the arrear clearance week spent in discussing the priorities.

However, a list of priorities was eventually drawn up. The first place on the list went to the grievances received from the public and pending with the PM's petition officer. The petition officer while forwarding to the respective Ministries the petitions received by the PM naturally keeps a note of them. Reminders from there are no good for anybody's career. Second on the list were all pending parliamentary assurances, like questions that have not been replied to. Third on the list came matters relating to communal harmony, complaints of atrocities on members of scheduled castes and tribes and public complaints against the police.

Painless Hindi

Rightly or wrongly the Janata government was considered to have a pro-Hindi bias. The present government, with the equal measure of support it draws from the north and the south, will probably consciously try to avoid that image; and nobody will try to construe the sending of parliamentary delegations round the world to assess the use of Hindi in GoI offices as actually doing something for Hindi. The inaction-in-action is also on display to anyone entering the Press Information Bureau office in Shastri Bhavan. Up front is a notice board which has traditionally carried announcements in English informing newsmen of coming events. But a new notice board has recently been installed at the top of which 'Press Information Bureau' has been inscribed in Hindi. Presumably it will carry announcements in Hindi. But the board has been left blank for over two months.

Important "stenographer"

The long awaited Assam talks were not without their share of mystery. At the request of the agitation leaders, no officials were participating. Despite the political nature of the discussions, no member of the political department of the home ministry was present; even Mr H. C. Sarin, adviser to the Assam governor, was kept out. But there was one senior officer who sat in on the talks: Mr S. P. Bagla, establishment officer in the home ministry with the rank of a joint secretary. Since it was known that officials would not participate in the talks, curious pressmen asked Mr Bagla on the opening day what he was doing inside the closed room. "I am attending it as a stenographer," was Mr Bagla's reply.

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NEHRU AND THE MOUNTBATTENS

By RICHARD HOUGH

When Lord Mountbatten came to India to arrange a smooth transfer of power, the task seemed impossible. Mountbatten's great asset was his personal rapport with Jawaharlal Nehru built up in no small measure through the strong affection Lady Edwina and Nehru had for each other, a relationship which Mountbatten never grudged. Many details of the precise nature of that relationship, allegedly an "affair", have been published in the most recent (barely weeks-old) biography of India's last Viceroy and first Governor-General: Mountbatten, Hero of our Time (*Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, £8.50)*

NOT long before he died, Mountbatten said, "You can divide my life into two. During the first part of my life I was an ordinary conventional naval officer, trying not to be different in the sense of being royal, trying not to show myself off as being rich and ostentatious—like always using a small car to drive to the dockyard instead of my Rolls-Royce.*Then we come to the period when I was pulled out and pushed one generation up. Dudley Pound, for instance, was twenty-four years older and was a post-captain while I was a two-striper. From that time everything was new for me, and most of it for the first time for anyone.

"A lot of people today still think I gave away India, but..."

MOUNTBATTEN was forty-six and still looked ridiculously youthful. One morning, he was interrupted with a message from Downing Street. Please come and see me—signed Clement Attlee. It was not the first of its kind. Recently, his advice had been sought over Burma and about "the mess caused there by the Governor," as Mountbatten himself expressed it.

This time India was the main item on the agenda. With Attlee was Sir Stafford Cripps, an expert on the subject, who had recently led a mission to Delhi which had very nearly pulled off an agreement for the transfer of power. "I had kept in touch with what was going on," said Mountbatten, "and I was able to produce reasonably intelligent answers. Suddenly I began to have suspicions. We were talking about Wavell, who was having a very difficult time. I said, 'You're not by any chance talking about me relieving him?' Attlee said, 'Yes, and I said, 'Not on your life. And I'll give you my reasons. First, Wavell is a very honourable man. He may be taciturn but he's first class and if he can't succeed, no

**Not at first. This was something he learned, painfully.*

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one can.'

"This, and all other reasons were swept away, so I started making conditions. I must choose my own staff, and there'd be a lot of them, and I'd want Wavell's too, and everyone must be allowed cars and to bring their wives. I wanted 'Pug' Ismay. I wanted complete control of the Honours List at the end, with no queries. I wanted my old York aircraft back, fitted out just as I liked it. I wanted...."

Was Mountbatten teasing them? Did he know that all the conditions he was likely to ask would be met? We can assume that he did. Then he tried two tough ones. First, he demanded that he could have his present appointment to the 1st Cruiser Squadron back again when he had finished in India as Viceroy, the highest appointment any British citizen could hold. Attlee said yes. But Mountbatten insisted on Admiralty approval, now. So the First Lord (Lord Hall) and the First Sea Lord (Admiral Sir John Cunningham) were called to Number 10.

Hall agreed at once. "Hey, not so fast!" said the Admiral. "We had the gravest doubts about Dickie coming back after running SEAC, where he commanded fleets. It was only allowed after a lot of hesitation. But to come back after being Viceroy of India—absolutely out of the question."

There was a brief pause. Then Attlee spoke in his dry, sharp, even-toned voice. "I am not asking for your comments," he said to Cunningham. "I am giving you an order." After they left, there was another pause before Cripps spoke: he would gladly go as Mountbatten's Chief of Staff if that would help. Mountbatten thought this a terrible idea, and that it would be read by the Indians as confirmation that Mountbatten was a mere regal figurehead. "It's very good of you, sir. But that is too great an honour," said Mountbatten.

Years later, Mountbatten insisted that he was being relentlessly cornered. "I went on fighting." Next he brought up the King's name. He would have to discuss it with him. Attlee said he had already squared George VI, and that he thought it was a marvellous idea. But, argued Mountbatten, the King had not yet heard his arguments against his appointment. The meeting broke up with nothing decided except that Mountbatten would see the King at once.

Mountbatten reminded George VI that there were hundreds of princely and native states. The Government had treaty relations with them, the king had a special responsibility towards them. Then if there were civil war, and terrible massacres, the royal family would be directly associated, perhaps even held responsible for them, through himself, even if he was only a minor member of the royal family.

Mountbatten reported George VI as saying that it was precisely because of his rank that he approved, that the royal family still had a cachet in India, that Mountbatten should take a personal message from him to the princes.

Jinnah was as thin as a reed from the Ganges, narrow in face, his brown skin dry even in the hottest weather, his eyes bright and alert, missing nothing. He was a terrific dandy and displayed a wide range of perfectly cut suits, and a monocle completed the picture of some suntanned eccentric from a Michael Arlen novel.

Mountbatten: "You do know that the job is almost impossible?"

George VI: "It *can* be done."

Mountbatten: "Only by a miracle. And look how bad it will be for you and the family if I fail."

George VI: "Ah, but look how good if you succeed!"

"And that was that!" said Mountbatten. "I went back to Attlee and said I thought the King was quite wrong, and produced my trump card. I asked innocently if the Secretary of State for India was above the Viceroy, and was told yes, but that he was only a spokesman for the Cabinet.

"You mean I am going to have the Cabinet sitting on top of me all the time? This is ridiculous. The decisions must be mine and mine alone, on the spot."

Attlee replied, aghast, "But anything else would mean giving you plenipotentiary powers. We cannot possibly consider that."

Mountbatten claimed that at this point he rose from his chair. "For this relief, much thanks," he said, smiling.

"You don't mean you're going, Dickie?"

"I'm going all right. I'm going back to the navy."

With hardly a second's pause, Attlee said, "All right, you can have plenipotentiary powers."

A week after Mountbatten arrived in India, with a time limit of just fourteen months to hand over power, Nehru asked if by any chance Mountbatten had managed to get some special dispensation. Mountbatten said, "Yes, as a matter of fact I did. Why do you ask?" Nehru said, "Because you act entirely differently to any other Viceroy. You talk as if *you* are making the decisions."

Between the time when the news of the appointment was made public and Mountbatten's departure, his enemies were inclined to say he had taken on the task for its grandeur and pomp, ceremonial and uniforms, and for the historical record: the great-grandson of Queen Victoria, proclaimed first Empress of India, giving away "the brightest jewel," a "socialist" viscount behaving traitorously to his class.

The statistics were truly alarming. Mountbatten was charged with securing the political freedom within a unified state of some 400 million people (one in five of the earth's population), 250 million Hindus, 90 million Moslems, 6 million Sikhs, and the rest made up of numerous sects and Buddhists and Christians and over 500 independent princes and maharajahs. They spoke 23 languages and 200 dialects and were divided into some 3,000 castes, orginating in racial, tribal, occupational and territorial differences. In the past few years, millions had died of hunger and tens of thousands as a result of internecine riot. Some had fought against the Allies, many more had formed the main strength of Mountbatten's armies. Many princes and maharajahs did not welcome the end of British rule. The giant Congress Party, led by Nehru, wanted a united India within the Commonwealth. *The Muslim leader, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, called out*

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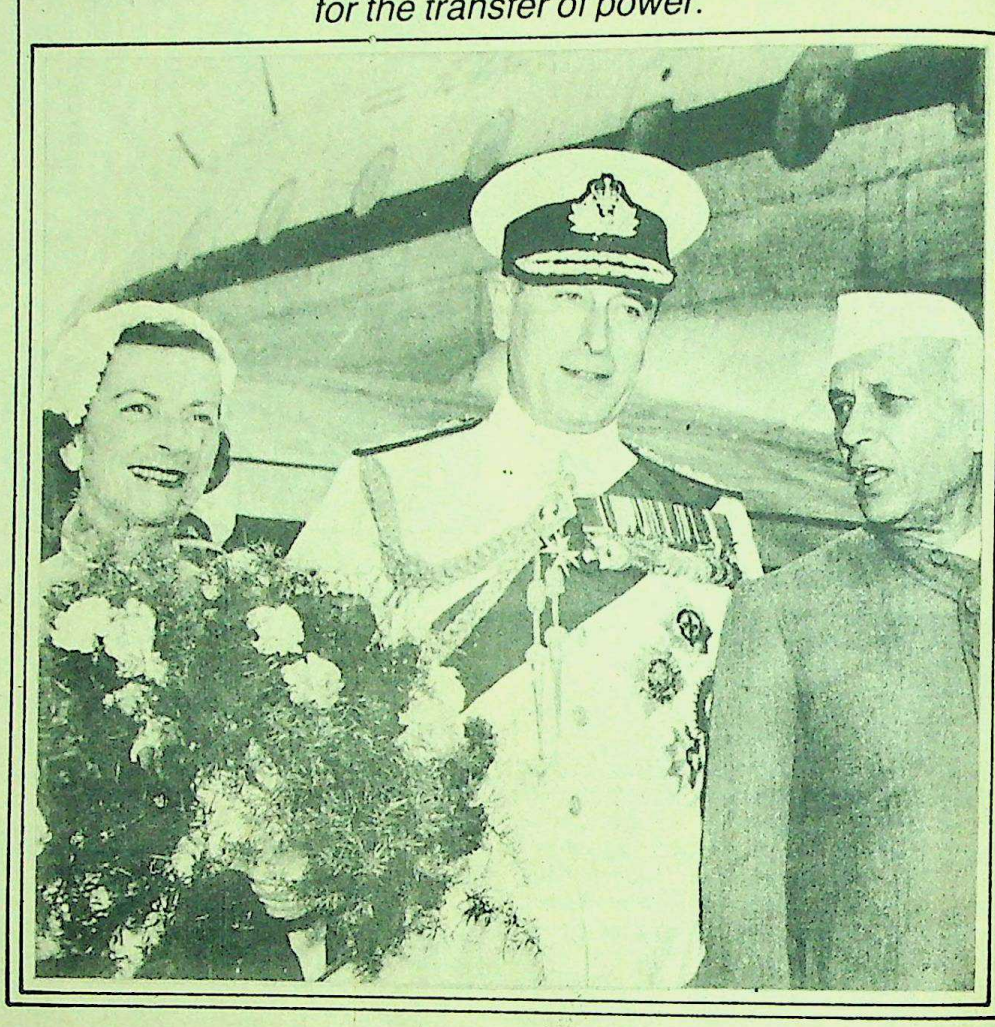
from the Muslim League for a separate Pakistan. The Muslims had been mainly loyal to Britain during the war, and had provided by far the greater number of troops. Congress helped to widen the division by opposing the war, and Nehru, Gandhi and some 60,000 of their followers were arrested. Nothing much seemed to have changed since 1921. Mountbatten was taking on the political commitment of a socialist Prime Minister, and would be recognized everywhere as the King's cousin and representative. Attlee himself "thought the odds were about six to four against success." Mountbatten's estimate of a thousand to one against seemed more realistic.

Mountbatten's York aircraft took off from Northolt airport in north-west London at first light on 20 March 1946. Besides Rear-Admiral the Viscount and Viscountess Mountbatten and their daughter Pamela, there were on board their personal servants, Mountbatten's senior ADC Lieutenant-Commander Peter Howes, who did so much of the hard work, and Captain 'Ronnie' Brockman, his private secretary and for so many years before and after, sharer of private jokes, whom Mountbatten always found congenial company for lighter moments.

As usual when Mountbatten travelled the luggage was prodigious in volume and quantity and even Edwina, normally the lightest of light travellers, was obliged as Vicereine to bring a wide range of possessions and clothes. As on her honeymoon (and this year marked their silver wedding), she brought with her much of her jewellery as well as a diamond tiara for the proclamation in Delhi. Then there were all the documents and the two-page definition of the terms of Mountbatten's mission, signed by the Prime Minister.

Mountbatten had laid down a gruelling timetable for the flight, which set the tempo he was evidently intending to sustain througout the mission, like the destroyer commander he was. Most of the rest of his staff had left the previous day, at Ismay's insistence, preferring a more relaxed flight, like the good (no, exceptional) army staff officer he was.

The relationship that developed between the beautiful 45-year-old Englishwoman of such notable wealth and aristocracy, and the English-educated Hindu barrister from Allahabad had the most profound effect on the negotiations for the transfer of power.



MOUNTBATTEN's plane, because of its tight timetable, arrived only a few hours later, and the sixty-three-year-old Field Marshal greeted his forty-six-year-old naval successor.

The next morning, Mountbatten and Edwina saw off the Wavells from the airport, an unusual and appreciated gesture, and returned to work. On 24 March, two years after Mountbatten had taken Mandalay, he and Edwina were sworn in as Viceroy and Vicereine, a function as grand as any swearing-in ceremony, but for this last time with the single purpose of granting political freedom to 400 million people instead of ruling them.

It was the nearest thing to a coronation, though mercifully briefer: trumpets sounding the prelude, the ADCs leading the Mountbattens, he solemn and noble in the pale blue robe of the Grand Master of the Star of India over the full dress admiral's uniform, and wearing the dark blue ribbon of the Garter above the dazzling array of Grand Crosses, orders and decorations; Edwina in gold brocade with her splendid tiara and more modest display of decorations. They moved to their thrones, cunningly lit red and gold with scarlet velvet hangings, and Sir Patrick Spens, the Lord Chief Justice of India administrated the oath..."I Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas Mountbatten..."

Then, with the prior knowledge of only a few members of his staff, Mountbatten delivered a brief address, an unprecedented step. "This is not a normal Viceroyalty on which I am embarking," Mountbatten began. "His Majesty's government are resolved to transfer power by June 1948...I am under no illusion about the difficulty of my task. I shall need the greatest goodwill of the greastest possible number, and I am asking India today for that goodwill..."

June 1948; fourteen months. For thirty years a means acceptable to all parties had been searched for. And now this young admiral told them the transfer would take place in fourteen months. The shock when the Indians first heard this could only have been more electric if he had added now that he had promised his family that he would be home in a year. But even his staff did not know that.

HE had spoken of goodwill, and it was the search for that goodwill that occupied Mountbatten's earliest days. "Everything, absolutely everything, was going to depend on personal relationships," said Mountbatten. "This I had known from the beginning. I knew Nehru, and there was plenty of goodwill there. We liked one another and Nehru had always been one for rank and titles—a great snob and pro-English, even if the English had put him in jail so often. He was marvellous to look at—wonderful, very tall and handsome. Above all, he and Edwina got on marvellously too. That was a great help."

In a country not at that time noted for the political influence of its women, the wives of those involved in the transfer negotiations played a strong part; and the leading role was, of course, played by Edwina herself, her leading man Jawaharlal Nehru, now widowed and lonely and needing a woman in his life.

Edwina charmed all the Indian leaders—and every Indian she met, for that matter, and they numbered

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thousands. Her blend of grace and authority, transparent kindness and interest in everyone she spoke to, her evident love of India and her people, played quite as big a part in the negotiations as Mountbatten himself in one formal and informal meeting after another.

Whether in some riot-and-strife-torn town, the bodies lying rotting in the streets among smashed glass and wrecked rickshaws and the litter of looting, with the temperature in the 110s and her hair soaking with sweat as she grieved or gave comfort; or in Viceroy House, surrounded by the glitter and riches of Imperial power, two hundred servants at her bidding, acting with ease and charm as hostess to her guests, the Vicereine was indeed the graceful empress of the last months of British power. Nothing was too much trouble for her; her patience and energy were inexhaustible, whether at home or at the numerous social occasions, from maharajahs' banquets to minor luncheon parties to which they would fly to all parts of India.

THE fact that a strong affair developed between her and Nehru, and so many people knew or suspected it, in no way diminished her standing. Rather the reverse; and the relationship that developed between the beautiful forty-five-year-old Englishwoman of such notable wealth and aristocracy, with a good stiffening of Jewish blood in her veins, and the English-educated Hindu barrister from Allahabad, leader of the Congress Party and thirteen years older than Edwina, had the most profound effect on the negotiations for the transfer of power.

Gandhi, too fell under Edwina's spell, and was soon calling her "my dear friend," although the nature of his love for her was utterly different from Nehru's. Gandhi was the first target of Mountbatten's "search for goodwill." With the Mahatma on his side, he would, as he defined it, "be half-way home." "We didn't talk any business at all at our first meeting," said Mountbatten. "It was just a personal chat. He was fascinated when I told him about my efforts to bring about a meeting between him and the Prince of Wales, when he was in prison in 1921. He talked about his early life, the development of his political beliefs and the non-violent independence movement. We were together alone for two hours, and when we came out, the waiting reporters thought we must have been solving the difficulties of the transfer. Actually, we hadn't mentioned them!"

But the one man who could drive home the bolt and secure the lock of united India was Jinnah. "Jinnah was the Muslim League," said Mountbatten. "He held the future of India in his hands. I tried the same technique with him, but it was almost impossible to warm him. He had only one dream, and that was a separate Muslim state." Jinnah was cold ("My God, he was cold!" Mountbatten would exclaim), arrogant, vain, inflexible—all the characteristics that make negotiation virtually impossible. Before a word could be said his appearance was sufficient to depress anyone attempting to negotiate with him. He was as thin as a reed from the Ganges, narrow in face, his brown skin dry even in the hottest weather, his eyes bright and alert, missing nothing. He was a terrific dandy and displayed a wide range of perfectly cut suits and a monocle completed the picture of some suntanned eccentric from a Michael Arlen novel. At morning meetings of Mountbatten's staff "the Dickie birds"—the subject of Jinnah was more often on the agenda than anyone else. In the end Mountbatten claimed to have thawed him. But everyone knew that the temperature change was that of one man's breath on a frosty dawn. Jinnah was seventy, in poor health, and destined to live little longer than a year.

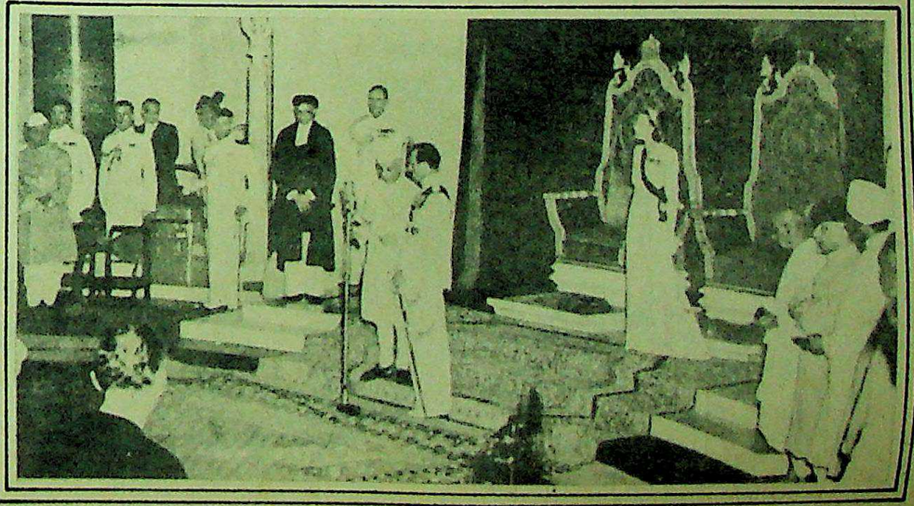
"It was Jinnah, and the Muslim riots and massacres, that convinced me of two things soon after my arrival," Mountbatten said. "The first was that we had to be quick to find a solution. The second, that it was more important to be quick than to have an undivided India. Government was losing control. I decided that we had to be out not in fourteen months but in five months."

It was as if the subcontinent had been sown with politico-racial time-fused mines. As fast as Mountbatten and Edwina sped about the country defusing them, others were laid in their place. One of the worst problem areas was the North-West Frontier province. On 28 April, the Mountbattens flew to Peshawar. They were told that a crowd of Muslims, numbering around 75,000, was about to march on Government House, and that their mood was violent. Mountbatten agreed to meet and show himself to the demonstrators. At the last minute Edwina insisted on joining him in the car. The sound of chanting rising to crescendos, could be heard from a distance. The crowd was in a large park and its surrounding fields, stretching far into the distance. They were crying "Pakistan Zindabad!" over and over again, and waving the illegal green flags of Pakistan. Their imminent march was also illegal and certain to lead to violence.

The Mountbattens climbed up on to a railway embankment, both of them looking informal in *khaki* bush shirts, and waved to the nearest people in the crowd. The word of their presence spread like a tidal wave. Children were held up to see them, and the cries soon changed to "Mountbatten Zindabad!" No speech was possible. But their presence was enough. For nearly half an hour, they exchanged waves and smiles before leaving for lunch with the Governor. They learned later that the entire crowd had dispersed peacefully and were returning to their homes.

Edwina made a journey alone to the Punjab where communal rioting was bloodiest and thousands had already met death almost as horrible as those in the Japanese camps two years earlier. It was a harrowing experience, emotionally as well as physically, with temperatures up to 114

Nothing, it seemed, could tarnish the glitter and douse the happiness of August 15 - only perhaps the thought that at this moment the man who had done more than all of them put together to win India her freedom felt no call to rejoice, rather to mourn... "For Mahatma Gandhi there was only one place to be at this moment— in a noisome slum where he could bring a little peace and comfort, where he could fast for his people's sins, and where he could mourn the India, united as well as free, for which he had worked and prayed and schemed and dreamed."



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The Wavells receive the Mountbattens at Palam

degrees in the shade.

She could do little to ease the misery directly. The indirect influence of her dangerous and exhausting work was profound, however. As soon as she returned, grieved and distraught by what she had seen, Mountbatten sent her to recount her experiences to Nehru. Together the leader of the Congress Party and the most powerful man in India, and the exhausted Vicereine, grieved for Mother India. Then Mountbatten himself worked on Nehru, socialist Viceroy and admiral and socialist barrister and politician, friends with so much in common and certainly no jealousy on Mountbatten's side of Nehru's relationship with Edwina. On the contrary, he was proud of her role.

With every show of reluctance, Nehru agreed that the only way to communal peace and freedom for his country was to divide it.

Whatever other conclusions can be reached about this stage in Indian history, however the figures of the massacred before and after the transfer of power are read, there can be no denying that if freedom for India was to be granted in months and not years and partition was absolutely inevitable, then the Mountbattens between them did a marvellous dual job in putting together the new dual structures of powers in India.

Never in Mountbatten's career had Edwina's influence been more openliy evident. Only Mountbatten himself fully appreciated the extent of her support through a quarter century of marriage, guiding him through the tricky channels of those early days in the Mediterranean, from healing the injured pride of fellow officers, to charming captains and C-in-Cs; supporting him in those months at Combined Ops, dealing first with the affronted Keyes, the eccentric specialists and wild men that this HQ attracted and the hard men of the services who disapproved of Mountbatten and all his works; above all impressing Churchill with the depth and glitter of her mind so that the war leader always saw Mountbatten as one half of an unique team.

Nehru had capitulated. A great deal of choppy water lay ahead but they had clawed their way off the lee shore of catastrophe. "So there we were," said Mountbatten "We had all had dreams of a united India, handing over to a single government. Within weeks they were shattered and we had to make do with second best. But that was better than what I knew to be the alternative." By 3 June all seemed clear sailing. There had been last-minute hell from Jinnah and other problems. But now the Mountbatten Plan had been agreed; and on the same day that the leaders met, Attlee announced what he claimed as complete success to the House of Commons.

Four months earlier to the day, commenting on Mountbatten's appointment, the London *Times* predicted that if he brought with him no new initiative, no solution, it "may reinforce the determination of the Congress Party and the Muslim League to make no concessions to each other." And then under the threat of complete breakdown, there would be a decision "in favour of the claims of one side or the other." And now it had worked out exactly like that. India was to be partitioned and Jinnah had his Pakistan.

Nehru and Mountbatten were with so much in common, and certainly (there was) no jealousy on Mountbatten's side of Nehru's relationship with Edwina. On the contrary, he was proud of her role.

HINDU India formed the great central area of the subcontinent, and because of the approximate lines of religious population distribution, Pakistan was divided East and West without any linking corridor—the one concession Jinnah was forced to make. This was the broad outline but there were many ragged ends, such as the provinces of Punjab and Bengal and Kashmir. The legislative assemblies would deal with their future. The representatives of the Muslim districts and the others would vote separately in favour of partition or against it, a simple majority being decisive. If the vote favoured partition then a boundary commission would set up the frontier line. The North-West Frontier, Sind and British Baluchistan would have a referendum on whether or not to join the Constituent Assembly or form their own.

This was the essence of the Mountbatten plan. For all but a handful of veteran authorities on Indian politics,

Edwina with Gandhiji

Hazratganj, Lucknow

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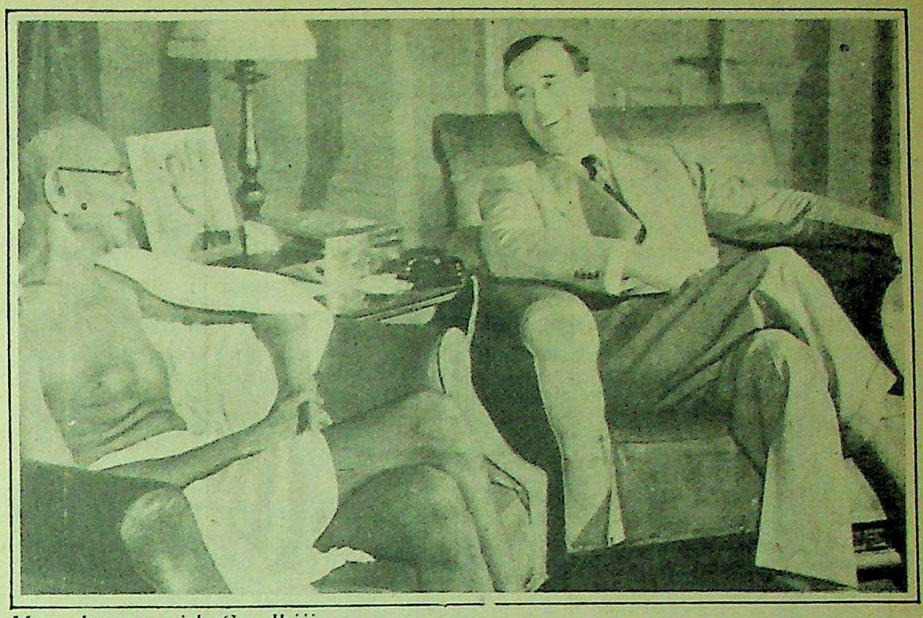
Jinnah was cold ("My God, he was cold." Mountbatten would exclaim), arrogant, vain, inflexible—all the characteristics which make negotiation virtually impossible.

races, religions, frontiers, hates and loves objectors were certain to be blinded by the complexity of the whole business. That, and the speed and decisiveness with which agreement had been reached, were its chief strength. Its weaknesses were to manifest themselves over decades and generations to come.

But, for the present, there were few dissenting voices. Not only Attlee proclaimed that this was a success. Millions of Hindus and Muslims regarded it as a triumph, and outside India some informed opinion and nearly all uninformed opinion considered that the Mountbatten Plan was "a good thing." But, of necessity because of the selfimposed time factor, the surgeon had no opportunity of sharpening his knife and the incisions of partition were coarse, leaving millions on the wrong side of boundary lines, and leaving the nawabs and rajahs, khans and maharajahs, many ruling vast areas, in what Mountbatten truthfully described as "a pathetic situation."

They still had to be dealt with. "I knew some of them well, had played polo with them and they were my friends," said Mountbatten. "But these were only a few out of five hundred, some of them rulers of only a small town or a few square miles, others of vast wealth controlling huge and rich areas. I saw some of them separately, and then summoned a full-scale meeting of the Chamber of Princes and told them they had until 15 August to make up their minds whether they would remain independent or throw in their lot with one or other of the two new states." Some Mountbatten bullied, with others he used more subtle methods. "He could," commented one observer, "not only talk the hind leg off a donkey but also the throne from under a prince."



Mountbatten with Gandhiji

A tremendous amount of other work remained to be done. Mountbatten had a much-photographed calendar in his office with a ring round 15 August, and every day a date would be deleted as a further emphasis of the urgency. Friday 15 August 1947 was the most memorable day in Indian history, and one of the most significant in the mid-twentieth century. The world's greatest imperial power was handing over voluntarily and (with some exceptions) gladly, a great subcontinent and one in five of the world's population would now control its own destiny All over Pakistan and the new India, the speeches rang out and the new flags were unfurled. If anyone should question the goodwill that accompanied the exercise, an Indian or a Briton could point to the figure of the first Governor-General. for Mountbatten had been asked to stay on in this role in free India, and had agreed, though for a few months only. (He had hoped to be Governor-General of Pakistan, too, but Jinnah, who had been granted almost everything for which he had worked, would not have that).

The installation of Mountbatten as Governor-General, and now created an Earl, was as elaborate and stately as his installation as Viceroy barely five months earlier. Messages of goodwill from the world's rulers were read out, Mountbatten made a speech of friendship and gratitude, followed by that of Dr Rajendra Prasad in Hindi and then in English: "Let us gratefully acknowledge, while our achievement is in no small measure due to our own sufferings and sacrifices, it is also the result of world forces and events, and last though not least it is the consummation and fulfilment of the historic tradition and democratic ideals of the British race." That seemed to say it all.

Many more ceremonies and celebrations remained and nothing it seemed could tarnish the glitter and douse the happiness of that day—only perhaps the thought that at this moment the man who had done more than all of them put together to win India her freedom felt no call to rejoice, rather to mourn. "It was true that the country was free. But more important, it was also torn asunder and bleeding. For Mahatma Gandhi there was only one place to be at this moment—in a noisome slum where he could bring a little peace and comfort, where he could fast for his people's sins, and [illegible] mourn the India, united as well as free, for which he had

Gandhiji fasting on 15 August 1947

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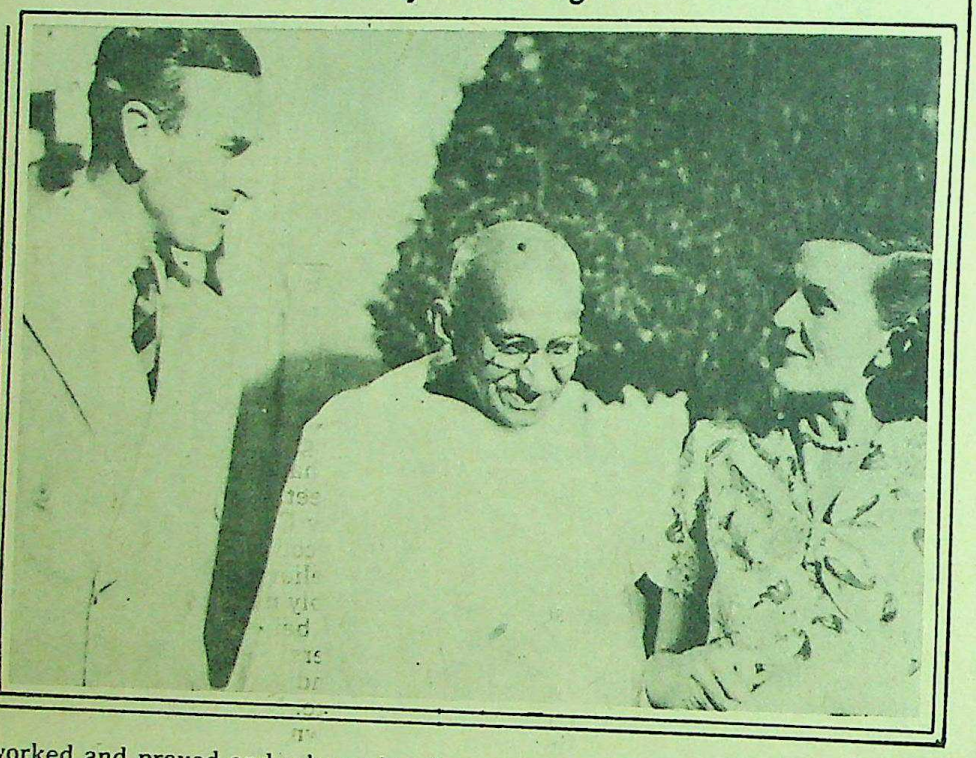
On the afternoon of 30 January 1948 Mountbatten received first the grave news that two men had been found with grenades in a crowd being addressed by Nehru, and that they were certainly intended for the Prime Minister. A few minutes later the news came over the car's radio that Mahatma had died. "To say I was appalled conveys nothing," said Mountbatten. "I was numbed and utterly terrified. His little pinched face looked serene in death when I went to his house, where a great crowd had already gathered. Someone in the crowd shouted, 'It was a Muslim that did it.' I immediately shouted back,'You're a fool. You know nothing. It was a Hindu.' I had no idea of course. Luckily I was right."



worked and prayed and schemed and dreamed."

"No power in history," ran one Indian newspaper comment on these stirring days, but Great Britain would have conceded independence with such grace and no power but India would have so gracefully acknowledged the debt."

But there were other debts to be paid—the anguish and sufferings of some twelve million people forced to uproot themselves for fear of the future. Communal strife and frenzy on a scale never known before even in this great suffering land. No one has calculated accurately the number who were shot, burned, hacked, battered and tortured to death. Perhaps one million, perhaps two million died in the months following partition—certainly many more than British and imperial (including Indian) troops killed in World War I.

With fear and death there inevitably came famine. Edwina set up a United Council for Relief and Welfare. At one time, with the hysteria of mass murder now sweeping in to Delhi itself, many of her M[illegible] staff were murdered and Edwi[illegible] was [illegible] mask over her face, helping to move the corpses to the mortuary and then touring the hospitals tending the wounded and attempting to allay their fears. Delhi resembled a city of the dead, with no transport entering or leaving. Somehow, Gandhi appeared on the scene of horror, a frail little spindle-legged saint whom Churchill had once called a seditious Middle Temple lawyer now posing as a half-naked fakir.

In a few days it was his seventy-eighth birthday. "Send me only condo-lences," he said. "There is nothing but anguish in my heart. I cannot live while hatred and killing mar the atmosphere." He spoke, too, of the sufferings of the refugees. "I have heard that a convoy of Hindus and Sikhs 57 miles long is pouring into the Indian Union from West Punjab. It makes my brain reel to think how this can be. Such a happening is unparalleled in the history of the world and it makes me hang my head in shame." In the midst of these scenes of anarchy and death across the sub-continent, with Edwina working as desperately and effectively as she had during the liberation on South-East Asia, Mountbatten insisted that they should b[illegible] go home.

THE Mountbattens were in India again a week later. Edwina went straight back to her relief work. Over and above the deaths by violence thousands were dying from exposure in the November winds in refugee camps in the Punjab. Two events followed in swift succession, each marking symbolically the extremes under which the masses in India suffered. The first was the Silver Jubilee of the Maharaja of Jaipur, as grand and glitteringly ostentatious and extravagant an affair as ever occurred in the days of the British Raj. In this land of extremes, the scene in Jaipur contrasted grotesquely with those of riot, pillage, rape and murder that stalked the nation.

In one more desperate attempt to stem the flow of violence and bloodshed, in the New Year, Gandhi began a fast unto death and was soon so weak that he had to be carried to prayer meetings. Mountbatten visited him anxiously. Mahatma was just able to whisper. Roguishly he said, "It takes a fast to bring the mountain to Mahomet."

Then, on the afternoon of 30 January 1948, Mountbatten returned to Delhi from a visit to Madras. He arrived to receive first the grave news that two men had been found with grenades in a crowd being addressed by Nehru, and that they were certainly intended for the Prime Minister. A few minutes later the news came over the car's radio that shots had been fired at Gandhi and that he had been hit three times. Before a doctor could arrive Mahatma had died muttering, "Hey Rama!" "To say that I was appalled conveys nothing," said Mountbatten. "I was numbed and utterly terrified. His little pinched face looked serene in death when I went to his house, where a great crowd had already gathered.

"Somone in the crowd shouted, 'It was a Muslim that did it!' I immediately shouted back, 'You're a fool. You know nothing. It was a Hindu.'

"I had no idea, of course. How could I? But if it had been a Muslim, then civil war was inevitable and the carnage terrible. Luckily I was right. It was a Hindu fanatic."

Four months later, the term of Mountbatten's office expired and he and his family prepared to leave India. It was a parting of two friends and warm were the words, glittering the ceremonies, generous the gifts on both sides. Edwina in particular had forged a deeply loving relationship with the people to whom she had given so much of her time and energy and compassion.

Mountbatten was seen in the simple terms of a great and royal figure who had given them their freedom. The love for him endured all his life. In Britain when he was murdered 32 years later, there was a day of mourning. In India, mourning was ordered for two weeks, and the feeling ran even deeper among all classes includ-[illegible] who had grown up since the [illegible] British Raj.

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'Edwina did not believe in being discreet'

By KHUSHWANT SINGH

I HAD a few encounters with the Mountbattens and was twice ticked off by Pandit Nehru for letting his rendezvous with the Countess get into the papers.

It was the winter of 1947-48. Krishna Menon was our High Commissioner in London; I his Public Relations man. Krishna, who could be unbelievably rude to most people, could also be unbelievably fawning towards people who mattered. He knew how enamoured the Nehrus and the Mountbattens were of each other and took great pains to cultivate the Earl and his Lady. He had a room set apart in India House with a copper plate bearing the legend "Countess Mountbatten of Burma". Since there was shortage of office space, I was put in that room with strict instructions to clear out at the slightest whisper of her Ladyship's arrival. She never graced it with her presence. Her husband, however, had to use it as a waiting room on one occasion. He had been misinformed about the time of a reception and turned up 15 minutes before he was expected. He liked making spectacular entries and was very much out of countenance when instead of being greeted by the High Commissioner and his aides (to the playing of national anthems and booming of gun salutes) he was escorted by a messenger to the office reserved for his wife. He was in the First Sea Lord's uniform, his chest ablaze with medals. He was in no mood to talk to me and brushed aside my attempts to engage him in conversation. Then I boldly asked him if the partition of India had not been a great blunder. He drew himself up to his regal height and replied as if he was addressing a vast multitude: "I do not care what people say about me today; I will be judged at the bar of history." The statement was undoubtedly true but lacking in the modesty one associated with Englishmen of the upper classes. The blue blood that coursed in Lord Louis' veins was almost entirely German not English. A few months later he got the chance to display himself in the manner that suited his temperament. This was at the Canadian Trade Fair at Toronto. For reasons which transpired later, he had asked the Indian High Commission in Ottawa (where I was then serving) to provide him with escort. It was a bright sunny morning, Lord Mountbatten was decked up in his shimmering, silver-white shark-skin uniform with gold epaulettes, gold and silver medals ablaze in the sunlight. He marched in front; four blacks (two of them including myself bearded and turbaned) behind him. Here was the last of the Viceroys of India with all that the British Empire had stood for in its sun-never-sets glory. Hallelujah!

At the first Independence Day celebrations

My encounters with Nehru and Edwina were of a different sort. I was one of a handful of officers to receive Panditji on a bitingly cold winter night at London airport. At Krishna Menon's prodding, I introduced myself to the Prime Minister and asked him if he had any instructions for me. "What, at this time of the night!" he snapped. "You can go home."

The next morning, I found a note on my table asking me to see the High Commissioner at once. "The old man is furious with you," Menon told me. "What have I done?" I pleaded. "Have you seen *The Herald?*" he asked and showed me a large photograph on the front page, depicting Panditji outside the Mountbatten's home, the door slightly ajar with Lady Mountbatten in her night gown. The caption read: "Lady Mountbatten's midnight visitor." Menon warned me to keep out of Panditji's sight for a couple of days.

Three days later there was yet another picture in another paper showing Panditji and Lady Mountbatten dining together in a Greek restaurant. This time there was a note from M. O. Mathai, saying that Panditji wanted to see me. I went to Claridges hotel, expecting the worst. I entered Panditji's room. He demanded: "Who are you?" I reintroduced myself. "What do you want?" he asked. "Sir, you sent for me. I am your press officer." He gave me a withering look and remarked: "You have strange notions of publicity."

It was not for me to tell him that I had nothing to do with those pictures and that he should have been more discreet. However, a couple of times I saw Countess Edwina with Panditji, I could guess that Edwina did not believe in being discreet and probably never gave Panditji a chance of being so. She took his hand in hers in front of people: it was as candid a gesture as it was affectionate. No more. Edwina had been known to have had many lovers—now named in Mountbatten's two biographies: Richard Hough's *Mountbatten: Hero of our Time* and Charles Smith's *Fifty Years with Mountbatten*. Amongst the lovers listed are a pianist, Paul Robson, the six-foot-seven-inch tall Negro singer, the Earl of Sefton and our own Panditji. According to the biographers, Lord Mountbatten, instead of feeling peeved as a cuckolded husband, actually clucked with pride at his wife's infidelities. As the holy book says, it is as difficult to know the ways of a man with a maid as it is to tell the ways of the eagle in the air, the way of a serpent on the rock and the way of a ship in the midst of the sea. But we can be pretty certain that the one price people in the public eye have to pay for their popularity is to deprive themselves of the right of leading private lives of their own. Every move they make is seen by thousands of people, every friendship exaggerated into an affair. I go along with Indira Gandhi when she dismisses *L'affaire Nehru-Edwina* as "ridiculous."

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Let me cry for Moradabad

By SYED SHAHABUDDIN,MP

Kamal Sahai

I HAVE just returned from a second visit to Moradabad; just over a month after the tragedy on Id...I feel lost and helpless. Have hearts turned into stones? How can man be so insensitive to pain, to suffering, to a human tragedy of this extraordinary dimension? You see fear and terror writ large on the faces of the people; you notice suspicion and distrust; they open out their hearts and then ask you not to take notice, not to do anything about it, least they face more beatings, more repression, more breaking of bones—maybe death! You see rows of people in a hospital ward, each with a broken limb, broken by the police, deliberately, calculatedly, coldly, each telling more or less the same story, of police breaking into a house, arresting people, beating them up, throwing them into prison on false, trumped-up charges.

You hear of PAC looting shops and homes; you hear of PAC participating in an orgy of destruction; you hear of persons taken away and traceless; you hear of men and women who have turned mad with grief, of babies crying out for their missing fathers. You hear, till your senses refuse to take any more. And yet, since the authorities are against "them," they do not matter. And you know that it could be you, your children, your relations, your home, your shop, your place of worship, your *mohalla*—no matter who you are; what your status is, what your ideology is...

And there is so little you can do; yes, you can speak to the local authorities, to the Home Minister, to the Prime Minister; write to them. So what? Are they omniscient, omnipotent? How can they stem this tide of hate? How can they clear the air of this pollution? How can they take the bug out of the system?

In the darkness that has descended upon this unhappy city, I see no light in this encircling gloom, no hope of redemption. I feel as if the milk of human kindness has ceased to flow and the wells of human compassion have run dry. But have they?

The Jamshedpur tragedy of 1979, whose high point was the macabre roasting alive of a busload of women and children, was marked by a wave of sympathy for the victims, by objective and in-depth analyses by the media, by generous public response to relief operations. There was sanity, compassion, hope in the public response—as if the blood had not been let in vain. The Moradabad tragedy, in many ways a watershed in the history of communal violence, symptomatic and symbolic of complete alienation between the police and the Muslim community, has failed to stir the hearts of the nation, to generate any such wave of sympathy.

There is an eerie silence over the moral landscape, as if conscience has gone to sleep, as if the victims are not our flesh and blood, as if the bond of common nationhood has broken down.

Look at how the country reacted to the killing of the Chopra children. Look at how our jurists and intellectuals protested at the drowning of the known criminal Sundar. Look at how we reacted to the Baghpat incident. And then look at Moradabad.

Today, but for a few discordant voices—it is silence all around, acceptance of atrocities...The politician is silent; this is understandable; he has his constituency to look after. The Gandhi Peace Foundation is also silent; The Citizens for Democracy are silent, the Sarvodaya crowd is silent; Vinoba Bhave is silent, the civil liberty *wallahs* are silent; the intellectuals, the academicians, the jurists are silent; the students and the youth are silent. The believers in spiritualism, the fighters for human rights in Kampuchea and the liberation of Afghanistan are silent. There is no sense of outrage, no air of protest, no cry of repugnance, no rejection of brutality—why? Would Gandhi and JP have remained silent?

From the word go, the media presented a distorted picture—our great free press initially played into the hands

"You see rows of people in a hospital ward, each with a broken limb, broken by the police, deliberately, calculatedly, coldly, each telling more or less the same story, of police breaking into a house, arresting people, beating them up, throwing them into prison on fake, trumped-up charges.

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of the local police and magistracy, the normal source of information in such situations. But how could the police and the magistracy tell the truth when they are a party and, by all indications, the guilty party. You can't ask them to incriminate themselves and not to fabricate lies, not to try to cover up their crime. Hence the barrage of concocted rumours competently broadcast by the mass media. Later, more lies, to sustain the original lie. The sin was compounded a thousand-fold—churned out day in and day out, intensifying the image sought to be projected, strengthening it, giving it a lip of its own, a momentum which takes it out with the world beyond.

Yes, the propaganda was cleverly orchestrated, diabolically planned, but you must ask why it was lapped up by our discerning public, our elitist opinion makers. That is the important question.

Because the seeds fell on a fertile ground and overnight sprouted into a crop of certitude. The people behind the stories, the "objective" analysis, the "factual" reports, the "unbiased" comments, were inclined to believe it, because there is an undercurrent of suspicion, distrust, even hatred and contempt for the Muslim—the end-product of our history, our education and our politics.

EVEN the voices speaking up against the police atrocity are shy, half-hearted, apologetic. "We all know how terrible the police is but what can we do about him; we have to tolerate him." "The Muslim may indeed be a foreign agent but we ourselves are responsible for what he is." "He is a fanatic by birth and by faith; violence is his second nature, Arab money has gone to his head, a little chastening would have done him no harm, but the killing was not really necessary." "Tut, tut, we are not a violent people, why can't we change him by moral force?"

The image that has been projected is that the Muslim, unless he is contained and firmly handled and unless his nefarious conspiracies and designs are defeated, is just about to take over the country, with fire and sword, through simultaneous uprising in several parts of the country, with the help of Pakistani arms, Arab money and CIA agents. China must indeed be thankful that it is not brought in.

The public has come to believe not only that the Muslims of Moradabad had attacked the police at the Idgah and the police fired to save their lives, but that throughout Muslims have continued to snipe at the police from rooftops; that there shall be no peace until they are totally disarmed. The general public instinctively believes that "miscreants" means "Muslims"; that if firearms have been seized, they must be from Muslim hands; that if arms dumps have been discovered, they must be in Muslim homes; that if Muslims have been arrested, they must have done some wrong; that if their bones are broken, they must have begun the violence.

A responsible newspaper comes out with a screaming headline: "Moradabad has more arms than UK" and everybody believes it. And the national press merrily publishes stories of 163 PAC jawans killed in Moradabad; of 400 Home Guards missing in Aligarh, of the Moradabad *kotwali* razed to the ground by Muslim mobs; of Pakistani agents arrested and interrogated. *Organiser*, the RSS mouthpiece, gives a name to the Muslims—"armed rebels." No one protests. Girilal Jain, the respected doyen of Indian journalism, weaves a whole theory of the hidden hand around one single "fact"—which turns out to be a lie—and scores of letters applaud his objectivity and his great service to the nation in weaving this plot.

> There is an eerie silence over the moral landscape, as if conscience has gone to sleep, as if the victims are not our flesh and blood...The politician is silent...The Gandhi Peace Foundation is also silent; the Citizens for Democracy are silent; the Sarvodaya crowd is silent; Vinoba Bhave is silent, the civil libertywallahs are silent; the intellectuals, the academicians, the jurists are silent; the students and youth are silent. The believers in spiritualism, the fighters for human rights in Kampuchea and the liberation of Afghanistan are silent. Would Gandhi and JP have remained silent?

And what was that "fact?" That a shot was fired at the police from inside the Idgah. Let us examine how absurd this lie is—so absurd indeed that no one even mentions it now.

- No one heard a shot.
- No one saw a Muslim carry a firearm.
- No spent cartridge was found in the Idgah.
- No firearm was left behind in the stampede.
- No house in front of the Idgah has a bullet mark.
- No policeman received a bullet or a pellet injury.
- And why should the group which had planned to attack the police choose the Idgah and the Id day? And why should it begin its operations, so chivalrously, with brickbats?

You must ask what was the purpose of this conspiracy. You are told, to pressurise Mrs Gandhi on Afghanistan, on Assam, on Kashmir, to weaken and destabilise the country; to slow down its progress. And you nod your head in wise agreement.

That the BJP joins in this song and dance about the "foreign hand" and "deep conspiracy" is no wonder. After all, they are the self-appointed knights-errant of "national ism." But in Moradabad, about every Hindu I met believes it. There is perfect polarisation; there are no Congressites, no Jawaharites. Truly was I told by a respected citizen, a Hindu: "It is not the RSS but the RSS philosophy which is in the forefront."

But the fact is that out of 144 officially killed, 121 are Muslims; at least 75 per cent of the injured, of the 1,600 arrested, of the beaten up, are Muslims; nearly all shops looted, all houses searched or looted are Muslims'. And the arms. In four weeks, the police have seized only 200 firearms, mostly unlicensed, and only four of them are of foreign makes! And yet the Muslim in Moradabad is on the warpath!

> Let us examine how absurd is that "fact" that a shot was fired at the police from inside the Idgah.
> - No one heard a shot,
> - No one saw a Muslim carry a firearm.
> - No spent cartridge was found in the Idgah.
> - No firearm was left behind in the stampede.

IN a democratic society, peaceful protest against injustice is not only a right, it is a duty. Spontaneous protest took place throughout the country on the following Friday, 15 August; in a few places, they got out of hand and resulted in confrontation with the police and of course in massive reprisals. But can some isolated instances establish a pattern or design? Can it prove a nationwide conspiracy to attack the police?

By talking of conspiracies, so long as you do not name the parties to the conspiracy, you can keep everyone happy because everyone can identify it with his *bete noire*. The Muslim is happy that the government means the RSS; the Hindu is happy that the Muslim League is meant. The secularist is happy that the RSS-Jamaat-e-Islami linkage has been finally unearthed; the communist is happy that the CIA has been caught red-handed. And the government, our omnipotent *sarkar* which cannot make its writ run even

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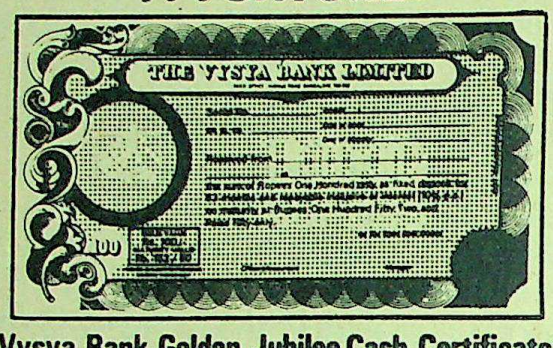

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in Delhi, promises to crush the conspirators and this strikes a responsive chord and the nation bursts into applause.

Of course, the government must keep everyone guessing and every one reasonably happy. You may whisper in private about the atrocities of the PAC, but condemn it, disarm it; no, how can you? They would rise in revolt. It does not matter if the ultimate result is the widening of the emotional gap, a setback to national integration. But who cares?

The bogies we raise divert national attention from the task of economic development, from diagnosing failures and taking remedial action. It generates an air of complacency and self-satisfaction, while 33 years after independence, 60 per cent of our people continue to live below the poverty line, like a sub-human species, devoid of dignity and hope.

Have the people become immune to violence, insensitive to human tragedy, neutral in the face of atrocities and massacre? It is not only that they begin to think that the Muslims of Moradabad, Aligarh, and Allahabad are getting what they deserve, and we need waste no tears over them. But with repeated exposure, they become callous, apathetic spectators who accept injustice and tolerate inhumanity, in this land which produced Buddha and Gandhi. Or maybe Gandhi alone understood us and tried to liberate us from ourselves. Perhaps we are a violent people, a hardened people, having lived through centuries of violence.

The real question is not how to save the Muslim community but how to save the nation from the undercurrent of hatred and violence which is consuming all our finer sensibilities. The real question is not what to do about Moradabad but how to save the country from this apathy to violence which will one day break it into pieces as surely as night follows the day.

Aren't we human beings before we are anything else? If there is any spark of humanity left in us, let us pool those little sparks to guide us through this moral wasteland. If we are still capable of tears, let us pool the tears we are yet to shed and then we shall see the tragedy in all its dimensions.

A POLICE force should never lose its temper; or become vindictive, it should be objective in its assessment in moments of crisis and firm and controlled in its responses, measured in the use of its power. But what do you say to a man with a gun when he favours a murderer, a looter, an arsonist. When lust and violence grip his being, he can never be your defender, the protector of your life and honour and property. What do you do with him?

What is Mrs Gandhi up to? Has she lost her grip, her will, or is she playing deliberately to the gallery of Hindu chauvinism? She is an astute politician and she knows which gallery to play to at which time. She is ruthless and amoral in her choice. She knows that when all else fails, when her government bogs down under the weight of its incompetence, when she defaults on delivery of the goods she has promised, she can divert attention and harsh criticism only by touching hidden subliminal chords in the dark recesses of the Indian soul. What better than a combination of the enemy knocking at the door and the fifth column operating within: so you have the deliberate policy of fomenting tension with the neighbours—this was foreseen—and now you have the 'rebellious' Muslim, a God-send indeed! Together they provide a beautiful and effective scenario for staying in power.

Mrs Gandhi wears many masks. The historian may well find it difficult to recognise or delineate her real face. Even the contemporaries have to ask at times, "Will the real Mrs Gandhi step out?" Her forte is crisis management. She has polished brinkmanship into a fine art. Power is to her an end in itself and for power she will sup with the devil and, if necessary, don a saffron garb. A month after Moradabad, ask who has benefitted most? Moradabad has dominated the headline for weeks—displacing economic crises, price rise, scarcity, breakdown of law and order, internal rivalries within the ruling party, the do-nothingness of administration, all forgotten or relegated to obscurity. Even Assam does not make headlines. What happened to the Gujarat agitation no one seems to remember. Mrs Gandhi has managed to wring the last drop of political juice from this tragedy.

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The myth of population explosion

Economics and Policy

By SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY

THE other day, a young expert, arrived fresh from Delhi's Palam airport after a stint with the World Bank, told me, "I tell you, unless India cracks down on the population growth, there is no hope for our economic plans." I countered his revelation with another, "Unless India can control the monsoons, there is no hope for stable food production."

My expert friend was stunned. He argued with me that despite all the hocus-pocus on rain-making machines, monsoons cannot be controlled, and therefore the best alternative was a massive irrigation programme to remove the uncertainty of water supply that the monsoon represents. "Exactly!" I said triumphantly. Population growth in India cannot be controlled at will, despite all the hocus-pocus on sterilisation, IUCDs etc., but the best alternative was a massive boost in the production of essential commodities and services.

By now my expert friend's knees began to wobble and his lips to quiver. The brainwashing he had received about India's population growth in the air-conditioned comfort of the World Bank did not allow him to swallow something so radically different. Lest I cause further brain concussion, I departed from the scene.

It has always amazed me how India, a nation of such intelligent souls, accepts everything uncritically that the West dishes out in the form of articulated nonsense—to suit their imperialist designs. For years we believed that the English were unwilling rulers of India, and had come for our benefit! Our intellectuals are so completely captive even today that it embarrasses me if someone calls me an intellectual. Indian intellectuals merely articulate for a domestic setting concepts of the *safed chamrha* (white skin). No deviation from these concepts is permitted, but ingenuity and originality to sustain these concepts are lauded. For a free India we must build an intellectual base to demolish these concepts.

The "population problem" is one such Western concept that needs to be demolished. All talk of controlling drastically India's population is a conspiracy of white nations rooted in the fear that brown skins will swarm the world, greedily casting eyes on the uninhabited lands of Australia and Latin America.

Let me argue as an economist to sustain what I am saying in political terms. What is the most sophisticated economic argument for population control? Than we need resources to feed the population, which resources are scarce. A baby born requires resources in terms of hospitals, schools, colleges, factories, etc., to provide for that baby. If that baby was not born, we could use those resources to provide more for those already born. Hence population control.

Paradoxically, I agree with this reasoning! But the economist within me says that *to prevent that baby from being born, I also require resources* in terms of clinics, mobile vans, doctors, instruments, etc. So in terms of economic logic of using resources most efficiently, I must know which of the two alternatives requires more resources: to provide for the baby born or to prevent the baby from being born?

All my studies show that in the present conditions prevailing in the country, if it requires Rs X for the first alternative, then it requires Rs 2X (i.e. twice) for the second alternative. Good economics means making efficient choice between competing alternatives; therefore, to save resources, the government ought at present plan to provide for the baby born only.

However, I must add a number of qualifications to the above revolutionary theorem (which is embarrassingly similar to the old Marxist view).

Firstly, I am not advocating that more population is a good thing. I am merely saying that preventing births *in the present context of our development* will require more resources than providing for it.

Secondly, the cost ramifications of the two alternatives may change, say 10 years from now. It may indeed become cheaper to prevent a birth than to provide for it.

Thirdly, we still plunk for family planning *on non-economic grounds.* For example, continuous childbearing erodes the freedom of the woman. Or, a huge population may contribute to environmental pollution. But then we ought to honestly state so. *I am for family planning, even if it means burning our resources, to liberate the Indian woman.*

Slowly the non-economic arguments are seeping into the Indian consciousness. Therefore India's birth rates have come down over the last 70 years—from 47 per thousand to 35 per thousand. Family planning-*walas* want that decline to be even more. To them I say: "Your only hope is to bring out the Durga in every woman." But can the country afford that? We have experimented with one Durga recently with disastrous consequences.

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'The haves thrive on the miseries of the have-nots'

By RANJIT SAU

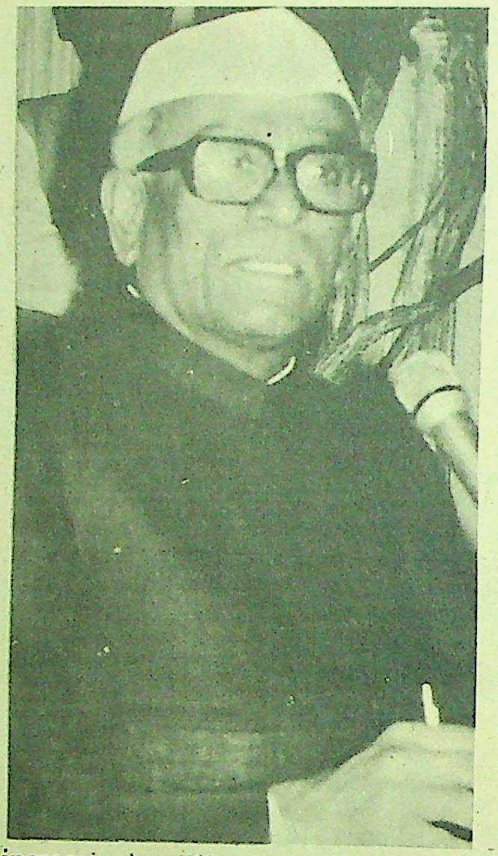
ON the eve of the thirty-third anniversary of Independence Day, the hon'ble President of India in a nationwide broadcast said:

> The rising prices and increasing disparities, making the rich much richer and the poor still poorer, are widening the gulf between the few haves thriving on the miseries of the have-nots, and the deprived masses left with little hope of any better life in the foreseeable future.

This segment of the presidential speech seems to have three parts: first, the gulf between the few rich and the many poor is widening; second, the haves thrive on the miseries of the have-nots; and third, there is little hope of any better life for the deprived masses in the foreseeable future. The second proposition—the haves thrive on the miseries of the have-nots—is one of the most paradoxical iron laws of the economic life in India today.

A rich man's son hardly remains unemployed; a poor man's son rarely finds a job. Nothing succeeds like success: the winner takes it all, while only failure piles upon failure on the other side of the line. The prosperity of the few is built upon the poverty of many. The poorer you are, the worse are your prospects. Such is the *vicious spiral* of Indian economics.

The record of 30 years of planned economic development has a positive side: foodgrains production has gone up from 50 million tonnes in 1950 to some 130 million tonnes in 1980, that is, by 160 per cent; national income has risen by 175 per cent, and industrial output by 300 per cent, as against an 80 per cent growth in population. Our misery cannot therefore be ascribed wholly to demographic proclivity. The record has also a negative side: the number of people below the poverty line has increased; the backlog of unemployment has mounted day by day to reach the level of 20 million persons (in standardised units) in March 1978, and every year another six million persons are entering the labour force, with little chance of getting a meaningful occupation. According to the studies conducted by the Reserve Bank of India, the pattern of ownership distribution of assets among rural households has sharply deteriorated, while the top ten per cent has cornered the gains. The decinnial census and other independent surveys indicate a swelling of the ranks of impoverished agricultural labourers. The common man finds it



increasingly difficult to make both ends meet; to the despair of the celebrated Engel's law the portion of the household budget spent on food items (mainly agricultural goods) is rising, leaving less and less for industrial goods, even though in official statistics the per capita national income has nearly doubled.

To be sure, the vicious spiral of economics also operates regionally. Some areas of the country, even though endowed with enormous natural resources, continue to lag behind those which had an early start. The Indian economy, as it were, harbours within itself a few metropolitan growth centres that get themselves supplied with provisions from 'colonial' hinterlands. Indeed, all this is not surprising; for this is precisely how the capitalist pattern of economic development works. A quantum of benefits do trickle down to the hinterland, but those again are cornered by a tiny minority and the vast masses languish in poverty. The history of several centuries and of many countries bears testimony for it.

The government does try to soften the rough edges of this inexorable process of development-and-underdevelopment. It offers relief measures in one form or another, whose apparent generosity varies in proportion with the deepening crisis. But it cannot stem the dialectic.

But, why is there this irony of economics? Why this cruel joke? Why can't we have a harmonious growth, where everybody gains? At any rate, how does somebody grow at the expense of somebody else?

For their material existence, human beings in a society produce, in interaction with nature, a set of goods and services every year; these are together called national income. A part of the national income is given out to workers for their maintenance; the remaining part is known as the *surplus*. Now, three parties—namely, the landlords, merchants and capitalists—lay their respective claims on this surplus; these are the three ruling classes who appropriate the surplus. Each tries to grab as much as it can. If national income is, say, Rs 100 crores, and Rs 60 crores is the subsistence requirement of the workers, then the surplus is Rs 40 crores which is shared by the three ruling classs. Should the merchant jack up his margin to get a bigger slice of the surplus, naturally the landlords and capitalists would feel the pinch. So they would also jump into the fray with larger claims. The conflict can be reconciled momentarily by enlarging the size of the surplus, which means a reduction in the workers' subsistence. This process goes on.

Over time the national income may rise, but the contending ruling classes manage to reduce their mutual tension by passing on the brunt to the common man. In other words, it is the immanent urge of the landlords, traders and capitalists to grab more and more, which takes the masses to the brink of starvation. A stage may be reached when the capitalist succeeds in establishing his class hegemony over the landlords and traders; then this acrimony among the ruling classes may cease, but that is a different matter.

In India, the landlords, traders and capitalists are almost equally powerful; so the competition among them is quite intense. Between them it is of course a friendly match, because none of them has to suffer at the end; they enjoy at our expense. The haves thrive on the miseries of the have-nots.

We do not know how the hon'ble President looks at it. We have only given our observations. But certainly the President has correctly enunciated a fundamental theorem on the Indian economy at the present stage.
Thank you, Mr President.

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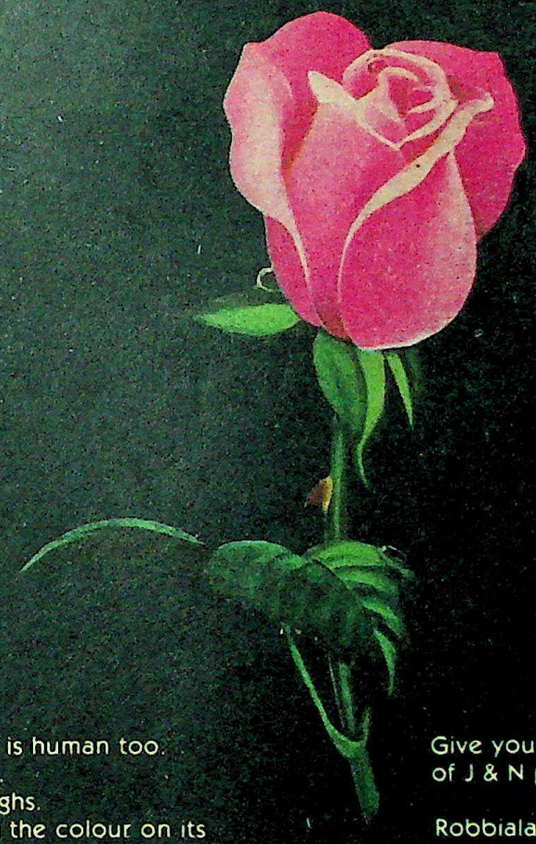

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UP: The troubled heart of India

More than a hundred violent and restless days after Vishwanath Pratap Singh entered office, Uttar Pradesh is still looking for "the government that works." UDAYAN SHARMA reports.

CM Vishwanath Pratap Singh and Mrs Gandhi look at a map showing the state's flood-affected areas

When we reached Lucknow on 18 September the sky was overcast; the next morning it was pouring, and soon life was paralysed in Lucknow; even the trains were not leaving the picturesque Lucknow station. To compound the misery, a wildcat strike by power engineers in Kanpur had plunged most cities and towns of the state into darkness. The weather office said that the sudden deluge was due to a deep depression centring around Allahabad, which was moving northwards accompanied by stormy winds. If anyone was searching for a better allegory for the political situation in Uttar Pradesh today, it would be hard to find one. The present Chief Minister comes from Allahabad, and enough stormy winds have accompanied him in his hundred-odd days in power. His only achievement seems to be that he has made Ram Naresh Yadav into an unsuspected hero: people say that even Yadav's Janata government, which till then perhaps held the record of being the worst UP had ever had, seems to have been much better than Vishwanath Pratap Singh's.

In the middle of September, Chief Minister V.P.Singh had taken what seemed to his detractors to be a long-overdue step: he sent in a letter offering to resign to the Prime Minister. In fact, the Prime Minister must have come to know of his noble intentions from the agency teleprinter at her house, because Singh had submitted a copy of his letter to the Press even before it reached the PM. But this gesture paid off handsomely, as the PM told him to forget about resignation and continue his work. V. P. Singh clearly has a shrewd adviser. By taking the initiative and offering his resignation, he had clearly preempted dissidents in his Party who might go to the High Command to demand his resignation for the utter failure of government which UP is currently witnessing.

And it is not just a failure in tackling communal riots, or police atrocities. It was not V. P. Singh but Brahm Dutt who singlehandedly tackled the serious situation created by the power strike. Cities, already dimly lit, went completely dark. Industries were closed; both passenger and goods trains were cancelled on the important artery between Mughalsarai and Delhi via Kanpur and Tundla. While the state was facing a severe crisis, the Chief Minister was in Delhi (among other things, asking Rajiv Gandhi to join politics). He returned only on 21 September, and met a delegation of the strikers at his residence for next morning's front-page photographs. But what the newspapers did not report was that for almost two weeks the CM had found virtually no time for the accumulating files in his office, and was either in Delhi or spending long hours with his secretaries at suite number one of the state guest house at Mira Bai Marg.

Despite the official support of 306

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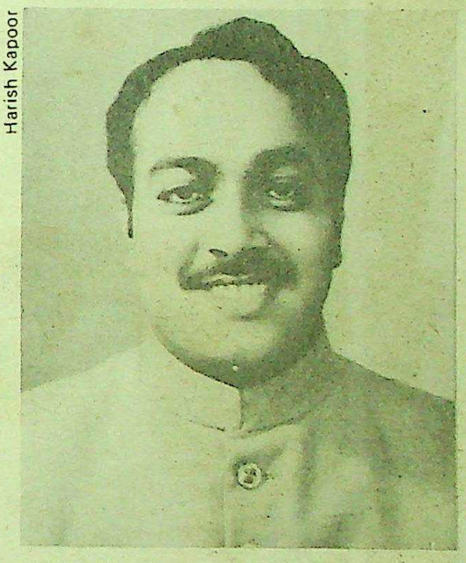
of the 421 MLAs in the Assembly, V. P. Singh, the twelfth Chief Minister of India's most populous, and most politically sensitive state has not been able to get comfortably astride that bucking horse called administration. He was made CM by the late Sanjay Gandhi, partly because he was the younger brother of the father-in-law of Sanjay Singh, Sanjay Gandhi's most trusted friend in UP politics. Mrs Gandhi has stood firmly by V. P. Singh so far, not encouraging his detractors, and allowing him the opportunity to work without subversive pressure from his own Party. But despite this advantage, Singh has not been able to get a grip on his job. To begin with, his ministry is incomplete (this seems to be a chronic disease with the current set of Congress(I) governments). A team of 20, including ministers of state, is dismally trying to run the most difficult state in the country. And the lack of decisiveness on even crucial matters can be gauged from the fact that for the first time in the history of the UP Vidhan Sabha, a *pro tem* speaker had to conduct the business of the house for the first two weeks, as the treasury benches could not decide on a name for the new speaker. The upper house, the Vidhan Parishad, is even today being presided over by the *pro tem* chairman B. B. Singh Chandel.

UP's students have been the banana peel of many a Chief Minister. Normally, there are two ministers of cabinet rank in the department of education; one looks after higher education, and the other is in charge of intermediate and primary education. In addition there is always a minister of state in charge of technical education and adult education. In the present government, there is only one minister of state for education, Mrs Swaroop Kumari Baxi, and she is expected to handle the full job. No wonder Allahabad University, which rarely if ever delayed its examinations, is yet to hold the examinations for the academic year 1978-79. A failure of the past government has been compounded by the present one.

Most universities have already seen police lathi charges this year as students express their dissatisfaction over administrative apathy—or use the absence of firm government to indulge themselves. While the Allahabad University has not held examinations, the Allahabad board which controls secondary and intermediate examinations in the state has had to order a record number of re-examinations in 15 subjects. This too is another first.

On 6 April, during President's Rule, which was the de facto rule of Sanjay Gandhi through the two C. P. N. Singhs (the older one was the governor; the younger one is now the minister for state for defence in Delhi), the district magistrate and district supply officer of Sultanpur seized 20,000 litres of diesel from a pump. It turned out that the owner of the pump was one of the pals of Sanjay Singh, who belongs to the adjoining Amethi district. In the end, the two officers found themselves transferred. Then, on 24 August, long after the new government took over, the town of Muzaffarnagar witnessed a unique sight. Members of a flying squad of the sales tax department were handcuffed and paraded through the town because they had seized a few trucks carrying contraband to a factory owned by a minister in the V. P. Singh government.

In yet another display of the arrogance of power, a Congress(I) MLA Shyam Lal Bajpai told the government on the floor of the Assembly that if they did not transfer the SP of Barabanki, he (the MLA) would personally break the SP's jaws. The officer was immediately transferred in order to keep his jaws in place. The district magistrate of Ballia is now on leave, after he had a quarrel with the well-known hijacker-MLA Bhola Pandey. He is now sitting in Lucknow and pleading with the authorities to transfer him out of Ballia as he is afraid to stay in the same place as Pandey.

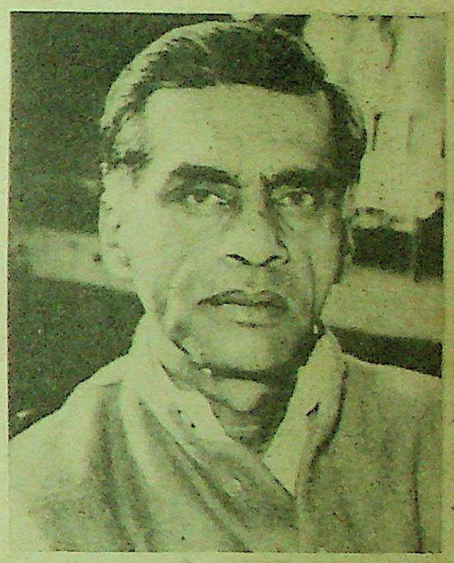


Harish Kapoor

Sanjay Singh

The Chief Minister has been making a show of honesty and efficiency by personally taking raiding parties to ration shops suspected of indulging in hoarding, etc. But the irony is that, a number of times he has reached the suspect's shop only to find the shopkeeper waiting for him with garlands! Obviously the news of the raid had been leaked out. The CM's efforts to curb corruption, in other words, are being sabotaged right under his nose. In some cases, officials of the government itself are diverting wheat to the blackmarket. Seasoned Lucknow-watchers admit that there is nothing new in financiers having links with politicians; C. B. Gupta used to make his fundgivers MPs and MLCs, and other politicians have obliged their moneyed friends in different ways. But rarely have things been as bad as this.

One of the major promises that brought the Congress(I) to power in UP was that they would restore law and order. The preceding Banarsi Das government was destroyed by the Narainpur outrage, but Narainpur seems comparatively mild compared to what has happened in Moradabad, Baghpat, Unnao, Banda, Barabanki. Even if one cannot expect the centre to dismiss the state government on these grounds, surely the police have given enough reason for V.P.Singh to hang his head in shame. The police have become a force of "encounters." The state police handouts have admitted that there have been more than 400 encounters with "criminals" in the past few months. True, there is often reason for the police to open fire on dacoits in the course of arresting them, or preventing dacoity. But such is the loss of credibility (more so, since theft and dacoity are not coming down) that people believe that the police are using the cover of the "encounter" to kill only those with whom they have some enmity. The CM defended his police force in the Assembly thus: "*Mere haath khoon se lathpath hain, par khoonion ke khoon se lathpath hain* (It is true my hands are bloody, but they are bloody with the blood of criminals)." There can't be many sections of the Indian Penal Code which allow such gory handling of the law and order situation.



Brahm Dutt

In an unprecedented case of corruption, one SP(Vigilance) of the UP government is said to have demanded a bribe from the SP of Barabanki. That itself may not be unusual, but the SP of Barabanki had secretly taped the entire discussion about the bribe and has offered the tapes to the CM.

One of the major reasons for the dissatisfaction in the administration is the large number of transfers that have been done under political pressure: the bureaucrat or the police officer has little hope of settling down in any place unless he is on the right side of the local Congress(I) bosses. Too many transfers took place during President's Rule, and now the elected government has continued this bad

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STANROSE Fabrics The style is the season.

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habit. In its first hundred days in power, at least 50 district magistrates have been shifted. Some of the transfers have been silly in the extreme. The municipal administrators and the DMs of the five most important towns in UP, Kanpur, Agra, Varanasi, Allahabad and the capital, Lucknow, have been changed more than once. Allahabad has seen three senior SPs in the past 100 days. The first SSP, Mr Sinha, was transferred after a month and a half of V. P. Singh becoming CM. His successor, Girish Bihari, was allowed to remain in Allahabad for just 40 hours, because of the enmity of one of V.P.Singh's secretaries. The present incumbent naturally keeps his fingers crossed. V. P. Singh, a namesake of the CM in Agra, had shown excellent work in Agra as SSP, averting many communal clashes by firm handling, but he was brought back from Agra (which is a sensitive city) soon after the Moradabad incidents and sent to the state CID headquarters at Lucknow; now, he has been sent because of his competence to Aligarh. In the last two months, Moradabad has had three DMs.

A large number of harijans have been appointed DMs; which is a very good thing of course: there are 18 today, which is a record. But too many harijans given such an important charge are being transferred within a fortnight. This is leading to the impression that harijans are not good administrators.

Lokpati Tripathi, health minister and son of Kamalapati Tripathi, is sarcastically called the minister for transfers as the maximum number of transfers have taken place in his department. The matter has become so serious, and the level of *sifarish* so irresponsible, that the Prime Minister herself has issued instructions that no transfer should be done or stopped at the recommendation of ruling Party MLAs. But the impact of her instructions has not yet seeped down. Curiously, while so many transfers have taken place, the one transfer for which 40,000 people went to jail in western UP (making this the largest satyagraha after independence in that region) did not take place: the transfer of the police from Baghpat.

When the question of development comes up, all that the state government is doing is repeating past promises made by the Ram Naresh Yadav and the Banarsi Das government, promises which they made but could not implement. The Yadav government had promised that they would set up four mini-cement plants; the Singh government, without worrying about copyright, is repeating that. Similarly, the promise of four thermal power plants at Azamgarh, Jhansi, Gonda and Dehra Dun was made by the Janata government, and the present government is talking about it as if this brainwave had just come to them. And though everyone is shouting about these projects from the rooftops, no budgetary provision has been made for their implementation.

One opposition MLA shouted in the debate on industry in the last session that all that the treasury benches seemed to be doing was repeating the name of Sanjay Gandhi. Were they unaware that Sanjay Gandhi had started industrial development programmes, for instance the Noida in Ghaziabad district near Delhi, or in Amethi? What was the great Sanjay sena doing to get these programmes implemented? In fact, what is the Sanjay sena doing?

Their leader is Sanjay Singh, son of the raja of Amethi. He still lives in feudal glory. Every morning a horse comes from the police lines to his doorstep at the spacious 19 Vikramaditya Marg and the Youth Congress(I) president then goes out riding, followed by a policeman on horseback for his protection. On the way, he might stop to give a crony an instruction or two. On 19 September, for instance, he rode into the state government colony on Park Road and his horse stopped outside flat number E3. The policeman was sent in to awaken Azad Kumar Kardam, the Youth Congress(I) leader and MLA from Agra. Kardam came out and spoke to Sanjay Singh, who was still seated on his horse; Singh gave him his instructions and rode off.

In Lucknow they refer to the 100 days of the V. P. Singh government as "Sau din sasur ke (100 days of the father-law)" this is a takeoff on popular Hindi film currently showing, *Sau Din Saas ke* (100 days of the mother-in-law). Sanjay Singh is the son-in-law of V. P. Singh's elder brother. The Youth Congress boys have indeed enjoyed more than their share of power. They entered Lucknow after winning their seats with a literal bang. A number of them simply walked into government houses which they fancied, threw the occupants' belongings out, and took possession. Sanjay Singh himself took a spacious bungalow at Vidhan Sabha Marg and only vacated it after a public hue and cry; he has now shifted to a less spacious but still big (for a first-term MLA, that is; houses are allotted by hirearchy and seniority) house. Many MLAs have also acquired government houses in their hometowns—which has more than its obvious temporary benefits, because tenancy laws in UP are liberal enough for some of the MLAs to retain possession after their terms are over. And these young MLAs have been in the forefront of using their influence to get officers transferred.

But their contribution to the government on the floor of the Assembly has been negligible. Initially, in the euphoria of victory, their lung-power was highly audible, but eventually even here they could not match the young opposition MLAs who have returned for their second terms. It is common knowledge that a number of people given the Congress(I) ticket had a criminal past. One Congress(I) MLA from Ballia, Bhaskar Pandey, still has a "history sheet" on the files of the local police. He has applied for a licence for 30 carbines, but the local police have objected to such a licence for such a large number of arms being given to a person with a known criminal record. Pandey's patronage, strangely enough, comes from Jagdish Tytler. Following the refusal to give a licence, the deputy SP of Ballia was transferred out.

Few Chief Ministers of UP have lasted very long, for the simple reason that the most populous state of the country also has the most number of problems. And an articulate, politically involved population. The communal problem is perhaps the most serious, but, as we have seen, that is not the only one that a UP Chief Minister has to face. Vishwanath Pratap Singh is only the last, and among the weakest leaders UP has had. By November he must win an Assembly seat to remain CM. Enough people within his own Party think that will be a difficult achievement.

Poor show

The 20-member UP Ministry under Vishwanath Pratap Singh can be faulted on two counts: it is unrepresentative of the whole state and has performed badly. Only seven of the state's 12 divisions, including the Chief Minister's home division, Allahabad, are represented in the Ministry. Allahabad has the largest representation of six ministers, followed by four each from Lucknow and Meerut divisions, two each from Bareilly and Garhwal divisions and one each from Gorakhpur and Varanasi divisions. Agra, Faizabad, Jhansi, Kumaon and the newly formed Moradabad division are unrepresented. The situation is ironic for Agra, which handsomely returned all Congress(I) candidates in the last Assembly poll. Even the group of MLAs from a particular division is not entirely representative: three of the six ministers from Allahabad division, the CM V. P. Singh, Jagdish Prasad and Amin Ansari, are from the Allahabad district.

On the floor of the legislature, the performance of only four ministers Brahm Dutt (Finance, Planning and Power), Lokpati Tripathi (Health), Ammar Rizvi (Parliamentary Affairs) and Balram Singh Yadav—has been noteworthy.

UTTAR PRADESH

Area:	294,413 sq kms
Population:	6,83,41,144
Density:	300 per sq km
Sex Ratio:	879 females per 1000 males
Literacy:	21.70 per cent
Districts:	56
Tehsils:	237
Towns:	325
Villages:	112,561

Based on 1971 census

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"Our IGP is doing a very good job"

After several days of trying, Udayan Sharma and Shubhabrata Bhattacharya finally caught up with the hardpressed Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mr V. P. Singh, at 10 pm on 22 September in the state guest house in Lucknow. The city looked embattled and isolated with power and communications disrupted by floods and industrial unrest. The CM defended his record and his government confidently on a wide range of issues.

CM Vishwanath Pratap Singh

Q: It is being said that you rely more on the bureaucracy than the politicians belonging to your Party. Any comments?

A: Perhaps few Chief Ministers have shaken up the bureaucracy as I have done in the past three months. There is perhaps no pride (in me) in saying that I have taken action against about a thousand officers in the last three months. I would not have mentioned this if you had not put the question. The number of suspensions and vigilance action too have been large. Even in the police, within two months 18 sub-inspectors, 16 head constables and 98 constables were suspended and action has been initiated against more than 900 policemen. Some people have the habit of insulting officers in front of a hundred people and the impression goes around that a particular CM is very tough on the bureaucracy. But I am different. This (the bureaucracy) is the instrument you have to take the help of to run the administration. If a bureaucrat is wrong then punish him. I have not spared anybody. For instance, when I detected bungling in sugar in Lucknow I not only put the guilty person behind bars under the P. D. Act but also suspended the area rationing officer and the inspector. It is not my job to go on inspections but if I have gone on an inspection and some hanky panky is detected then the person in charge has to be held responsible for it. There are officers also who have cooperated a lot in the last three months in tackling the administrative challenges. For instance, after the Emergency examinations were never held properly in this state. Now the examinations have taken place smoothly. Of course, I had to take a very stern attitude and post the police and the PAC outside examination centres and also order searches of examinees to ensure that no non-student entered the exam halls.

Q: We understand that the number of re-examinations ordered by the Allahabad Board this year has been rather high, in some 15 subjects or so.

A: No, re-examination was ordered in one subject only and that may be due to some previous decision—a decision taken in March or so. Secondly, floods were another major administrative challenge which we have faced and even the central board which came to study the floods has praised our alertness and our arrangements. When I was in the opposition and worked in the flood-affected areas, I realised what kind of bottlenecks arise. Soon after taking over, I ordered the disposal of relief funds with the district authorities and Rs 10 lakhs per district was vested in district magistrates so that they did not have to run to Lucknow for help in an emergency and relief could be distributed smoothly. They came to Lucknow only when these funds were finished and another sanction was given. By now some of the districts have distributed up to Rs 80 lakhs as relief. While we have punished some officers it has to be admitted that by and large the officers are doing well and you cannot just run them down.

Q: How do you view the law and order situation in your state?

A: Our data says that there has been a 14 per cent drop in the crime rate since we have come to power. You may say that this is government data. In that case take the data of the press: one and a half months back the press used to have so many items on rape in UP. Today you do not find them. So you must give us credit for stopping the rapes. No newspaper is publishing even one line saying that this government has succeeded in stopping rapes. I suggest you do some research. Leave out the Moradabad and other communal incidents. Pick up any newspaper of last year and scrutinise the number of crime reports in one month and then pick up one month's papers during our rule and check up on the crime figure. You will find a decline of 50 per cent. Last year there were so many cases of necklace snatching, of couples going on rickshaws being robbed, of dacoities. This year there are very few such cases. Of course, in a big state like UP there will always be some incidents but by and large things have improved.

Q: What concrete steps are you contemplating to tackle the explosive communal situation in your state and to restore the confidence of the minorities which has been shaken after the Moradabad incidents?

A: The flare-up in Moradabad was of course very sad but thereafter in almost every town there was an attempt (to create disturbances) and the pattern was almost the same: somewhere in some mosque a piece of pork meat would appear in the morning. Somebody would have placed it in the night and in the morning there would be a (tense) situation. The history of UP indicates that whenever there was trouble in Meerut, there was trouble in Agra but this time whenever there was trouble it was (locally) contained within a few days. The district authorities, and in some instances the minorities, for instance in Lucknow, were a big help, they held meetings and issued statements to maintain peace here. By governmental action—through the police or the army—I can only bind hands, not hearts. I know the limitations of government action in such matters and finally a binding of hearts has to come on the human plane.

Q: Why did you offer to resign?

A: One journalist had asked me that question after I resigned and I said that it was a continuation of the cabinet concept which I had initiated. Soon after I took over I said that for anything that went wrong in a district the DM and the SP will be held responsible. Then certainly I should own responsibility if something goes wrong with the province. Even over the radio soon after the (Moradabad) incidents had happened, I had owned up moral responsibility for the incidents. In the Assembly when I stood up to speak on the subject, the first sentence I said was that I have not come to give explanations but to seek punishment.

Q: There are too many complaints about the PAC. What steps are you taking to improve this force? Also why is it that whenever there are communal riots the confidence of the minorities is restored only after the PAC has been removed and the army or the BSF has been deployed?

A: Well, talking in very clear terms, the PAC is the only striking force that the state government has with it. But I would not like to blame the whole PAC as such or condemn it, because policing is a thankless job. A policeman's job is not simple, like that of the block development officer. So I would not condemn the whole PAC. But certainly I would say that the PAC has to be better trained. What has happened is that till the Congress regime quit in

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1977 deployment the of PAC deployment units was about 40 per cent of the total force, that is while 40 per cent of the force used to be deployed (in active duty) the rest used to be rested or put through training. During the three years of Janata rule, the development of the PAC went up to 80 to 90 per cent as there was more trouble and the time needed for training was not available. Moreover, the units were overworked.

Q: But the PAC has been a source of trouble for the UP government even before the Janata regime. Take the fate of Kamalapati Tripathi in 1973, for instance.

A: It was, but it had also done fine work earlier. I know officers of the minority community who have served with the PAC and they are proud of the units. In the past the PAC was sent to Maharashtra to maintain law and order. And it had a very good reputation. It is a basic question of training the units properly. After all, the armymen, the BSF jawans, the PAC personnel and policemen—all are drawn from the same population. It is the same village or the same town that gives the men for these forces.

Q: It is being said that there was involvement of foreign money and arms in the recent communal disturbances in your state. What proof of foreign involvement do you have? Moreover, what information do you have about the arrest of a Pakistani spy in Agra?

A: You have seen my statements. I have hardly made any on this (foreign involvement). I have myself ordered a judicial enquiry into the causes and the sequence of the events in Moradabad. Therefore any comment from my side would not be fair. Moreover, facts at the moment have become associated with theories so it will be better for me not to comment. But at the same time, it is my duty to find out what happened. So I have ordered the enquiry.

Q: What about the Agra spy?

A: A Pakistani national has been arrested in Agra. He is a foreign national overstaying and that is all.

Q: There have been many killings due to police encounters in the last few months. What does your government have to say about this sudden spurt in the number of police encounters?

A: Immediately after assuming power we had decided on a dacoit-combing operation and, frankly speaking, the operation was enforced vigorously. The effectiveness of it I could judge from the comments made by the Chief Ministers of neighbouring states, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Jagannath Pahadia and Arjun Singh spoke to me separately but their comments were the same. They both told me that the dacoits of UP were running away to their states. I told both of them that all my actions will be of no use unless you take simultaneous action on their side of the border as well. As a result the IGPs of the three states met about a month back to coordinate their anti-dacoity actions. I need no more proof that our IGP is doing a very good job.

Q: While appreciating the role of your police in apprehending and weeding out dacoits, one must say that in the process an incident like the one at Baghpat also happened. Should you not issue clear guidelines to the police that having apprehended someone on the charge of being a dacoit, they should let the law take its own course?

A: That (instruction) we have already issued. But even on the Baghpat incident the opposition has not said that the deceased were not dacoits. I can show you the letters written by Charan Singh and Ram Naresh Yadav in which they have said, maybe they were bad characters. Even the opposition has not said that they were not criminals. None of them (those who were killed at Baghpat) had less than eight to nine criminal cases against them, including murders. But again there is a judicial enquiry on it and therefore except for saying that there is a criminal record for each of the three (deceased) I am not saying anything. But while saying that the police force has to be firm and effective, I certainly agree with you that it should not be brutal.

Q: The proximity of UP to Delhi makes it easier for central leaders to come here. I find that the union home minister Giani Zail Singh rushes to UP very often. He went to Baghpat with a parliamentary delegation, he rushed to Moradabad on 14 August. Did he inform the state government about his intention to visit these trouble spots?

A: Yes he personally spoke to me. There is no such clash between the state and the centre. After all the law and order situation and the integrity of the country are a unified concept.

Q: But law and order is a state subject. It is your prerogative. If the union home minister comes so often to your state does it not create confusion?

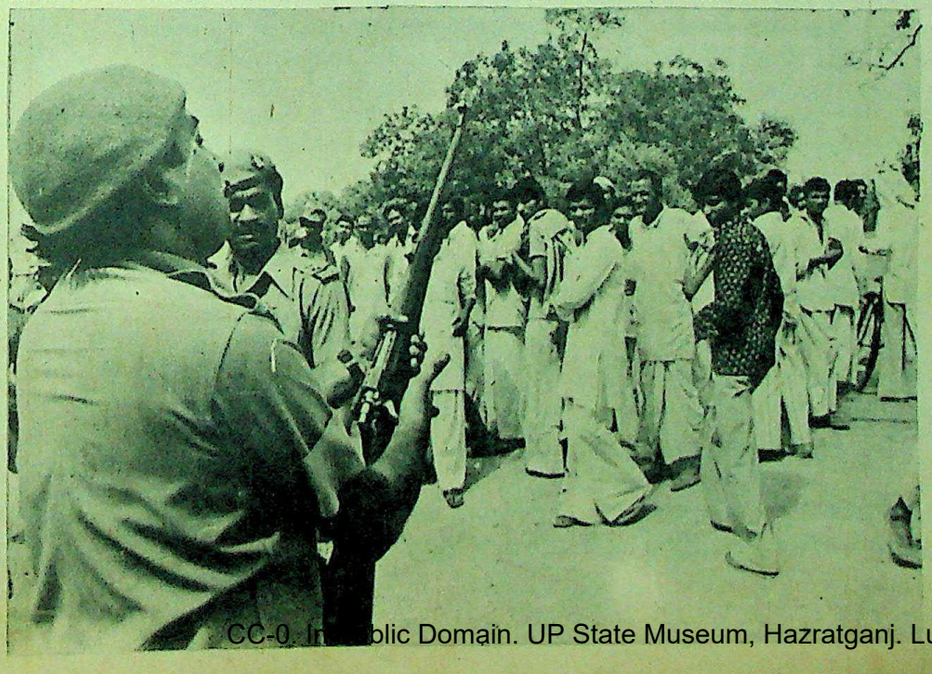
A: I think I do not suffer from such ego problems, so that when I have asked the centre to send me the army and the CRP, to the home minister I should say, "You do not come!" (laughs) You see the fallacy of the situation. Why will I not ask for his help and also guidance on the matter?

Q: Somebody told us in Lucknow that Giani Zail Singh does not inform you before he moves into your state.

A: No, every time he informs me. It is a different matter that his helicopter is faster and we could not reach Moradabad before him. But when I have asked for central forces what is wrong if he comes?

Q: A last question. You were in Delhi recently where you tried to persuade Rajiv Gandhi to enter politics when you met him with a delegation of your PCC (I) and AICC (I) office-bearers dealing with UP. Do you think that the state of your Party organisation is such that you should need an outsider like Rajiv Gandhi to lead it? Moreover Sanjay Gandhi had been a product of a political movement launched by your Party during the 33 months of Janata rule. What role did Rajiv Gandhi play in that movement?

A: I have met Rajiv earlier also and requested that he should consider entering politics and in case he does so he should consider contesting from UP. But during this particular visit I could not meet Rajiv because he was on his regular flights. So we met Indiraji and I presented to her the signatures of all the MLAs of UP (asking Rajiv Gandhi to join politics). Now, about Rajiv being an outsider in politics, how can he be an outsider when the whole Party wants him? He is an insider, and very much more of an insider than anybody else. Ask any common Congressman and have a referendum on the issue. You would find that 100 per cent will say, 'Yes, we want Rajiv.' If that is the feeling, he is not an outsider. He is right in the core of the Party.



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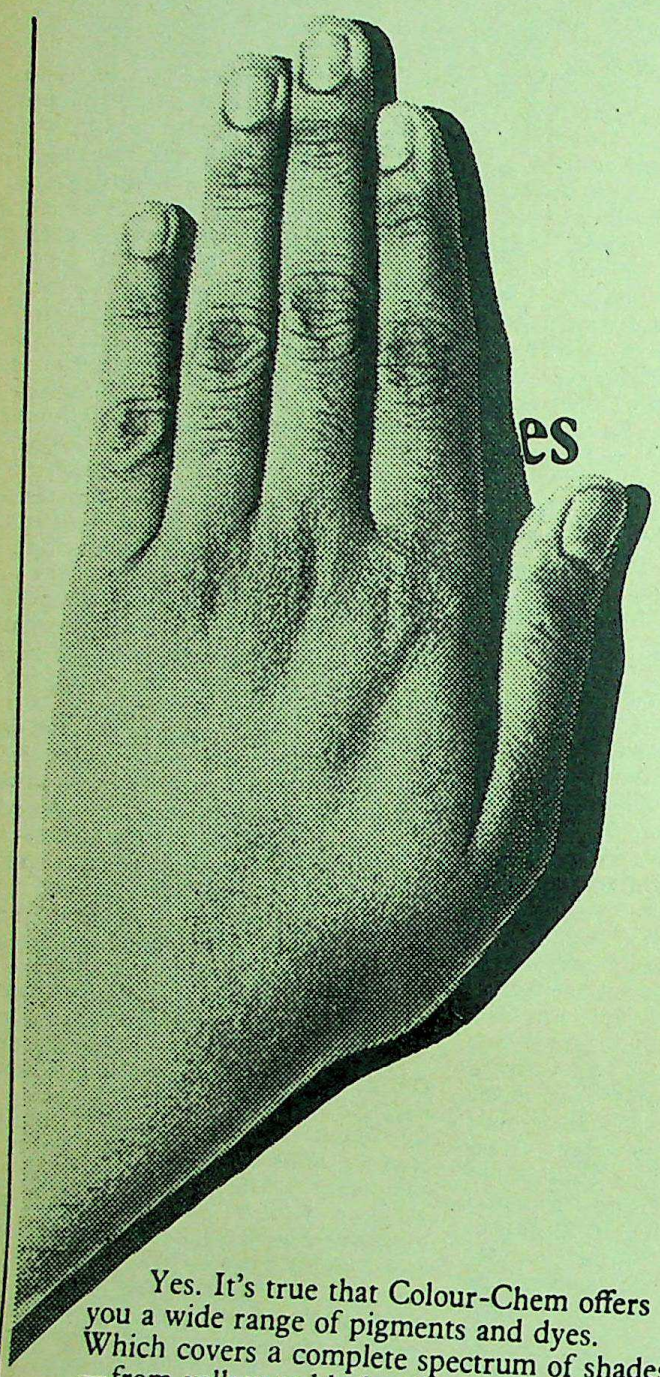

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"This is a sasur-damaad government"

The sasur *is the CM; the* damaad *is Sanjay Singh, president of the state Youth Congress(I). The most vociferous critic of Vishwanath Pratap Singh today is Mohan Singh, the young Lok Dal MLA who was the minister of state for industry in the Banarsi Das government. An original socialist, Mohan Singh has one singularly unique achievement: he, in a sense, caused the dismissal of his own government. It was Mohan Singh who first broke the story of the Narainpur outrage, and the centre used this as a handle to dismiss the Banarsi Das government. SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA interviewed him in Lucknow.*

Q *How is this government worse than yours?*

A: The Janata Party was composed of *ghataks* (factions), so if there were differences it was understandable. But the Congress(I) is a Party of *ghulams*—of people loyal to one leader, so why should there be lack of coordination? Take, for example, the divergent statements of ministers and other politicians connected with the government. Despite the well-known policy of Mrs Indira Gandhi on the states, the sugar and revenue minister of UP Yashpal Singh has demanded the division of the state into three parts. Both the CM and the finance minister of the state opposed the abolition of sales tax at the CMs' conference in Delhi on 16 and 17 September; but simultaneously UP's health minister Lokpati Tripathi announced in Varanasi that the state government had been considering for the past month and a half abolition of sales tax and its replacement by some sort of a production tax. Who should we believe? The CM has been announcing from the rooftops that his government has already received the money from the centre to set up four big fertiliser plants, but his industry minister told the Assembly on 15 September that he only hoped he got the money. Who should we believe?

It is a pity that before the Assembly elections this Party was speaking the language of the Muslim League, and now it is speaking the language of the RSS. Before the polls, Mrs Gandhi said that the minorities should not be crushed; now, when they are being crushed, she is saying that the minorities should not get emotional. At the Darul-uloom in Deoband, before the elections, Mrs Gandhi had welcomed foreign funds for the Islamic university at Moradabad; today her home minister Zail Singh and CM Vishwanath Pratap Singh are saying that foreign funds are the root cause of the Moradabad incidents. What should we believe?

Speaking at the Rakshabandhan ceremony at Nagpur, RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras said that the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) in UP should not be demoralised. In the UP Assembly during a debate, Congress(I) youth leader Sanjay Singh and parliamentary minister Ammar Rizvi too pleaded with the government that the PAC should not be demoralised. Four days after they had pleaded in this fashion, the PAC again had to be removed from riot-torn Aligarh and the army and BSF had to be called in. If the PAC really is a secular and efficient force then why does the state government have to remove it from riot-hit areas? Worse, nobody in the Congress(I) can raise his voice. The ruling Party MLA of Moradabad Hafiz Mohammad Siddique was humiliated by the local authorities, but no one in Lucknow thought of pulling up the administration for doing this.

Q:You have alleged that the new government has no programme. How do you substantiate your charge?

A: We had initiated two main schemes: *antyodaya* and food-for-work. The first has been scrapped, and the government does not have enough foodgrains to implement the second. The government has failed this year to build up a buffer stock of wheat because the procurement price was lower than the market rate. The government has admitted in the Assembly that this year's procurement is ten lakh metric tonnes less than last year's. Moreover, 50 per cent of the state's revenue comes from the agricultural sector. The CM has claimed that as the rains this year have been good, the crop too would be good. But in many parts the rains have been excessive, causing floods. Moreover, four districts in western UP are facing a shortage of water: Moradabad, Badaun, Muzaffarnagar and Rampur. On he other hand, floods have ravaged the central and eastern districts. Fertiliser prices have gone up by 38 per cent. The supply of power to the agricultural sector is poor. The kharif and the sugarcane crops have done poorly. So where is the cause for optimism? The coming year will be full of hardships.

And while the resources of the state have been dwindling, the administrative costs have been shooting up. The common man's tax-paying capacity has declined, and there is no new avenue for collection of additional tax. Our government had taken stiff measures to curb tax evasion and blackmarketing. We had handcuffed the offenders. But today, the sales tax authorities are themselves being handcuffed and paraded on the streets! Three officers of the sales tax flying squad were going on their normal beat on 24 August at Muzaffarnagar. They caught three truckloads of contraband which belonged to a mini steel factory, Rainbow Steel, which is owned by Vidya Bhushan, the minister for forests. Instead of being rewarded, the sales tax officers were handcuffed and paraded on the streets! The maximum sales tax revenue comes from the western districts of UP, and after this incident, no officer is willing to stick his neck out in this area—and the state's coffers are being denied legitimate funds.

This government is run by a coterie; it is a *sasur-damaad* (father-in-law-son-in-law) government. Sanjay Singh, the president of the state Youth Congress(I) is married to the daughter of V.P.Singh's elder brother. Sanjay Singh's father Dhananjay Singh, the former raja of Amethi, is the president of the UP Kshatriya Mahasabha. Unfortunately even the *rajputwad* of this coterie benefits only the rich rajputs, and does not percolate down to the common rajput who tills the land.

Protest march against the rape at Baghpat

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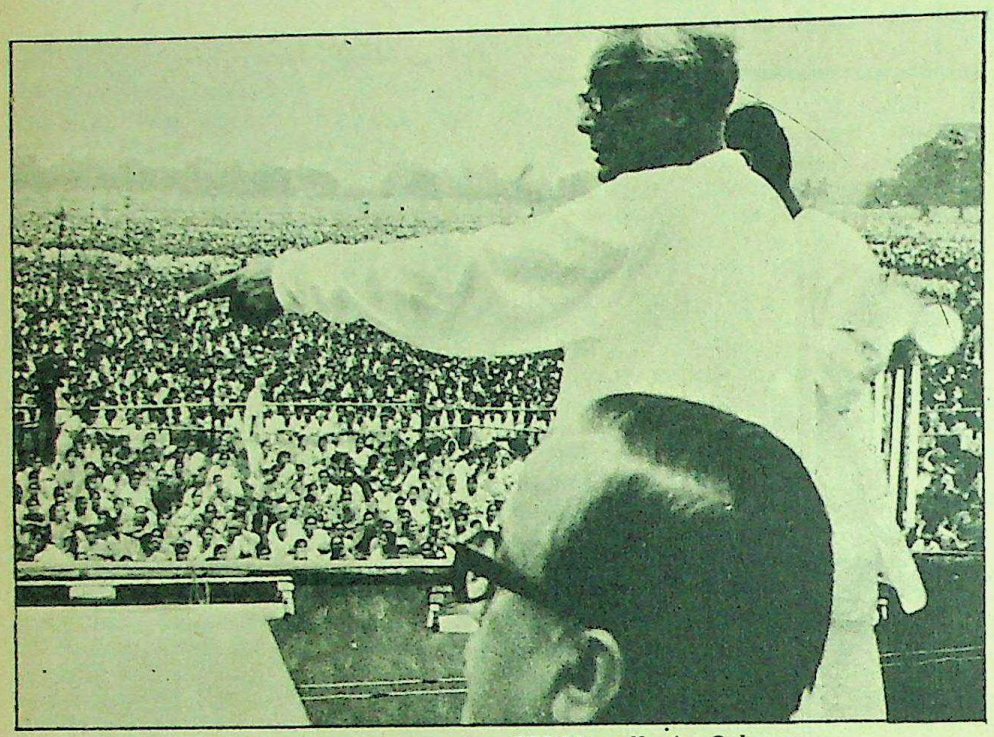

Joyoti Basu and Promode Dasgupta at a CPI(M) rally in Calcutta

CPI(M): Bodyweight, 100kgs; strength, 0?

Marxists look into the mirror and are not happy

Calcutta: Three years of power, and what is the result? To find out, the members of the CPI(M) state committee in West Bengal held a closed-door, four day session in September. Discussion was frank, and a secret document made available to us through our sources confirms that a strong section of the local leadership was not in a very happy mood.

Some leaders maintained that the Party had gained tremendously: expanding its base, strengthening its mass organisations, and even making inroads into the state machinery—the police, for instance. But many others were not so optimistic. They thought that the CPI(M) today had become like a *gaddiwala*—its bodyweight might be an obese 100 kilograms, but its strength was nil: the Party had lost its fighting spirit, and that might be suicidal. These leaders alleged that the Party today was full of opportunists (the inimitable Bengali word *dhandabaaj* was used), and even some senior cadres had become more interested in favours from the government than the cause of the oppressed. It was such degeneration, they pointed out, which had led to the Congress Party's downfall. A Marxist Party like the CPI(M), they alleged, had become a victim of the bourgeois parliamentary system—and even suggested that the Party leave the government to restore its credibility and stop the rot.

However, the majority in the committee supported the leadership of both the Party and the government. The leadership admitted some weaknesses, and promised to rectify them, but asserted that continuance in the government would still help the Party to create a revolutionary situation in eastern India.

The organisation report submitted by the state secretariat to the state committee members shows that the CPI(M) has reasons to be happy with its performance on a few crucial fronts. The total membership of the Party now stands at 67,043 (of which 16,868 are candidate-members). But the report admitted that a large number of the older workers had not renewed their membership, though no specific figure of how many such cases there were was given. According to the report, "nearly 40 per cent of the membership" is new and "they have joined the Party since 1977": that is, after the Party came to power.

The most spectacular growth (and commendable too, in Marxist terms) has been among the farmers. (See box for these and other specific figures.) Its second most successful effort has been among women, though the present membership is still way short of the Party target of 7.25 lakhs. Among trade unions too, the Party has grown appreciably.

On the other hand, there has been a sharp decline on the student and youth fronts. The Students Federation of India has lost in about 70 per cent of the college union elections in both urban and rural areas to the Chhatra Parishad of the Congress (I). The SFI's membership has also gone down to nearly half in the last three years. Even among the poor, the SFI has been losing ground at a rapid rate. In Calcutta, which is dominated by the middle and the lower middle class, the SFI's strength has come down from 17,196 members in 1978 to 9,247 today. In 24-Parganas, the industrial and agricultural district which surrounds Calcutta, membership has come down from 51,004 to 16,500. In 1979, the CPI(M)'s youth wing, the Democratic Youth Federation (DYF) had a membership of 510,184; today it is 220,788—despite the fact that the Party's target for 1980 was 7.5 lakhs.

The secretariat posed some vital questions in its organisational report. We quote: "We must not forget for a moment that the reactionary forces are not sitting idle. Authoritarian forces are active. Disruption is being sought to be created by vested interests against our Party and the Left Front government. A communist Party must continuously prepare itself to meet their offensive. Have we been able to change the correlation of class forces as we wanted? With the present opportunities and possibilities we can quickly expand and consolidate the Party, but have we been able to do it? These questions have to be dealt with seriously."

Some members of the state committee said that the secretariat should have been more explicit in admitting mistakes. They demanded that the degeneration of Party cadres should be accepted as a fact, and erring members should be severely warned. The Party leaders explained that fears of a bad Press prevented them from taking stern action against cadres.

But even this restrained organisational report admits: "The functioning in the district and local centres of the Party is not up to expectation. Party circulars are not properly attended to, and all district committees do not reply to them. Most of the leading cadres at the district, local and branch level are bogged down by too many jobs, and others are entrusted with administrative functions. District committee members and MLAs are given jobs in too many committees. Local leaders are bogged down with panchayat and municipal activities. Hence the work of the Party organisation is being neglected at all levels. This is a serious weakness.

"Nearly 40 per cent of the membership consists of newcomers who have joined the Party after 1977. They have not been given even elementary Party education. Branch secretaries

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West Bengal CPI(M): At a glance

Members	1979	1980
PARTY	57,956	67,043
KISHAN SABHA	28,45,709	31,82,965
MAHILA SAMITI	236,151	348,346
TRADE UNION (CITU)	620,107	NA
STUDENTS' FRONT (SFI)	146,669	72,070
YOUTH FRONT (DYF)	510,184	220,788

Source: Report of the CPI(M) secretariat presented to the state committee on 20 August 1980.

are not trained, and for an expanding organisation this is a must. A plenum resolution stated that oral propaganda, and speeches in general body meetings should play a big role in educating the branch members and secretaries. But this is not always done nowadays. Thus the political level of the Party cadres cannot be raised to the extent that they can cope with the present complicated situation.

"Due to the lack of politicisation of the Party and the masses, the rate of growth of our Party and mass influence has not increased up to expectations. Though the recent panchayat by-elections are not criteria for judging our strength and influence, we still have to think seriously over it. In the last parliamentary elections also we have seen that the increase of the Congress vote is greater than the increase of our vote in industrial, city, as well as some rural areas.

"The failure to instil the spirit of collective functioning among the leading cadres at all levels has been the root cause of personalised functioning of panchayat *pradhans*, panchayat *samitis* and the *zilla parishad sabhapatis*. In many areas the people have not been involved in panchayat work despite repeated directions to this effect from above...There is no doubt about our big achievements in governmental and panchayat activities—but at the same time we should realise that some of our comrades fall prey to bureaucratic tendencies, corrupt practices and other bourgeoisie vices when they function in the present administrative and panchayat apparatus...There are instances of breach of Party discipline. But this is not a general feature of our Party life; these are all exceptions, due to the lack of understanding of political significance of maintaining Party norms and discipline. New recruits have not been trained in the elementary rules of the Party.

"Above all, the basic weakness lies in the fact that there is inadequate realisation in the Party, especially among the leading cadres in the districts, about the special responsibility on our Party, which is running the state government. A Party running a government should have new tactics and methods to solve the people's problems and tackle the issues. How to behave with the people—all this has to be learnt anew, keeping in mind that we are running the government."

Will the CPI(M) in West Bengal be able to rectify these mistakes, which, as this story shows, it is already aware of? Meanwhile, it is faced with a problem about which no one is talking very much, but which can affect the Party seriously. The strong man of the Party, Promode Dasgupta, is 70 years old and in bad health; Chief Minister Jyoti Basu is 67 and suffers from high blood pressure. There is no one else at the moment who can provide the strong and disciplined leadership which alone can rescue the Party.

Barun Sengupta

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BY-ELECTIONS

Congress(I) goes on trial

Delhi: The Congress(I) will face its first major popularity test after the May-June Assembly elections, in what will virtually be a mini general election around November-December. The Election Commission has announced its plans to hold several by-elections around that time. As many as four Congress(I) Chief Ministers are not MLAs, which they must become to remain CMs. They are Abdul Rehman Antulay (Maharashtra), Jagannath Pahadia (Rajasthan), Janaki Ballabh Patnaik (Orissa) and Vishwanath Pratap Singh (Uttar Pradesh).

Altogether 19 Lok Sabha seats, 36 Vidhan Sabha seats, spread over 12 states, and one Rajya Sabha seat are vacant. Besides, the Metropolitan Council and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, which were dissolved after the Congress(I) came to power, are yet to have their elections. The total number of by-elections, due to be held, including those to the Legislative Councils of some states, is at present 204. Strangely, the Representation of the People Act, the law which governs the elections, is silent on the time-limit within which a by-election must be held after a seat falls vacant. This naturally provides any ruling Party the opportunity to keep on postponing the elections till such time as is politically suitable for it.

Of the 19 vacancies in the Lok Sabha, five are from UP: three have been caused by deaths (Sanjay Gandhi from Amethi, Aziz Imam from Mirzapur and Mifiryar Khan from Bareilly); two are due to resignations (Vishwanath Pratap Singh from Allahabad and Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna from Tehri Garhwal); and the Serampore seat in West Bengal became vacant with the death of Mr Dinen Bhattacharya of the CPI(M). Twelve seats are vacant from Assam along with a single seat from Meghalaya (elections will not be held here till the agitation is resolved). The vacancy in the Rajya Sabha occurred when Delhi's Khurshid Alam Khan retired and could not be replaced since there is no Metropolitan Council in the capital which forms the electoral college for this seat.

Interestingly, only one of the five MPs who became Chief Ministers has resigned his seat. Normally, a member vacates his seat in the Lok Sabha only after he has won the by-election in the Vidhan Sabha. It is believed that Vishwanath Pratap Singh vacated the Allahabad seat because a section of the Congress(I) leadership wants Rajiv Gandhi to enter Parliament from the Allahabad constituency.

Of the 36 vacant Vidhan Sabha seats, six are from West Bengal, five from UP, four from Bihar, three from Haryana, two each from Maharashtra,

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Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Orissa, Assam, Gujarat and Tripura and one each from Andhra Pradesh and Manipur. Besides, there is a possibility of two more Assembly seats falling vacant—one in Karnataka and another in Nagaland—in case the Supreme Court upholds the High Court judgments setting aside the two elections. The appeal in the Madhya Pradesh High Court against the election of the Union Civil Supplies Minister Vidya Charan Shukla from the Mahasamund Lok Sabha constituency, is pending before the Supreme Court.

The Union Territory of Delhi is now without any representative body. The Delhi administration has been made into a virtual pocket organisation of the Lt Governor, Mr Jagmohan, and is being run under the guidance of men handpicked by the late Sanjay Gandhi: Police Commissioner Pritam Singh Bhinder, Municipal Commissioner J. N. Singh, New Delhi Municipal Committee president P .N. Behl and Delhi Development Authority vice-chairman V. S. Ailwadi. There are others like Arjun Das, the motor-mechanic friend of Sanjay Gandhi and the youth Congress(I) leader, Manoharlal Khurana, who is on the managing board of the super-bazars.

The ruling party expects the economic situation to improve rapidly by November with a record *kharif* crop in October and acting as a damper on prices. By then the communal tensions in UP will, hopefully, also have subsided. But will memories continue to remain as short as they have been in the past?

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

For Rugby addicts

Calcutta: *Rugby is a game played by men with peculiarly shaped balls.* These immortal words of William Webb Ellis, the founder of modern rugby, were prominently displayed in a poster at the Calcutta Cricket and Football Club (CCFC) which played host to the recently concluded All India and South Asia Rugby Tournament which was won by LMOB (the Lamartiniere Old Boys'). This levity, apart, the 55-year-old tournament (held alternatively in Calcutta and Bombay) was conducted this year with meticulous planning and attention by a small group of enthusiastic men led by CCFC vice-president R. A. W. Thomas and S. M. Osman

For Calcuttans, the dying embers of interest in the game were rekindled once again as 12 teams of rugged men "scrummaged" into the fray oblivious of broken noses, black eyes and laundry bills. There are not many rugby players in the country today. For it is not a game that comes naturally.

But last week at the CCFC these doleful prognostications seemed out of place as avid rugger addicts rubbed shoulders with hundreds of curious uninvited spectators who watched the proceedings and were thrilled

Tapan Chaki

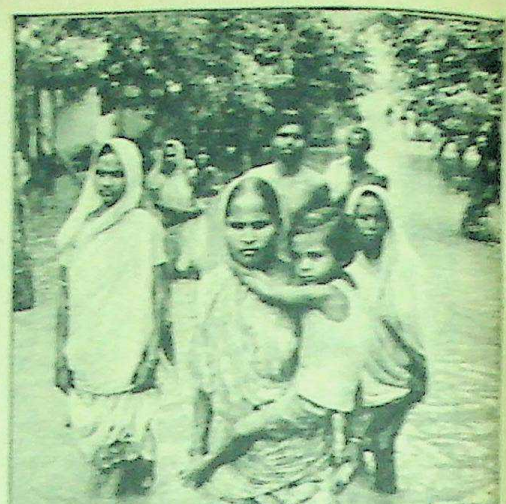
FLOODS

Another havoc

Bhubaneswar: "We are marooned. Everything around us has gone under water; only the jail, the police station and the hospital have been spared. Rush help." The frantic signal was radioed by the circle inspector of police from Gunupur, a prosperous sub-divisional town (pop: 15,000) in south Orissa at precisely 3.31 am on Thursday, 18 September. Only 30 minutes before he shouted the message Bansadhara river had breached its embankment and cascaded into the town. Fed by incessant rain in the delta area, the river had been swelling for the past 48 hours. It reached the protective embankment at 3 pm on Wednesday, spilled over at 11 in the night and finally swept the embankment itself four hours later. The town remained under 10 to 14 feet of water for the next eight hours.

Just as the government was preparing to organise relief to Gunupur, distress calls flowed in from Kashinagar, another sub-divisional town in south Orissa. The same Bansadhara river had surged into that town also. Chief Minister J. B. Patnaik tried to reach Gunupur by an air force helicopter on Friday but returned to Bhubaneswar from midway because of bad weather. When he finally made it to Gunupur in a larger chopper sent from the Kalaikunda air base in West Bengal on Saturday, a hostile crowd received him with brickbats. There was a mad scramble for food as the helicopter touched down. The people there had eaten nothing for two days and started pelting stones at the helicopter when they found that it had not brought enough provisions.

To add chaos to the confusion, the power supply in entire Orissa collapsed. The Hirakud hydel station suddenly stopped generation with the Mahanadi flood waters seeping into the cables; the Balimela power station had gone out of commission a couple of days earlier; and the Talcher thermal plant also broke down. Barring the Rourkela Steel Plant all industries were shut down. Even Raj Bhavan, the state secretariat and hospitals in Bhubaneswar had to do without power.



Fortunately Bansadhara subsided as fast it had risen. But Mahanadi and its tributaries fed by discharges from the Hirakud reservoir and the Naraj barrage, continued to inundate new areas. By 24 September, large areas of Cuttack, Puri, Koraput, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sambalpur, Phulbani and Dhenkanal—nine of Orissa's 13 districts—had been flooded. The official death toll mounted to 320; some 3.4 million people were turned destitutes; and about 850,000 acres of standing crop was lost.

The first major relief operation could, however, start only on 21 September morning, three days after the flash flood had struck the Orissa coast, with the IAF airdropping some 12,000 kgs of food and medicine at Gunupur. Bad weather restricted the operation to just one sortie on that day and Air Commodore M. M. Sinha, conducting the operation, said that Gunupur did not appear to be inhabited. "Not a soul, not a house." That is how he described the place.

The exact nature and extent of the damages are yet to be ascertained. Most of the flooded coastal areas remain inaccessible. With most roads breached and telegraph poles uprooted all down the line, it is the ubiquitous transistor which is providing the only communication link to the marooned millions.

A Special Correspondent

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FRUSTRATION

BARC's harassed scientists

Bombay: A top scientist at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) Dr R. Y. Deshpande has sent an "emotional and melodramatic" letter of resignation to Mr Homi Sethna, which says that the distraught scientist would prefer retirement to working at BARC, and will be joining the Aurobindo Ashram. Mr Sethna is said to be perturbed. He called the scientist for a chat but nothing is known about whether the ashram will be richer and the BARC poorer.

Deshpande (50) was head of the technical physics division of BARC, and the immediate provocation for his despair was the way in which his claim for promotion to the top post of scientific officer was bypassed. In BARC the grades are something like: SD-SC-SCD-FC-FD-FE-FF and FG, the last being the highest. Usually a committee, consisting of representatives of the physics, chemistry, biology and engineering units of the Directorate of Atomic Energy (DAE) as well as secretaries attached to the Atomic Energy Ministry are supposed to meet to choose who is to be promoted to a top post. But this year nothing of the sort happened. Neither the heads of the units nor the two outside members of the DAE, namely the secretaries, were there. The coterie that sat in judgment rejected the claims of two top scientists. The other was Dr Ramani, who is head of the division of Desalination and Effluent Engineering (DEED). According to the talk prevailing in BARC, where there has been outright disgust at the methods of promotion for some years now, the two top scientists have been discriminated against because they dared to make observations about the working conditions at BARC which angered the establishment. Dr Ramani, it is said, had repeatedly highlighted the need for a verbal policy to rehabilitate frustrated scientists.

Mr Deshpande is well-known for having made the thermo wax chambers used in Bhaskara and Rohini (the Indian satellite) and these worked well for screening components. He has also made mass spectometers. The DAE had wanted to import Rs one crore worth of these spectometers for heavy water plants, but Mr Deshpande objected, saying he could deliver them. He was overruled and imports were ordered. And then he was victimised when his claim for the highest grade was denied. This is not the first time that a meritorious first grade scientist has been humiliated, said one infuriated scientist to this correspondent.

There have been scores of examples, but those punished have generally been too small a fry to find a place in the newspapers. Now the same policy has affected another well-known scientist, Dr P. V. Iyengar, who was given a show cause notice to explain why he had accepted a gift of Rs 5,000 from the Kerala government. The Kerala government had given awards to outstanding scientists from Kerala and Dr Iyengar, who was earlier a recipient of the Padma Bushan and the Bhatnagar Award, was also honoured. It is understood that the Home Ministry has now cleared the acceptance of the award, but the pettiness which it showed has created great animosity towards the ruling clique in BARC.

Last year the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) had honoured Mr S. H. Patil for discovering a mutant of groundnut for the biology division of BARC. But his own superiors at BARC treated him so shabbily that the scientific officers' association had to take up his case. When Patil went to Delhi to receive the award, instead of granting him leave to do so, the department cut his earned leave. They said he was going on social duty and not official duty. One of Dr P. V. Iyengar's colleagues, Dr S. E. Kannan, was also treated in a similar manner. He was chargesheeted and censored for writing to a professor at the University of Illinois, USA, and accused of having violated the rule of applying for jobs abroad. Dr Kannan contested this accusation and asked that the matter be referred to the Home Ministry, but that was not done.

The treatment to Deshpande and Ramani has further aggravated the situation between the rank-and-file scientists and the scientist managers. The latter have refused to give information even on such matters as the precise framework of rules and regulations governing the terms of employment of scientists, seniority lists and the promotion norms. In fact, requests from the BARC Officers' Association (BARCOA) to draw up guidelines for transfer of scientists from one field to another was termed interference in the management's prerogatives. In January 1980, BARCOA had written to the Prime Minister drawing her attention to "the ascendancy of bureaucrats and the absence of 'rule of law' in promotions prevailing at BARC." They had said that in order to administer by the civil service rules, the scientist managers had to take the help of the functionaries. And this was then used by the bureaucrats to acquire undue control over the working scientists. Their trick was to suggest to the scientist managers that all their decisions in personnel matters, however unfair or arbitrary, could be legitimised by appropriate manipulation of the rules. The fact that this frequently involved violation of those very rules of their selective or discriminatory applications was no problem, since most scientists, including the scientist managers, were unfamiliar with the intricacies of the rules and could not effectively defend themselves.

Occasionally, when in certain cases these rules could not be used as a stick, additional rules were drafted and enforced. The fact that it was often done without due authority was not noticed, again because of the ignorance and even distaste among most scientists for legal detail. In the case of the DAE, when the illegitimacy of all this was pointed out, the sensitive nature of the department was freely cited to justify such actions. "There was thus no restraint of the scientific ethic or the rule of law. Any demands for the rule of law, such as those made by the association repeatedly, were invariably met with the threat of using more civil service rules for disciplining scientists. In this task the bureaucratic functionaries used the enormous prestige of the DAE to recruit the help of such agencies as the Central Vigilance Commission and the Union Public Service Commission who upheld even the most perverse charges made by the administration against the scientists. At the same time, bureaucrats guilty of even serious offences went scot-free. In this process the scientist managers slowly became totally dependent on their bureaucratic allies. The latter became more powerful than most senior scientists."

Mrs Gandhi received this letter in January but she has not bothered to talk to the complainants. Her oft-repeated concern for science and technology had raised enormous hopes among scientists and the scientific community. But these hopes have been frustrated by the disregard for vital issues that affects the morale of honest scientists wanting to contribute their services to the nation.

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BIHAR

Students fight for their right to cheat

Patna: Any student caught cheating in an examination in Bihar can face imprisonment upto three years and/or a fine of Rs 5,000. That is the revolutionary content of an ordinance passed by the Bihar government in early September. No other state has had the courage to officially challenge so boldly a malpractice which seems to have become endemic. But if Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra was under any illusions that the law he has pushed through has actually stopped cheating, they were quickly dispelled. In fact, the students of Bihar have virtually launched what can only be called a pro-cheating agitation, with the support of not merely opposition leaders but also with the help of those Congress(I) leaders who have been demanding the resignation of Dr Mishra.

Magadh university, which was holding its intermediate examinations even while Patna was passing its anti-cheating law, witnessed unprecedented scenes of violence against the teachers who were acting as invigilators. As many as 12 teachers, including a lady, were attacked in the first five days of the examination. The assaults began from the very first day, 9 September. Bindeshwari Prasad Singh of H. D. Jain College, Arrah, was attacked viciously by students armed with iron rods while he was returning home after completing the day's invigilation. His skull was broken, and he went into a coma for 96 hours at the Patna Medical College Hospital before being flown to the All India Medical Institute in Delhi, where he is still struggling for his life.

Bombs were thrown by angry students at many places. At many "disturbed" centres in Patna and Arrah, teachers refused to do invigilation duty for fear of their lives: they were replaced by home guards and government clerks. When the protests from teachers became too loud, the government was forced to postpone the examinations scheduled for September 15 and 16. And during those two days, arrangements were made to provide teachers with the police assistance. Police have been posted on the campuses—with the right to search pockets for hidden weapons. (This, incidentally, has created a furore among the women.)

Acording to the ordinance, cheating becomes a cognisable offence. Magistrates on duty have been made co-centre superintendents. Provision has been made for an on-the-spot trial, by an officer above the rank of DSP. Teachers conniving in cheating can be jailed for three months to two years. Invigilators have been declared public servants *(Lok Sewaks)*, and any obstruction to their work can result in two years' imprisonment.

As examination centres begin to look like battlefields, the pro and anti-cheating debate is raging all over Bihar. "How can the police, the most corrupt section of the administration, launch a war against cheating?" asks one examinee. Others point out that if the police seriously started to deal with cheating, they would simply not have the time for any other work.

Different political Parties have criticised this ordinance, seeing behind it a conspiracy to "break teacher-student unity", and thus prevent any chance of a 1974-type movement ever happening again. The young BJP MLA Lalmuni Choubey told this correspondent angrily, "Karpoori Thakur's prohibition ordinance resulted in the growth of an illegal trade in liquor, leading to deaths due to consumption of poisonous liquor. This ordinance too will have the opposite effect from its intention—it has already led to assualts on teachers, and it will result in an increase in cheating." Even from his own party, Dr Mishra gets no peace. In an open letter to the CM, Vidyakar Kavi, a senior dissident in the Congress(I), has attacked the ordinance, saying that it is even more harsh than the ordinance against blackmarketeers and hoarders.

Arun Kanjan

NAXALITES

MGR talks, police shoots

Madras: Naxalites willing to reform can ring up 22345 or 422222 in Madras city for a chat with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran. The offer to hold 'frank discussions' with the Naxalites was made by MGR in mid-September after some top police officers concluded that the morale of the Naxalites in the state had gone down considerably. But this offer has apparently not been a temptation enough. None of the top-ranking Naxalites have talked to the CM yet. However, MGR, incorrigible optimist that he is, thinks that the 'response has been encouraging.'

At the same time, the police hunt continues, guided by Walter Davaram, an ambitious and strong-willed DIG. A major drive to flush out the extremists was launched in the first week of August following the death of three policemen in a bomb blast near Tirupattur. A police posse had arrested the Naxalites, bound them hand and foot and bundled them in a car. A few minutes later, a countrymade bomb exploded, killing inspector Palanisamy, two constables and a Naxalite. Two other Naxalites, who had been in the car, died in hospital a few hours later.

The police then started combing operations in "Naxalite-infested" areas of Tirupattur and Dharmapuri. The operations will continue throughout October, despite MGR's offer to hold dialogues. There have been reports, meanwhile, of deaths of "prominent" Naxalites in police custody. Two "notorious Naxalites", Subramanium and Shanmugham, were shot dead by the police in a village near Tirupattur on 11 September in the early hours of the morning.

For more than seven weeks, DIG Davaram and his colleagues have been combing the hilly terrains of Yelagiri on the border of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The combing operations start around two in the morning as dozens of policemen armed with rifles, torches, binoculars and hurricane lamps negotiate hilly terrain, and look into caves and other possible hiding places.

Curiously, journalists who visit Tirupattur come back with interesting stories. T. N. Gopalan of the *Indian Express* who was in Tirupattur on 15 September was assaulted in broad daylight by a "Naxalite" a few yards away from the police station. "I had spent nearly half an hour with the police and I was going towards my lodge. A self-proclaimed Naxalite kicked me and warned me not to write anything about them," recalled Gopalan.

It is not only in Tirupattur and Dharampuri that the police are intensifying the drive against Naxalites. Lawyers, too, who have defended the extremists in the past have been rounded up. P. V. Bhaktavatsalam, a Tirupattur lawyer, arrested on 16 August, has been refused bail. Bhaktavatsalam, the brain behind the organisation for civil and democratic rights, had demanded that the state government should provide relief to the members of the families of the three suspected Naxalites who had died in the car blast near Tirupattur. He had said: "They were not held guilty by any court and they are entitled to compensation."

A few days later, V. Chokalingam, the printer and publisher of *Makkal Seighi* (People's News), a daily with a small circulation, was arrested for publishing "seditious" articles. Then came a more sensational arrest. K. V. Sankaran, president of the Advocates Association, who had attended a Madras city meeting of the civil and democratic rights organisation in his "individual capacity," was arrested on 1 September. Sankaran who had defended several alleged extremists in the past was accused of having said that "only by doing away with the police could the government be toppled."

It is believed that more "vigorous" steps against the Naxalites will follow. According to a police spokesman Interpol would be asked to investigate the flow of foreign money and arms to the Naxalites. Efforts are also being made to check the infiltration of Naxalites into the police force during recruitment. For the first time in police history the background of the candidates is being checked thoroughly by the intelligence department.

Arthur Pais

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OBSESSIONS

Testing the venom

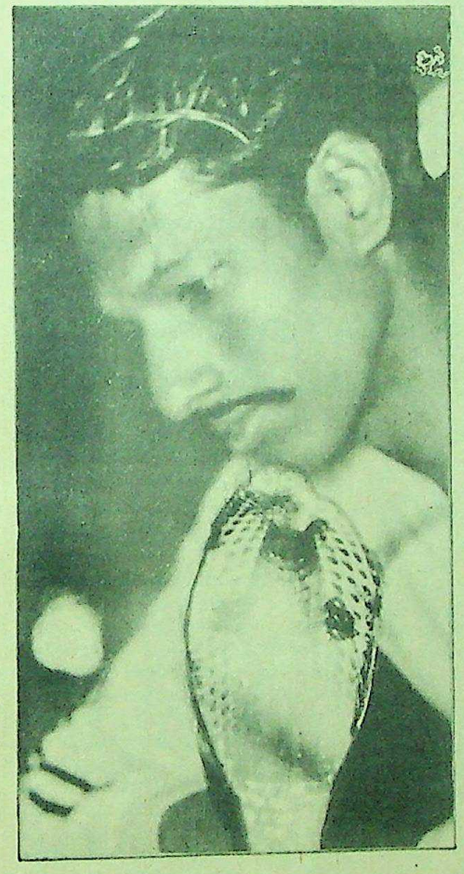
Kozhikode: Velayudhan sat like a man possessed in the glass chamber. Around him were 31 cobras, three vipers and 11 kraits. But the 33-year-old class four employee of the Kerala State Electricity Board was firm in his determination to become the world's first man to live for more than 75 days with his "45 venomous friends." He was bitten four times since he entered the glass chamber on 17 August, and the fourth time it nearly cost him his life. That was on the 19th day. Feeling giddy, he was removed to an intensive care unit and given a 120 ml anti-venom injection. After 61 hours he felt better again and re-entered the glass cage ignoring the advice of Dr Warrier, who was constantly monitoring his physical condition. As a form of appeasement, the young adventurer gave a letter to the organisers signed by him and his wife which stated that if anything untoward happened, the responsibility would be his.

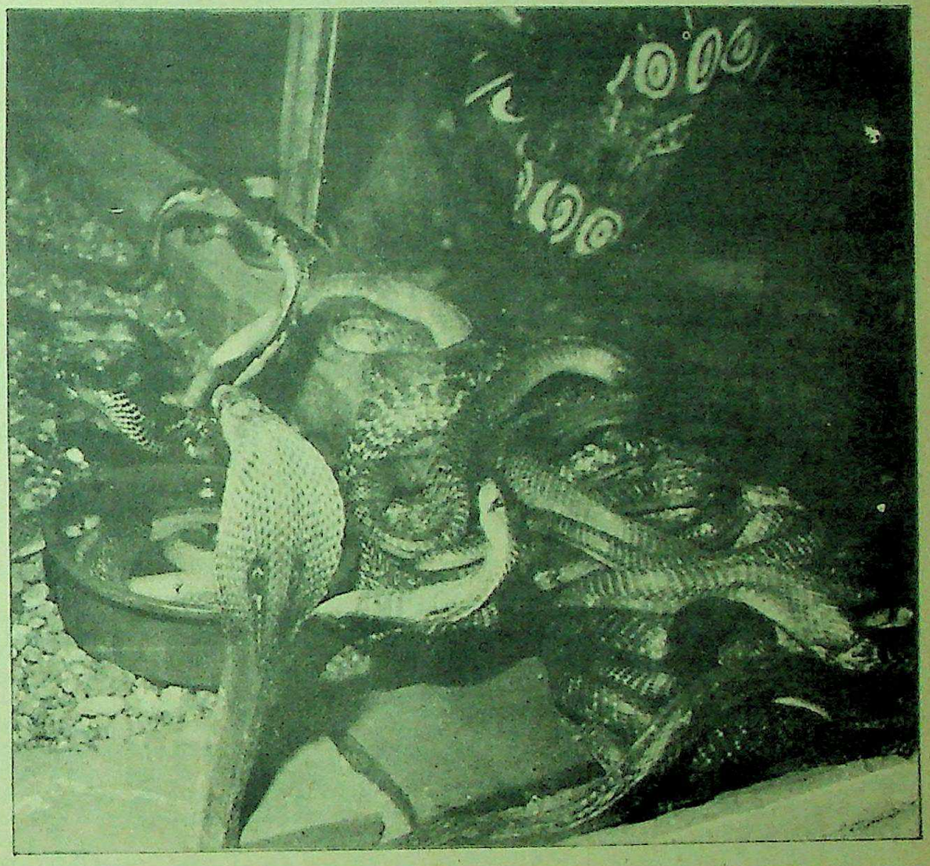
The *yagna* catapulted Velayudhan to fame, bringing him a substantial amount of money. Till the 26th day of the snake *yagna*, more than two lakh people had filed past the glass cage, paying a rupee each, to watch the spectacle. The corporation of Kozhikode took 32p per rupee as entertainment tax while the herpetologist took 60 per cent of the takings.

The organisers of the *yagna* had wanted to get the feat of endurance recorded in the *Guiness Book of World Records* but Velayudhan failed them. On 16 September, he abandoned his efforts.

Velayudhan's snake *yagna* has inspired others to undertake similar feats. Within a space of one month the stage has been set for two more *yagnas*—in Cochin and Coimbatore. In Cochin, Dr Tommy Joseph, the managing director of the Tomman Joseph Memorial Institute in Idukki district which specialises in snake studies, is planning a similar feat of endurance. Either Dr Joseph or his younger brother William Thomas, will try to stay in the snake cage for 120 days with 122 snakes starting on 2 October. The second *yagna* is being planned by Parthasarathy, who had earlier bettered his own record for walking backwards (this record is yet to be recognised by *Guiness*, who must be more responsible than anything else for such 'achievements').

Binoo K. John





Capital flight

Trivandrum: The customs officer asked the routine question: "Are you carrying any Indian currency with you?" Two bearded Sikhs, Santosh, 35, and Gurumukh Singh, 30, who had turned up at the counter on Friday, 5 September to be cleared for the flight to Colombo leaving Trivandrum in another 30 minutes said they had about Rs 620 in Indian currency between them. To which the officer replied that an individual is entitled to carry only Rs 20. When Santosh asked what they should do, the officer said curtly: "It's your headache". But on second thoughts, the officer said they could deposit their excess money with a friend or acquaintance and even leave the counter and go out to the lounge to do this.

First, the two Sikhs tried their luck at the State Bank of Travancore counter. The bank refused their deposits because it dealt with foreign exchange only. The two men scanned the crowd for somebody whom they could trust with the money. There was none. Time ticked away, and in desperation they returned to the customs counter to plead with the officer for permission to carry the money. The officer refused, and, predictably, asked them to try once more: "Surely, you will find someone you know outside."

And once more Santosh and Gurumukh failed. In sheer anger and frustration, they turned up at the customs counter, pulled out the currency notes from their pockets and tore them up, one at a time, with the rest of the passengers staring at them in surprise. "We think, we can go in now," Gurumukh said triumphantly—only to be disappointed. By now a couple of policemen who had been summoned by the customs officer had started picking up the torn pieces of the currency notes. "Tearing currency notes is against the law," the police told Santosh and Gurumukh and led them to the nearest police station. After some time, the police, apparently moved by their plight, decided to let them off with a warning.

Moral: You can't win.

G. S. Kartha

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THE WORLD

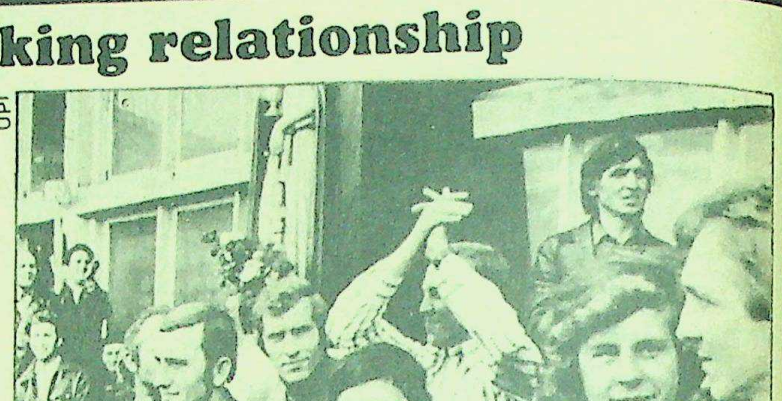
Just be good

President Jimmy Carter loves his brother Billy but not the embarrassment the younger brother has been causing him regarding the Libyan deals. And to prevent another 'Billygate' Jimmy Carter has drawn up a set of guidelines or "advices" as he calls them, not only for naughty Billy but also for some of his relatives who might sometimes wish to step out of line. And to give his set of rules some semblance of respectability, he has asked government employees to abide by them. They will, however, have no legal authority and will not be binding on future Presidents. The President's rules were being drawn up, according to senior White House officials, because "most people in government simply need some indication of what they should or should not do."

Working relationship

Did the Polish workers' strike have any effect on Big Brother Moscow who was apparently not only watching the developments but also helping the Polish Communist leaders in the negotiations with the workers? It did. The Russians were worried that their workers too would be affected by the same virus. So western broadcasts were jammed. But then such an event could not be ignored. Many Russians living in European Russia came to know of the strike and the subsequent victory of the Polish workers. In a frontpage article on 15 September, the *Pravda* urged Soviet industrial officials, by way of warning, to heed workers' complaints in order to preserve the "unity of the Soviet society and the solidarity of the people around the Party." But it is certain that

UPI



the Soviet Union will not allow its workers so much leeway as the Polish Party did although the conditions are similar: there are inefficiencies, shortages and bottlenecks. The *Pravda* article, however, projected an optimistic picture: it was all praise for the Soviet Communist Party which had created an atmosphere where "free, conscientious toilers could happily work together."

On Deng Road

UPI

"If you need food, get Zhao Ziyang," cried Chinese peasants, about ten years ago. And with good reason. Zhao Ziyang, the new Chinese Premier, is known to be an economic wizard—for the way he transformed the economy of his native Szechuan province. A rich landlord's son, Zhao's talents were recently recognised by his powerful mentor, Deng Xiaoping. Hence his appointment. With Zhao at the helm now, China shall follow the capitalist line, and begin the march to economic advancement under the guidance of superior technocrats.

Some opposition

Filipino dictator Ferdinand Marcos is as incorrigible as ever—even after being confronted by what is shaping up to be his greatest threat: the broadest and strongest-ever opposition combine of 72 opponents and eight political Parties. The opposition front, which christened itself the "National Convenant for Freedom", passed a resolution on 29 August—the 84th anniversary of the "Cry of Balintawak" when Andres Bonifacio plotted to overthrow the Spanish colonialists—demanding an end to the eight-year martial law. The occasion was symbolic, for, among other things, the oppositionists protested against American bases in the Philippines. For one thing, opposing the USA makes little sense if the Philppines must guard against Soviet designs in Vietnam and Cambodia. Marcos' opponents also argue, hopefully, that if the country is to be saved from economic chaos, martial law and Marcos must go. "This is the last-ditch effort," they also warn, "to head off a bloody confrontation."

Briefly

Lollipops

If you are boss of a junta and have just taken over your country, what is among the first things that you should do? Ask General Kenan Evren, latest head of state of Turkey after yet another coup in that country. On September 14, using the carrot and the stick with the simple-mindedness which only the worst army officers can achieve, he announced a 70% pay rise for workers, and "postponed" all strikes "till further notice."

Aid?

In 1979, the USA (which has an old, justified but no longer relevant reputation for generosity) spent more on potted plants for homes (5 billion dollars) than on aid for the Third World (4.6 billion dollars). And opinion polls say that four out of five Americans still want a further cut in the amount of aid. In the late 1960s, the USA gave 0.4% of its GNP to the Third World; only France, Australia, Belgium and Holland gave a bigger share. Last year, the USA was giving just 0.19%—and only Italy among the developed, democratic nations was giving less! Traditionally, most US aid has been given under bilateral agreements with nations. Last year, 40% of all bilateral aid by the US went to Egypt and Israel as reward for signing the Camp David agreement.

New era?

Among the Islamic communities celebrating the arrival of the 15th century according to the *hijri* is the large Muslim community of central Asia living under the conglomerate entity known as the USSR. Communist Moscow, perhaps in an effort to improve its face with the Muslim world, allowed an international Islamic conference in Tashkent between September 9 and 12. More than 70 countries attended. However, no unanimous resolutions could be passed.

Oppression

The latest target of the Iranian Islamic fundamentalists is the small community of Baha'is. Seven of them were executed as spies in the town of Yazdi in September; in August nine members of the Baha'i National Spiritual Assembly were arrested. The 450,000 adherents of this faith in Iran are believers of Baha'ullah, who appeared in Iran and preached the unity of all religions. The Baha'is are pro-Shah and refused to vote in the referendum making Iran an Islamic state.

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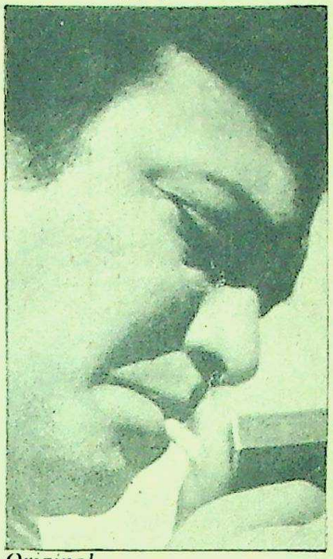
LIVING

Copycat



CHITRAJIT GHOSH

Original

Rekha Chakraborty (46) learnt the trade from her mother 27 years ago. And Rekha's knack of reproducing originals on mat with threads of many colours is uncanny. (The photographs here show the original portrait of Uttam Kumar which appeared in an issue of *Anandalok* and Rekha's embroidered reproduction of the same.) She has exhibited in Bombay, Delhi, Madras and at home in Calcutta. But she refuses to sell her work. However, at a recent exhibition in Salt Lake, Calcutta, Rekha put up four items for sale. Her decision surprised many of her admirers. But Rekha had her reasons: she was trying to raise funds for *Rekha Chitram*—an embroidery school which she is opening on 1 October this year.

Reproduction

Shooting star

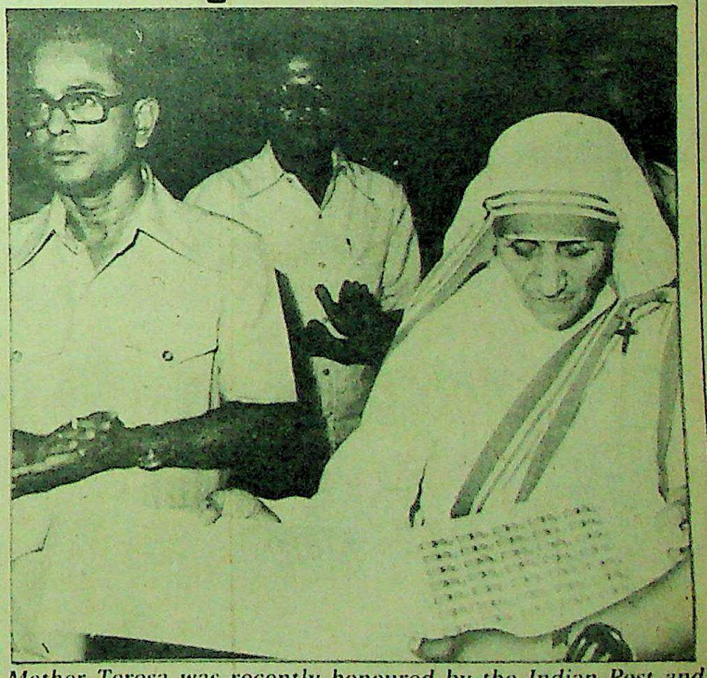
Director M. S. Sathyu is on to his next venture—*Bhoomi*—a bilingual film (in Hindi and Kannada). The film is about a young IAS officer's efforts to combat drought in Bidar, and the problems he faces in helping the drought-stricken people despite all political pressures. And guess who the actress is? Young and pretty Lavlin. This is her first venture and, as Lavlin says, "I think I have got a very good break. The film gives me good opportunity to express myself." She thinks very highly of director Sathyu. "He is a brilliant director who understands what he is doing and tries to bring out the best in the actors and actresses," she says. And what does she intend to do in the future? Said Lavlin: "I don't want to act in just any film, especially the run-of-the-mill films. I would like to choose my films instead of going totally commercial. Say, films with a specific purpose." She is off to a good start too. "I have received offers from a number of major producers and directors and I have been received very well in the industry." But about the industry itself she has many reservations. Said Lavlin: "It is a rat race, and I personally do not intend to get into it. But I'd definitely love to work in good films and maybe devote my life to acting." Lavlin has blossomed into a very good photographer too, with initial help from superstar friend Raghu Rai. In fact her first exhibition of photographs is scheduled to open in Delhi at the Art Heritage gallery from 2 October and will continue till 15 October.

RAGHU RAI

The visionary

"I wanted to be more than anybody else." And it seemed a reasonable explanation for Siddharth Kak's involvement, first with management, then with ghost-voicing and film-acting and now with journalism. In his quest to "be more than anybody else," Siddharth first came into the news by winning the *Made for Each Other* contest with his wife, Geeta. That was years ago. He returned to a quiet life, while Geeta went on to make a tremendous impact on the screen with her performance in *Garam Hawa*. But the irrepressible Siddharth has surfaced again, this time with a quarterly journal on films. The first two issues of his *Cinema Vision* bear enough evidence that this is an attempt at serious film journalism. *Cinema Vision* has been well received. Even the British Film Institute gushed: "(*Cinema Vision* is) without doubt the most important and informative Indian film magazine ever."

Stamp of dedication



Mother Teresa was recently honoured by the Indian Post and Telegraph Department when it released a stamp to commemorate her Nobel award. The picture above shows Mother receiving an album containing the stamps. On her right is West Bengal circle Postmaster General, C. L. Deb.

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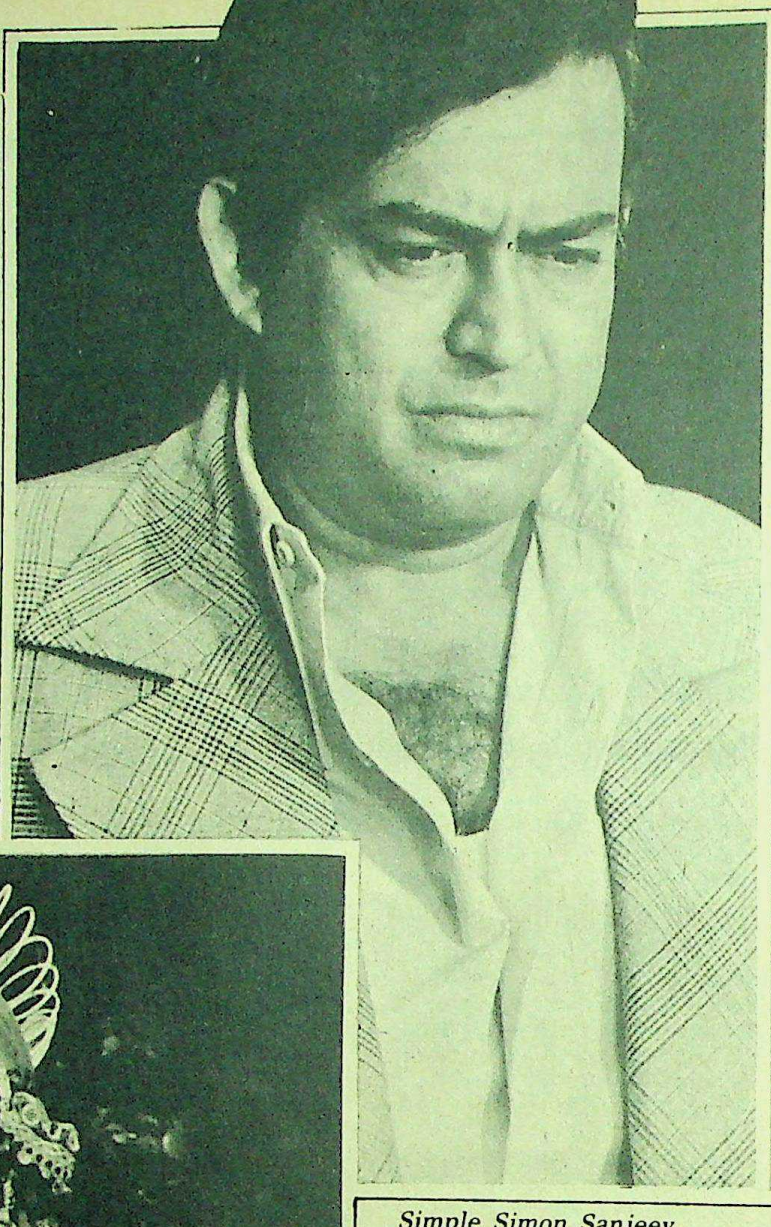
KHAS BAAT

IT'S no use putting it down to merely *Rishi Kapoor's* illness. One must admit that *Raj Kiran* is really good. Or else why would people praise his performance and say he scored over Rishi in *Karz* in spite of his small role as compared with Chintu's? And now Raj is getting films by the dozen. Recently *Yash Chopra* signed him for a film which will also launch a pretty, fresh female face. Much can be said of Raj, in spite of his tactless ways. The boy clearly nursed a Chintu-complex as he can never forget how Chintu along with *Dimple Kapadia*, broke all previous box-office records in *Bobby*. At that time Raj Kiran (also trying to be an RK!) was being groomed by *B. R. Ishara* for *Kaagaz ki Nao* with newcomer *Sarika*. The film flopped and Raj Kiran was pushed into oblivion. This happened six years ago. Now Raj is very much on his own and doing well too.



Raju Upadhyay

SPEAKING of *Raj Kiran's* tactless ways, remember the time when he was shooting for *Karz* and told anyone who cared to listen that he had a strong infatuation for a woman older than himself, *Simi*, his co-star in the film. He declared that he loved her poise, her class and what not. Well, news even went around that he was trying to woo the lady long after the film was complete and released. Nothing wrong with that except that Raj's raised many eyebrows among the filmi crowd.

THAT *Jayshree T* is madly in love—over the past so many years—with *Sanjeev Kumar* is well known. But must she advertise the fact that her dream-man must be simple, have a strong sense of humour, must be fat and round for that is what makes men large-hearted and kind—characteristics typical of Sanjeev, who is known as Simple Simon Sanjeev! Jayshree T even manages to look like *Hema Malini* with the clever touches of make-up, just to attract Sanjeev (since he is still nursing a big Hema-hangover) but getting nowhere closer to Sanjeev than an empty tiffin-carrier.

AFTER *Moushumi* declared in her typical style that she has so many sarees that she has to give them away, readers and friends have been playing all kinds of practical jokes on her. And she seems to enjoy being made a laughing-stock! Doesn't she realise that her sarees are no big deal, even if she wanted to give them away free? Yes, if it were *Raakhee* announcing an annual sale of her sarees things would have been different. There will be a stampede near her house or wherever she chooses to sack them!

WONDER if the *Dimple-Rajesh* reunion has put an end to the acrimonious battle that had begun when Dimple made the headlines by declaring that she was treated very cruelly by Rajesh Khanna. Rajesh had in turn laid bare her two-year-old affair with *Vijayendra Ghatge*, which she must have indulged in just to reassure herself of her youth and beauty. At the time of writing the two are closeted in their room at *Aashirwad* with a do-not-disturb order. Not even phone calls. So it is a happily-ever-after ending after all!

Sarika needs more exposure

Raju Upadhyay

Simple Simon Sanjeev

Raju Upadhyay

Jayshree T: Will she become Sanjeev's dream-girl?

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KHAAS BAAT

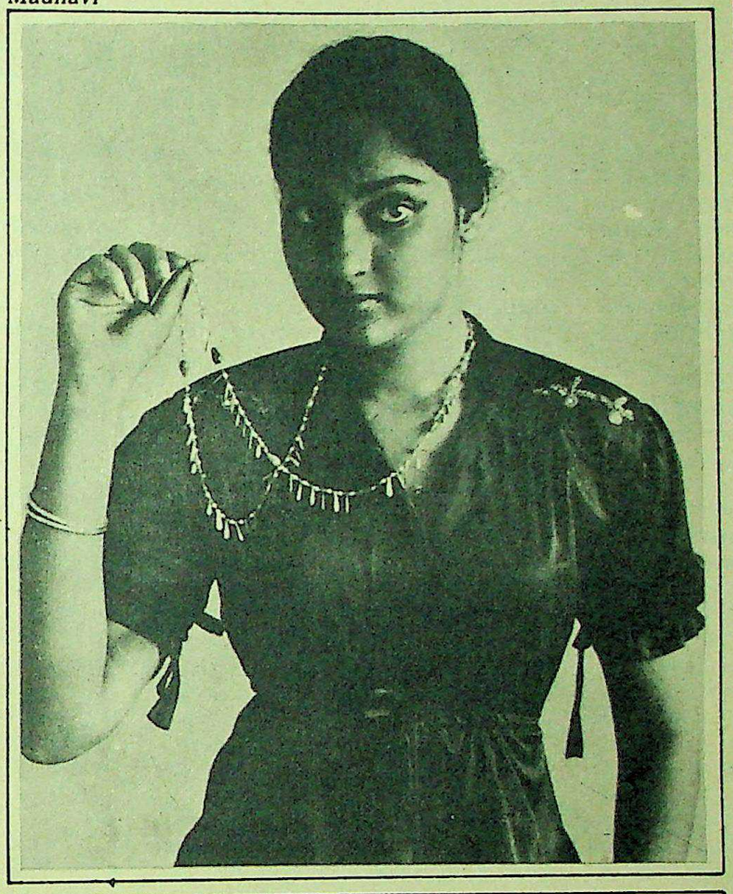
AS *RATI* will be making it big in Bombay, her brother hopes to strike gold in Madras. He's soon going to get hitched to a Tamil girl. "Tamil films mean a lot of hard work, Telugu films mean a lot of money, and Hindi films mean a lot of talk," says Rati's father Roop Agnihotri. Rati seems to agree with him. But then Hindi films also mean plenty of money, isn't it?

PREETHA'S maiden film *Thenir* about the plight of tea estate workers is almost complete. She's considered to be one of the brightest newcomers to hit the Tamil screen. It's believed that she'll soon make a film for *Bhagyaraj*, the successful actor-director.

RUMOURS are afloat that *Shoba's* mother *Prema Menon* is packing off to Singapore where a couple of her relatives, including an uncle, are settled. Her features in a popular Tamil weekly about her daughter are coming to an end. As expected the lady has gone out of her way to make innumerable slanderous comments about *Balu Mahendra*. But did she ever think that by doing so she was giving her daughter a bad name? In one of the features, she spoke at length of Shoba coming home sozzled. Shoba's co-stars as well as directors swear that she would not even touch the mildest wine. When Balu glanced through the writings, he asked a friend to convey a little message to Prema: "Write any damn thing about myself, but spare your daughter. Don't spoil her name further. Don't circulate cheap rumours about her."

BHOLI BHAALI Shoma Anand was hauled over the coals by director *I. V. Sasi*. That was *Pramod Chakravarthy's* version. Chakravarthy had commissioned Sasi to make *Patita*. a Hindi version of Sasi's all-time hit *Her Nights*. The film was originally designed as a quickie but it took more than a year to complete. Pramod says that it was all Sasi's fault: Sasi not only went around pinching Shoma you know where on the sets but also suggested that he'd make her a big star in Kerala if she could render "fayour". Shoma did one Malayalam film for Sasi where she played the second lead to *Seema*. *Arattu* flopped badly and Shoma gave up hopes of making it big in Kerala. Things started worsening after *Arattu* according to Chakravarthy. He accuses Sasi of terrorising Shoma, and of blowing up money on hard drinking. Sasi has repudiated all the allegations. Chakravarthy had no guts to make a simple realistic film and that was the beginning of a serious misunderstanding, accuses Sasi. And then, of course, this business of Shoma's forehead caused a great deal of trouble. Sasi and his cameraman thought that Shoma's forehead was terribly ugly. They wanted her to do her hair in such a way that a part of her forehead would be covered. But Chakravarthy vetoed their idea. As things stand now, *Patita* has been largely re-shot and the advertisements just don't mention Sasi's name.

Madhavi



Rati Agnihotri

AN AMERICAN hitchhiker who showed up in a couple of Tamil films, including *Kaali* had a hectic time in a city hotel where she was said to be distributing favours rather liberally. The situation became so "alarming" that the hotel management asked her to leave. A number of up-coming actors tried to have a nice time with the girl but she was a bit wary of the film crowd. "They promise you the moon, but once the passion has faded, they forget all the sweet promises," she told one of them. She didn't mind flirting with a "still" photographer. But she alienated him after she went through his pictures. "How much do you get for these pictures?" she asked him. He named a figure. "Ugh," said the girl, "if you were taking pictures in America, you'd be making a fortune." "Maybe," shot back the photographer, "but do you think that you would make millions in America?"

EXCITING things are happening in *Rati Agnihotri's* house. Brother Raakesh is going to set up a couple of fast food shops in Madras city. The emphasis will be on exotic snacks and he has plans to open up a chain of such shops all over the South in the course of the next three years. Disco music will be a permanent feature of his shops. Surely he has the young crowd in mind.

PIOUSJI

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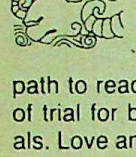
Beginning 5 October
This week the Sun, Jupiter and Saturn are in Virgo, Mercury and Uranus are in Libra, Mars and Neptune are in Scorpio, Ketu alone is in Capricorn, Rahu is in Cancer, Venus is the only planet in Leo. The Moon will be moving through Virgo, Libra and Scorpio from Leo.

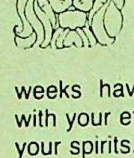


ARIES (March 21—April 20) You may have to take a loan to meet urgent expenses this week. You are advised to pursue a new path to reach your goal. This is a period of trial for businessmen and professionals. Love and matrimonial affairs are well signified. Your domestic front will also be calm and a source of happiness. There will be a marked improvement in your financial condition. Avoid disputes and speculative ventures. **Good dates:** 7, 8 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 1,3 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South-east.

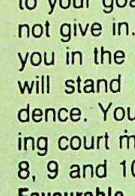
TAURUS (April 21—May 22) You will be faced with severe competition in your business or personal life. This should be met with patience and courage. You are advised to consult elderly friends and relatives. Progress will be slow in professional matters. A valuable friendship will develop. Take care while investing money. Look after your health which is bound to cause some anxiety. Try and use your initiative in business matters. **Good dates:** 6, 8 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 10. **Favourable directions** : North and East.

GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) There is a threat to your professional life this week. You are advised not to allow any member of the opposite sex to interfere with your professional work. A new friendship will provide you with a lot of confidence. Differences among partners are foreseen. Be on your guard against deceit. Avoid getting into disputes and arguments. Financially, however,this is a very good week for you. You are advised not to take too many risks. Keep a watch on your health. **Good dates:** 6,9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 1,3 and 10. **Favourable directions: North and East.**

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) You will make progress this week. Your financial condition will show a marked improvement. But you should be careful not to neglect your domestic front. Take particular care while dealing with the women of your family. Do not undertake journeys this week. Avoid extravagance. You will be required to take hasty decisions and are advised to exercise tact and discretion in this matter. Keep up your correspondence with friends. **Good dates:** 5, 6 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable directions:** West and South.



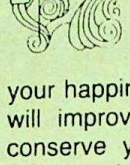
LEO (July 23 — August 22) You need plenty of rest and peace of mind this week. The results of your activities in the last few weeks have not been commensurate with your efforts. Do not let this dampen your spirits. In reality you are very close to your goal. Stand your ground and do not give in. There will be good news for you in the weeks to come. Your friends will stand by you and give you confidence. You need not worry about pending court matters and debts. **Good dates:** 8, 9 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 6. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



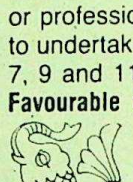
VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Despite some initial trouble this is a happy week for you. You will gain through property or legal matters or at least have the opportunity to do so. You are advised not to take undue risks. Concentrate on your plans for the future. Your domestic front may cause you some anxiety. Do not get into disputes with elders. A good week for romance and matrimonial affairs. **Good dates:** 7, 9 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 8. **Favourable direction:** South.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) You will face hurdles in your path this week. In spite of your efforts you will feel disappointed. Your health will also cause you anxiety. Be careful in your dealings with elders or those in authority. Pay attention to service details. Avoid speculative ventures. Try and meet your problems with patience. Businessmen are advised to guard against deception. A letter from an old friend or distant relative will, however, bring some good tidings. Keep an eye on your expenses. **Good dates:** 8, 10 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 2 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) You will make good and steady progress throughout this week. You will get the chance to gain through a secret matter or association. Your business will show signs of improvement. You are advised to guard against extravagance and over-optimism. Lovers, however, are likely to face new hurdles. Elders will stand in your way. The domestic front will not be too happy. **Good dates:** 5, 6 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 4. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) An old friend will render you good service this week. New interests will contribute to your happiness. Your financial condition will improve. But you are advised to conserve your resources. Medical expenditure is likely in your family. This is a good time for love and matrimonial affairs. But do not neglect your business or professional interests. You may have to undertake a short journey. **Good dates:** 7, 9 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Your associates will cause problems for you this week. They will indulge in false allegations and criticisms. But you need not worry about your domestic front. Things will move quite smoothly there. However, be careful in your dealings with your spouse or elders in the family. Do not get into controversies. This is not the right time for major changes. Love affairs are well signified. **Good dates:** 9, 10 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Many pleasant surprises are in store for you this week. It is also a good time for courtship and marriage. Care is advised in professional matters. You are also advised not to spoil your chances by impulsive decisions. Secret matters will progress well. You will get the opportunity to make appreciable and vital changes. Avoid legal matters and complications. A good time for romance. **Good dates: 5, 6 and 7. Lucky numbers:** 2, 6 and 11. **Favourable direction:** North.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This is a quiet week for you. You will make steady but not spectacular progress in all fields. You will get the opportunity to meet old friends and relatives who will be of great help to you in the weeks ahead. Pay attention to family matters. Keep up your correspondence with business or professional associates. Look after your health and be careful in your dealings with members of the opposite sex. **Good dates:** 5, 6 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 8. **Favourable direction:** East.

M. B. RAMAN

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this india

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Illustration/Ahi Bhusan Malik

KANPUR: Some 'dead' persons have also expressed their desire to take part in the liquor auctions this year and for this they had applied for the issue of solvency certificates from the Tehsil office. The 'dead' persons had submitted their applications along with the receipt of the payment of water tax and house tax of the Kanpur Nagar Mahapalika and their applications were duly verified by the oath commissioners and the notaries. The Kanpur Tehsil office had received about 150 odd applications for the issue of solvency certificates. But on physical verification, some surprising facts came to light. According to official sources, in some cases it was found that the applicant had died about six years ago and there was no property left in his name. In some other cases the addresses given in the applications were found fake. The district authorities were contemplating legal action against about two dozen such cases—*National Herald* (Anil Kumar, Fatehgarh, UP)

TIRUCHI: Trains are not supposed to wait for late comers but student leaders seem to have other ideas. This morning (2 September) the Nagore Thanjavur passenger steamed out of Ammapet but the chain in some of the bogies was pulled by students of a private college at Poondi and the train came to a halt. When the train crew wanted to know the reason for stopping the train, they were informed by the students that their leader Dinakaran missed the train at Ammapet. The train suffered a detention of about 45 minutes before Dinakaran boarded the train—*Indian Express* (Arulraj, Madras)

NEW DELHI: Two brothers, Abdul Haq and Riaz Shahid, separated during the 1947 turmoil, have found each other again after 33 years. The two brothers who lived in Sham Chaurasi village in Hoshiarpur district, were migrating to Pakistan with their parents when Abdul Haq was lost. Riaz Shahid made frantic but futile efforts to trace him. Then, by chance a Pakistani visitor met Abdul Haq now a barber in Aurangabad (Maharashtra). Abdul Haq mentioned to him the name of his brother, Riaz Shahid. Could he not be the same person as the Mayor of Faisalabad the visitor wondered. On return he found that this was so and had it confirmed through photographs obtained through the Embassy. Abdul Haq has now left for Pakistan, where he would meet his brother, old mother and other relatives, says a Pakistan Embassy release—*The Hindustan Times* (Gurinder Singh Mann, New Delhi)

MORADABAD: The Central Reserve Police force first shot a person though inadvertently and then provided blood to save his life. The person Mohammad Taufeek was found by the CRP men in a serious condition from a house in the Asalatpura locality last week. The CRP men had entered the house for a search after they were fired upon from the house. The fire was returned in which Taufeek is believed to have been hit. In the hospital where Taufeek had been admitted he had been fighting for life for want of blood. Having come to know of it 40 jawans of the CRP were sent to hospital for offering the needed blood for Taufeek. Finally the blood of Naik Sant Narain was found matching with that of Taufeek. The Naik donated his blood to save Taufeek's life—*Northern India Patrika* (Ajai Mehrotra, Allahabad)

ERNAKULAM: A lady overseer, Sosamma, was locked up in her National Highway office at the Bannerji Road for over three hours on Friday (5 September). Reason: she was a bit late in coming out of the office which was closed at 4 p.m. That the office was to have functioned till 5.30 p.m. was another matter. As she was to leave the office she found all the exits locked. Frightened she cried aloud to attract the attention of other office leavers in the same multistoreyed building. However, they found the lock unbreakable. Some of them contacted the police officers. But they were in the midst of a conference at the Collectorate. After much discussions the Ernakulam Central Police Station got the permission to break open the door. And they did it with a bang. As the harassed lady came out by eight in the night the Executive Engineer was also there. After some persuasion arrangements were made to drop her at her residence near Perumbavoor. Moral: leave the office as early as possible, lest you be locked up—*Indian Express* (K. Aravindakshan, Trivandrum)

RAIPUR: Alekhandas, a private candidate for M.A.(sociology) of Ravi Shankar University, who could not appear for the examination this year on account of illness, had a pleasant surprise to get his mark sheet showing that he had secured 187 out of a total of 400 marks and hence declared successful—*The Times of India* (Surya Deo, Patna)

without comment

Indira Gandhi may not be a queen, but she is a forceful ruler—one who quite likely could command her reluctant son to enter the corridors of power—*Newsweek*

We still have a feudal spirit. That is a fact.—Rajiv Gandhi

You can forget about colour TV—Vasant Sathe, Union I & B Minister

The Prime Minister wanted to confuse the people of Assam, but was not successful—Nibaran Bora, Assam's Gana Sangram Parishad executive committee member

India's immediate problem is not the spread of Hindi but finding food, clothing and shelter—Indian resident in USA on the impending visit of MPs, quoted in *Indian Express*

The time has come when we can no longer indulge in mutual recrimination. The time has come to hang our head in shame—Nikhil Chakravarty in *Mainstream*

Mrs Gandhi seems to be losing one of her father's most precious heritages, i.e. sensitivity to the problems of minorities—Kewal Varma in *Business Standard*

There is no doubt that the Muslims and all other minorities have greater faith in me than in anybody else—H. N. Bahuguna

Syed Abdullah Bukhari (the Imam of Jama Masjid) is now personna non-grata with the Pakistanis—*Organiser*

R. P. Mehra's anti-Muslim instincts have grown out of all proportions. His tiffs with former captain "Tiger" Pataudi were primarily based on communal disharmony—Bishen Singh Bedi in *Weekend Review*

I am not a saint. I am a politician but I am not mad after high office—Darbara Singh, Punjab CM

If you in the Press are so concerned about my health, I might tell you than I had a tummy-ache last evening—Mrs Gandhi quoted in *Current*

If taking hostages could prevent American interventions, all countries would take American diplomats hostage—Sadek Ghotbzadeh, Iranian Foreign Minister

All the young girls who come to interview me now tell me to give them something spicy or give them the liberty to manufacture something of their own. Their editors require it—Dilip Kumar interviewed in *Mid-day*

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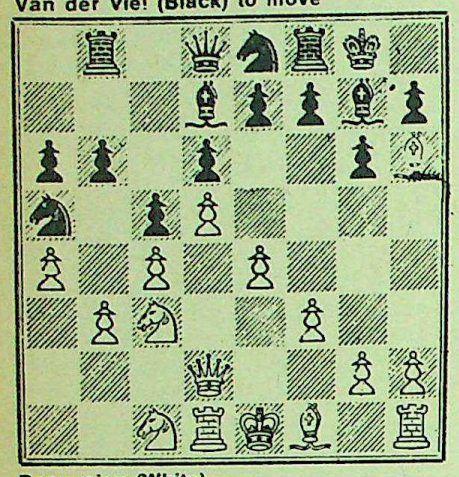
VARIETY

chess

Van der Viel (Black) to move



Rasuvajev (White)
Position after White's 14th move

Europa Cup Final

The Europa Cup, chess' equivalent of the European Cup, does not attract quite so much attention as its football equivalent, but certainly lacks none of the excitement. The final played between the Soviet champions, Burevestnik of Moscow, and the Dutch, Volmac of Rotterdam, promised to be a rather one-sided affair; a sort of Nottingham Forest versus the part-timers of somewhere-or-other who have a couple of good players but the goalkeeper is a part-time dentist and the left back runs a hairdressing salon etc., the Dutch being on paper at any rate heavily outgunned. The strength of the Moscow team could be gauged from the fact that they named ex-world champion Vassily Smyslov as their reserve for the first round. In the event the match very nearly produced a major upset, the Russians (continuing the football metaphor) only winning in extra time after scoring a last minute equaliser. Undoubted hero of the Dutch effort was their young European Champion Van der Viel who produced two sparkling wins against strong grandmasters. Barely 21, he already plays with the authority of a seasoned grandmaster and is clearly the most promising young Dutch player to emerge since Jan Timman.

I give his first-round game in which he demolishes a very strong and experienced opponent.

White: Rasuvajev (Moscow). Black: Van der Viel (Rotterdam).
Europa Cup Final., King's Indian Defence, Saemisch Variation.

1. P—Q4, N—KB3; 2. P—QB4, P—KN3; 3. N—QB3, B—N2; 4. P—K4, P—Q3; 5. P—B3, P—QR3; 6. B—K3, O—O; 7. Q—Q2, P—N3; 8. R—Q1, B—Q2. A very strange-looking move, but he could not play the intended 8. . . ., P—B4 because of 9. P x P, NP x P; 10. B x P exploiting the pin on the Q file.
9. KN—K2, 9. P—K5 was more energetic.
9. . . ., P—B4; 10. P—N3, N—B3; 11. P—Q5, N—QR4.
Here 11. . . ., N—K4 was an ambitious if dangerous alternative leading to sharp variations after 12. P—KR3 (trying to win a piece), P—QN4; 13. P—B4, P—N5! 14. N—QN1, N x KP; 15. Q—B2 (still trying to win a piece), B—B4; 16. P—N4, N—B6 mate! Better not to try and win the piece!
12. N—B1, R—QN1; 13. P—QR4, N—K1; Intending . . ., N—B2 and . . ., P—QN4.
14. B—R6? Clearly overlooking Black's reply, though he was in any case already losing the initiative.
(DIAGRAM)
14. . . ., P—K4! Very strong, for if 15. B x B, N x B Black is perfectly poised to hit back with . . ., P—KB4, so White decides to mix it.
15. P x P e.p. Q—R5+ the point.
16. P—N3, B x B; 17. P x Q, B x Q+ 18. K x B, P x P; 19. K—K3, N—QB3; 20. N(1)—K2, P—K4! With a positionally won game. The backward pawn will be masked by . . ., N—Q5.
21. N—Q5, N—Q5; 22. N x N, BP x N+; 23. K—B2, N—B3; 24. B—Q3, K—N2. Fine play. Black can improve this king's position before exchanging knights. **25. KR—N1, K—R3; 26. R—N5, N x N.** An excellent moment to exchange knights with the RN5 far away from the queenside.
27. BP x N, P—QN4; 28. P—QR5, R(N1)—QB1; 29. P—N4, R—B6; 30. R—N2, R—N6; 31. K—N3, R—QB1! Plenty of time to take the QNP.
32. R—QB2 Playing for a trick.
32. . . ., R x B; 33. R x R(8), R x R; 34. R—Q8 White's point. The bishop is trapped.
34. . . ., R—KB8; 35. K—N2, B—R6+! Black's point. The bishop is irrelevant.
36. K x B, P—Q6 and White resigned. The pawn is unstoppable.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

READERS often cast doubt on good plays attributed to well-known players. Nothing is more boring, I agree, than to see a standard brilliancy reported as though it had been achieved recently by some friend of the writer. It is a trap into which I never fall deliberately. But sometimes it is difficult not to be sceptical. See what you think of this deal, reported by *Le Bridgeur* in a feature called 'The best deals of the month.'

Dealer, South. Game all.

	♠ 6 ♥ A K 4 3 ♦ 8 7 2 ♣ A 7 6 5 4	
♠ Q 10 2 ♥ Q J 9 8 7 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ 9 8	N W E S	♠ K 9 8 7 ♥ 10 6 5 ♦ Q 4 ♣ Q J 10 2
	♠ A J 5 4 3 ♥ 2 ♦ A J 9 6 3 ♣ K 3	

South plays in Five Diamonds and West leads the Queen of hearts. In preference to making a frontal attack on the diamonds, South cashes the side winners and ruffs two spades and one heart, to arrive at this position:

	♠ — ♥ 4 ♦ 8 ♣ 6 5 4	
♠ Q 10 2 ♥ J 9 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ K ♥ — ♦ Q 4 ♣ Q J
	♠ J ♥ — ♦ A J 9 6 ♣ —	

South leads the Jack of spades, and the defence seems to have no chance to make more than two tricks. If West discards, declarer ruffs and leads a heart from dummy. East may ruff high, but South loses only to ♦ K and ♦ 10. If West ruffs the spade with ♦ 10, again he makes only one more trick.

But study the possible effect of ruffing ♠ J with the diamond *King* and exiting with a heart. East does best to discard a club. South ruffs and thinking that ♦ 10 must be on his right, leads ♦ J from AJ9. East wins and promotes his partner's trumps.

A leading French player, Daniel Versini, remarks that he made this super play of the King of diamonds at the table.

TERENCE REESE

stamps

Medieval coins are featured on four new stamps from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. One of them (above) is a silver grosso portraying Count John of Luxembourg, who in 1310 succeeded his father-in-law as King of Bohemia. After a long career as a royal mercenary, King John became blind but earned a niche in English history by fighting on the French side and dying gallantly at Crécy in 1346. There appears to be no contemporary evidence for the picturesque tradition that the Black Prince picked up the dead king's shield and claimed for himself its device of three ostrich plumes and the motto *Ich Dien*. The grosso is exceptional among 14th century coins in having a lifelike portrait of the monarch. Its English equivalent was the silver fourpence, which was known as the groat from its French contemporary the *gros tournois*, first minted at Tours about 1260. It was Edward III, the victor of Crécy, who made the groat a regular feature of the English coinage, though it had been issued briefly by his grandfather, Edward I.

C. W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. Lacrosse is the oldest organised sport in North America. What is the crosse?
2. The theory in *Philosophie zoologique* explained why giraffes have long necks and eels have no fins. Who propounded the theory?
3. Franz Liszt, the greatest piano virtuoso of his time, revolutionised the technique of piano playing and invented the 'piano recital' as it is known today. To which country did he belong?
4. What is *Vikramorvasi*?
5. Rosh Hashana is celebrated among the Jewish community with the sounding of the ram's horn and festive meals. What is Rosh Hashana?

ANSWERS

1. The implement consisting of a wooden staff with a loose network used by the players to carry and pass the ball. It derived its name from the Bishop's crozier, la crosse, in French.
2. Lamarck. His theory was that limbs and organs were fostered or eliminated by the demands of the environment.
3. Hungary.
4. A drama whose theme is the love of a mortal for a divine maiden. The second drama written by Kalidas, the outstanding master of Sanskrit literature.
5. The Jewish New Year.

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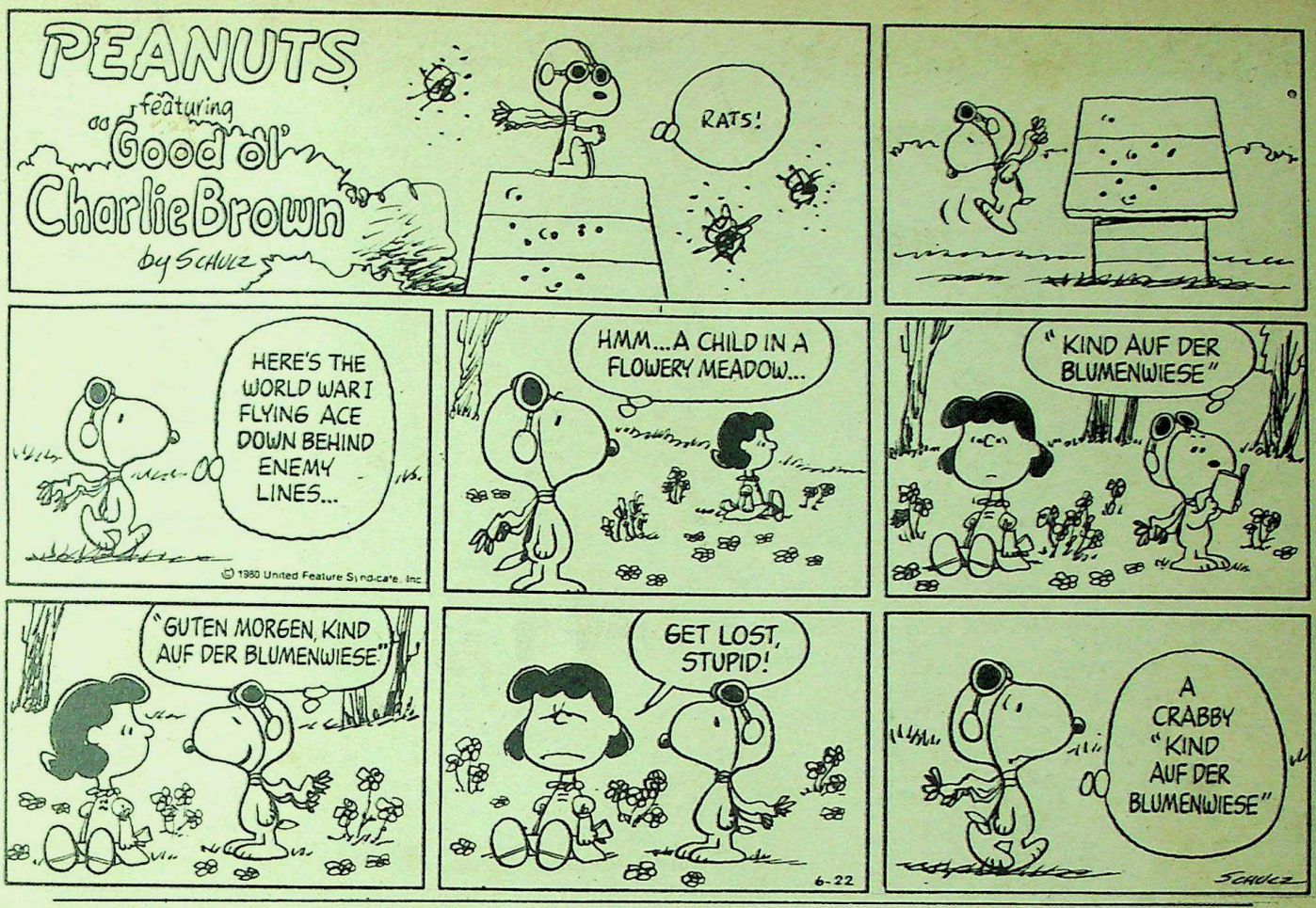

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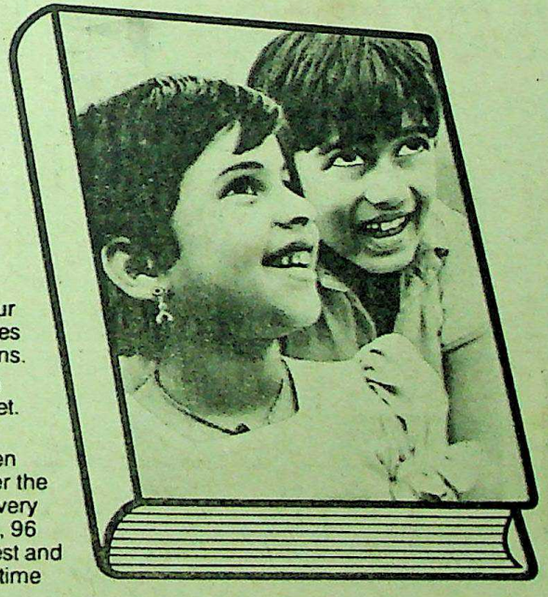

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YC(I) CIVIL WARS

On 13 September Maneka Gandhi came briefly into public focus again, after a long time, when she came out of 1, Safdarjung Road (the PM's residence) to calm the frayed tempers of an angry crowd of about 500 Youth Congress(I) activists. But this story is not really about Maneka, it is about the growing frictions in the Youth Congress(I) after Sanjay's death. A tree-planting ceremony had been organised by one of the general secretaries of the Delhi Pradesh Youth Congress(I), Satish Yadav, at Uttamnagar in rural Delhi on 13 September. The Union Minister for Agriculture Rao Birendra Singh, the Haryana Power Minister Mehr Singh Rathi, the Delhi Pradesh Congress(I) chief H. K. L. Bhagat, the Delhi Youth Congress(I) president Jagdish Tytler, the MP from outer Delhi Sajjan Kumar, and the Youth Congress(I) general secretary Sarvjit Singh were all invitees. While Mr Tytler was enjoying himself in Paris (that was where he had gone), and could therefore be excused for not turning up in the less salubrious environment of rural Delhi, none of the other VIPs turned up either to honour the memory of Mr Sanjay Gandhi. An angry Mr Yadav, who must have told all his followers that he would make all the VIPs turn up, loaded his workers into trucks and drove straight to the PM's house to protest. The truth soon came. Two Youth Congress(I) office-bearers, Rati Ram and Shadi Ram, had sent telegrams to all these invitees saying that the function had been cancelled (both of them are close lieutenants of Jagdish Tytler). Apparently this is the schoolboyish prank level to which politics has sunk in the noble city of Delhi.

COSTLY ERROR

Maneka Gandhi seems to have missed a golden opportunity to remain in the limelight. Just after her husband's death, we were told, Mrs Gandhi asked Maneka if she would like to be her official hostess, just as Mrs Gandhi was Pandit Nehru's. This was one way, Mrs Gandhi must have thought, to keep Maneka occupied after the grievous loss of her husband. Initially, Maneka was enthusiastic, but then someone gave her some poor advice and she refused the job of a "maidservant" If only Maneka had realised how powerful even a "maidservant" with access to a Prime Minister can be! Whatever the reason, Maneka missed her chance. It is also said that relations between the two daughters-in-law of the PM's household have become terrible, with the rise to power of Rajiv Gandhi.

WHISPER CAMPAIGN

A whisper campaign has been started against Foreign Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao. It is reliably learnt that Pandit Kamalapati Tripathi, Narayan Dutt Tiwari and Mir Qasim have been telling people in Delhi, including the Prime Minister that it will be better to send him to Hyderabad as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. The whisper campaign has been started at the behest of Dr Channa Reddy. It seems that Channa Reddy wants Narasimha Rao to be out of Delhi in case he is brought to the centre after being removed from the chief ministership of Andhra. That will ensure that Channa Reddy will be the seniormost Andhra leader at the centre. Moreover, if he is replaced by a senior man like Narasimha Rao at Hyderabad, it will also be a saving grace for Channa Reddy. It may be recalled that at one stage Narasimha Rao was a powerful AICC general secretary in the undivided Congress and he had been entrusted with the task of overseeing the ouster of P. R. Das Munshi and the installation of Ambika Soni as the Youth Congress chief in 1975. Narasimha Rao was quite popular as a general secretary and was entrusted with the task of drafting the Congress(I) mani esto before the Lok Sabha elections in January. His elevation to the powerful position of foreign minister must have irked his opponents in central politics and understandably they have now become natural allies of Channa Reddy.

FLYING HIGH

With a heavy heart, we return our attention to the chronicles of P. C. Sethi. It seems that this unique Minister of ours hits the headlines each time he boards an aircraft. This time it was not a puny state government plane, but a big, big jetliner of the Kuwait Airways. To begin from the beginning: Mr Sethi left on 16 September for a marathon tour to Kuwait, Rome, Tripoli, London, Geneva, Zurich and Baghdad, accompanied by his wife. There is nothing wrong in a Minister going abroad; they go all the time. There is nothing wrong in a Minister's wife going with him, although wives do not accompany Ministers all the time. But what has raised eyebrows is that Mr Sethi has broken tradition by choosing not to fly Air India, our national carrier.

Normally any representative of the government whose expenses are being met out of the public exchequer travels by Air India unless the airline does not fly to the particular city he or she has to visit. But Mr Sethi took an 'open' ticket from Air India, which entitles him to fly by any airline which has a reciprocal arrangement with Air India. And his first lap was done by Kuwait Airways, despite the fact that Air India flies there. Why was the rule broken for Mr Sethi? And why does Kuwait figure twice in Mr Sethi's itinerary, once while going and the other while coming back?

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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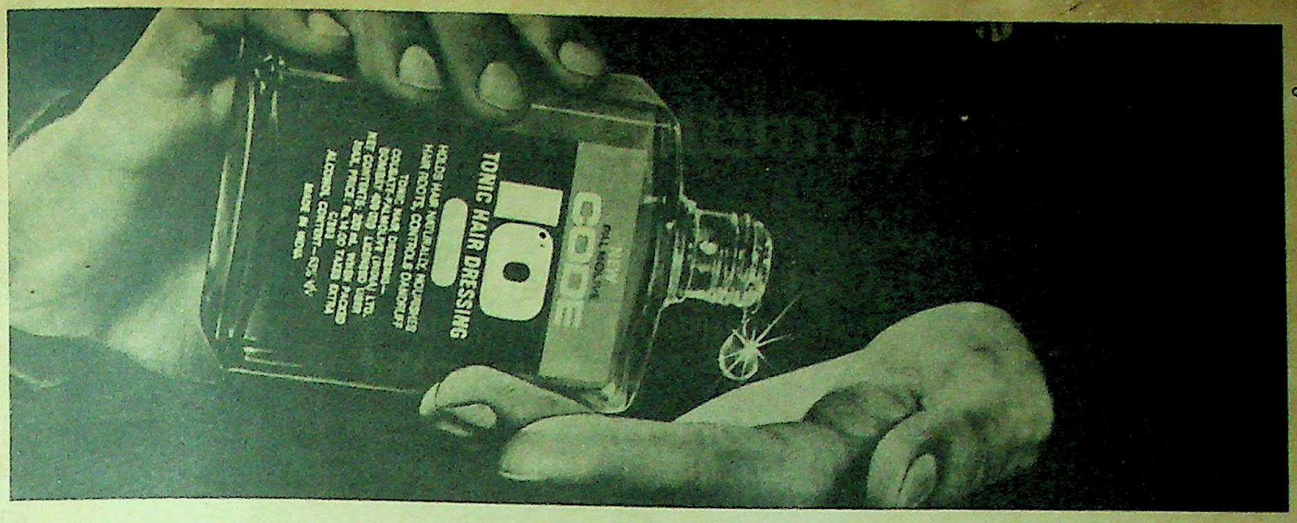

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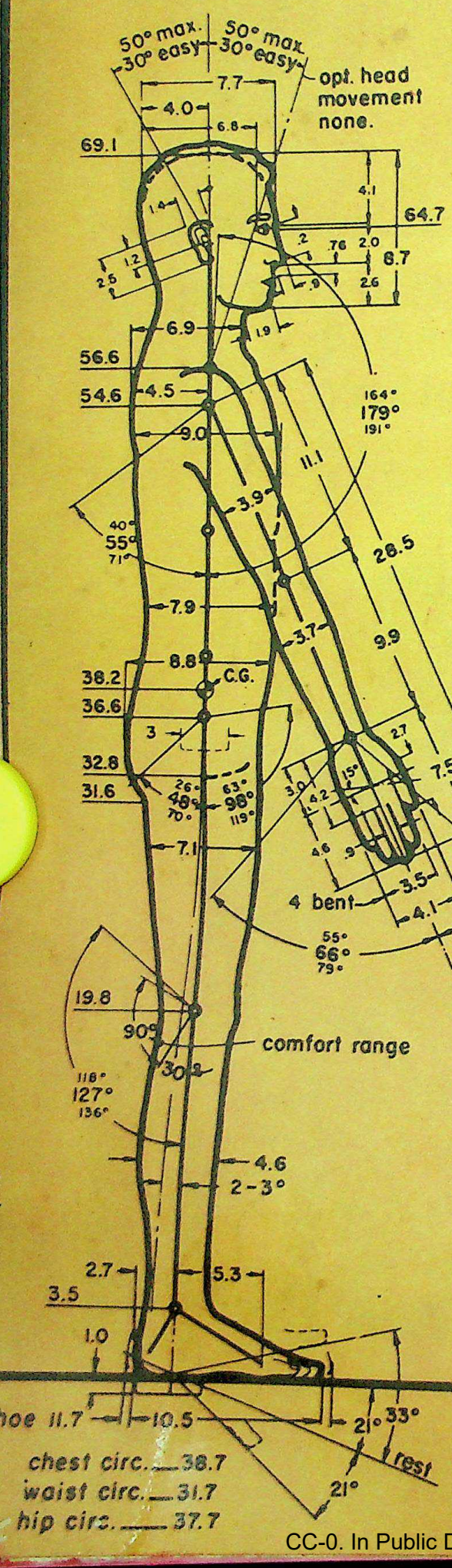

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A PUBLICATION OF ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION RS 2

SUNDAY

THE IMF'S REAL TERMS

BY KULDIP NAYAR

Will Rajiv Gandhi be education minister?

Bihar CM Jagannath Mishra displaying piety

The Exotic Ruling Family of Bihar

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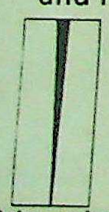

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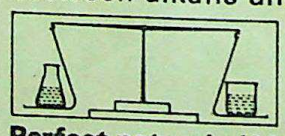

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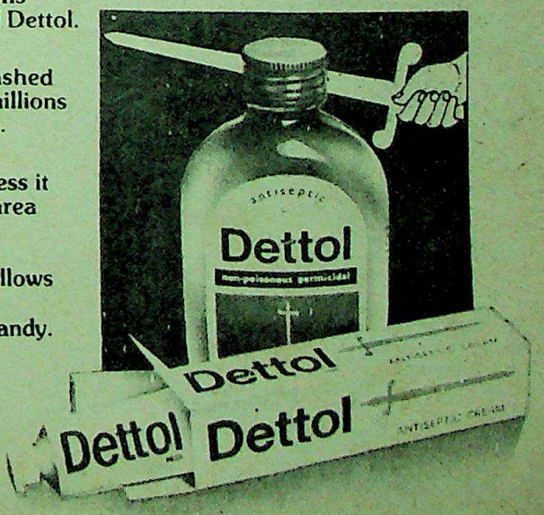

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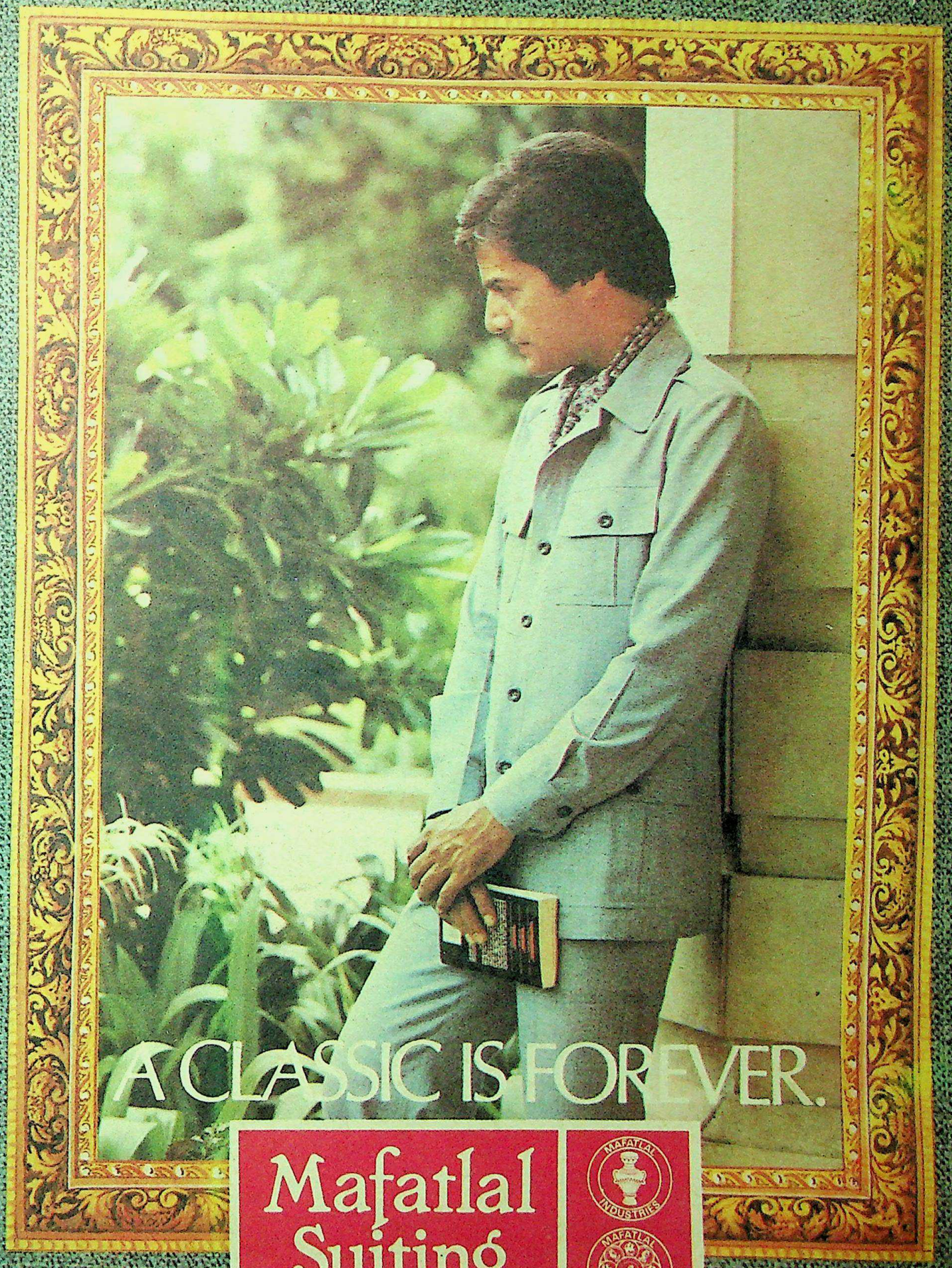

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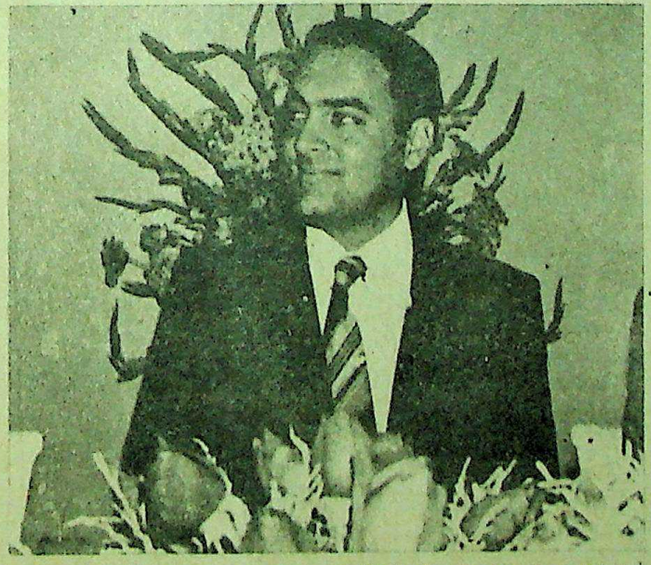
SUNDAY VOLUME 9. ISSUE 13 RS 2 AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

September 13, 1981

Bihar chief minister Dr Jagannath Mishra's 14-year-old son informs anxious, waiting ministers about the cabinet reshuffle. Dr Mishra ignores a judge's strictures and withdraws a case against himself. Under the CM's "tolerant" gaze a Congress(I) MLA attacks a church and loots its belongings. And nobody in Patna dare question either the CM's or his family's authority. SUNDAY publishes another story of misrule. Page 12

Lenient laws, corrupt police and officials and easy avallability of drugs have made India a haven of both drug addicts and traffickers. Drugs pour in from the Golden Crescent and find their way West through India. Madhu Jain reports. Page 44

Since Mrs Gandhi came to power in 1980, the CPI(M)-led Left Front government in West Bengal has been haunted by the constant fear of being toppled. Will Mrs Gandhi allow the CPI(M) to continue in office till the end of its term? Probably not. Page 28



Is Mrs Gandhi going to appoint son Rajiv the next union minister for education? If she does, Mr "Clean" Rajiv Gandhi will stake his political reputation on salvaging the controversial Asian Games. Page 20

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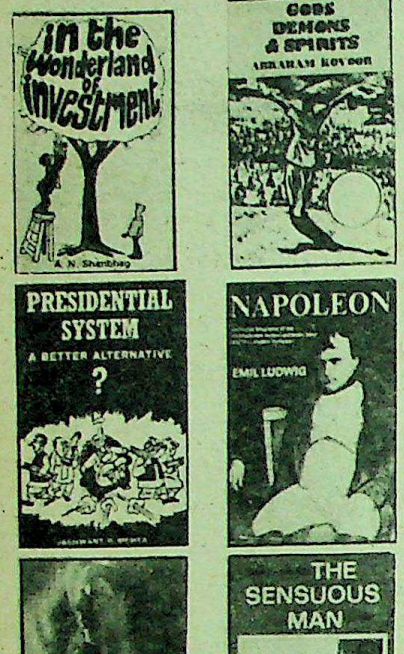

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Eleven steps to IMF temple

India, a founder-member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), can draw, from the Fund, upto eight billion dollars as loan on the basis of its contribution. However, New Delhi has preferred to apply for five billion dollars (Rs 4,500 crores)—but this is the largest loan ever considered by the IMF board.

The loan application will be formally discussed at the board meeting in October. By then, the terms and conditions would have been finalised. A team from the finance ministry, under the leadership of Mr R. N. Malhotra, economic affairs secretary, is leaving Delhi for Washington on 19 September for the purpose. Mr Narasimhan, who should have joined as finance secretary by now, has stayed back in Washington to participate in these discussions. Mr Venkataraman, finance minister, who is going to the Bahamas to attend the Commonwealth finance ministers' conference, will visit Washington either on his outward journey or on his return to talk to the IMF officials who are preparing a brief for the board meeting.

The central cabinet has already given its general approval to the conditions, which are still a closely-guarded secret, tagged to the availability of loan. But it will depend on the team how much ground, if any, it can retrieve during the discussions at Washington. The conditions grouped under eleven points are: 1. Ceiling on deficit financing; 2. Tighter control on money supply; 3. Removal or liberalisation of price controls so that domestic prices are determined by market forces (this would serve as an incentive for higher investment and larger production in the private sector); 4. Removal of administered prices in the public sector so that the need for budgetary support to loss-making undertakings goes down; 5. Revision of power tariffs so that the investments in the power sector get a reasonable return; 6. Measures towards conserving energy; 7. Removal of subsidiaries to the extent possible; 8. More incentives for higher investment in the public sector—a review of the country's internal investment programme; 9. Tax reforms and better tax administration so that tax revenues go up; 10. Improvement in the performance of infrastructural facilities so that production in the core sectors of the economy, including agricul-

Self-reliance and *swadeshi* could take the country out of the helpless position it is in, but the elitist and ad hoc approach of Mrs Gandhi's government will necessitate a bigger and bigger begging bowl every year

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ture, goes up (this is meant to reduce the foreign exchange imbalance); and 11. Measures to step up imports (the formation of the Export-Import Bank should help).

The IMF has not asked for the devaluation of the rupee because of its political implications and also because of the tie-up of the rupee to a basket of currencies which virtually gives it a floating exchange rate.

The conditions dictated to New Delhi are in addition to a IMF questionnaire running into some 45 pages seeking information on all vital sectors of India's economy, including the budgetary data for the centre, the states and union territories.

Some of the information furnished to the IMF is not available even to MPs because it is classified. One such question is on oil: "Please provide data on import, output, consumption and year-end stocks (both for fiscal and calendar year) for crude oil and different petroleum products (including kerosene, fuel oil, furnace oil, gasoline, diesel and naptha) for five year period... Please provide projections for 1982 and 1983... Please provide data on production from Bombay High oilfields as well as onshore oilfields in 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981 (estimates)... Please provide a summary of the measures that are currently in effect to conserve petroleum and to encourage the substitution of other energy sources such as coal."

The question on industry is indeed comprehensive. "Please provide a note on the current situation in the major industries in terms of output, stocks of finished, changes in capacity and the rate of capacity utilisation... Please provide data on the output of public sector enterprises (for five years)... Please describe the principal production control regulations governing major industries and the changes in these regulations during five years and their rationale."

There are hordes of questions on agriculture. "Please list the changes made during 1978, 1979 and 1980 in the domestic procurement system for foodgrains including procurement prices and the public distribution system. Please provide details of the Food For Work programme and the progress of the programme since its inception in 1979. In particular, please indicate amounts and types of foodgrains distributed, nature of public works undertaken... Please give data on unit costs of the foodgrain procurement, storage, and issue operations, showing how these have changed owing to, a) the increased size of the buffer stock, b) wastage because of inadequate storage facilities, and c) changes in pricing and distribution policy."

For reasons best known to it, the IMF has also asked: "Please furnish the following information with respect to the Additional Emoluments (Compulsory Deposit) Act and the Compulsory Deposit Scheme (Income Tax Payers) Act by revising and updating the answer to question given earlier: A) Disaggregated data on cumulated deposits under the separate facilities of these acts in 1978-1979; 1980-81 and 1981-82; B) A schedule of repayment of principal and interests for 1978-79 and 1979-80 and 1980-81 and 1981-82; C) A quantitative assessment of the addditional amount of compulsory deposits that would have been collected in the past two years, and an estimate for 1980-81 and 1981-82 if the CDS on one half of additional DA had not been abolished; D) A quantitative assessment of the effect in 1978-79, 1979-80, 1980-81 and 1981-82 of the changes, introduced in the budget for 1978-79 in the required deposit for tax payers in various income categories; and E) A note on any other major changes in the scheme since 1978-79, such as changes in the interest rate paid on deposits, changes in the method of repayment etc."

India's foreign exchange revenues now stand around Rs 3,600 crores. With an expenditure of Rs 150 crores a month on imports, it has no escape from borrowing from the Fund which, to quote a finance ministry official, "is behaving worse than a bank." Self-reliance and *swadeshi* could take the country out of the helpless position it is in, but the elitist and ad hoc approach of Mrs Gandhi's government will necessitate a bigger and bigger begging bowl every year.

Some of the information given to the IMF is not available even to MPs because it is classified. One such question is oil... According to a finance ministry official, the IMF is behaving worse than a bank

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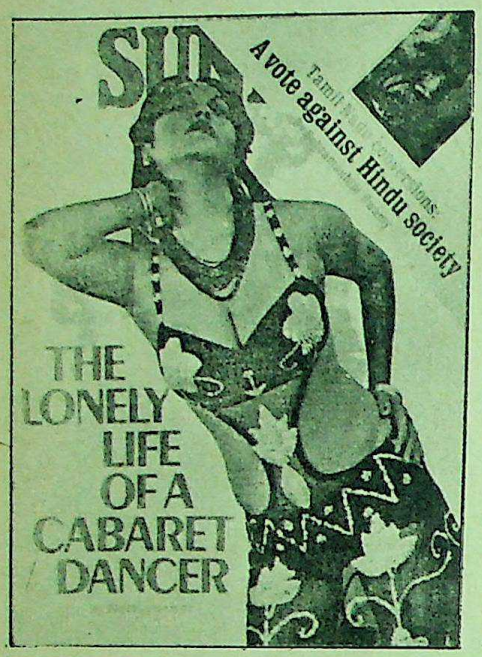

Revealing

In his otherwise beautifully clueless cover story, *The lonely life of a cabaret dancer* (16 August), Mr Pritish Nandy has mentioned an aunt of mine who frequents seedy north Calcutta theatres in order to glimpse snatches (sic) of female nudity in the hope that she will one day be exposed to the real thing. This is correct. However, there is something he does *not* mention. About a month back, my poor aunt suffered a serious trauma. Sitting there, surrounded by devilled eggs and vegetable chops, she saw something stark naked prancing around on the stage. Imagine her horror when she recognised the person who was billed as that night's 'sexpot-of-sin' as none other than old Mr Nandy's emaciated uncle!

At the time of writing, my aunt has eloped with this ersatz and lives a life of sin of her own with him.
Mukul Sharma, Calcutta

The cover story was informative; thanks to Mr Nandy.
T. K. Pattnaik, Calcutta

Mr Nandy's article was sheer poetry.
Prasanna Kumar Mohanty, Bhubaneswar

Titillating and informative; thank you, Mr Nandy.
Syed Humayun Siraj, Bangalore

Fortunately, Mr Nandy is not one of those sex-starved people who satisfy their lust by patronising cabaret shows; he has probed into the life of cabaret dancers and given us a heart-rending story.
Surinder Pal, New Delhi

The way Mr Nandy's cover story was presented, it may not have attracted the serious readers' attention; but the article by itself was quite revealing.
Shefalee Sengupta, Katihar (Bihar)

Pritish Nandy has succeeded in arousing sympathy for the hapless cabaret girls.
Shirsanka Ghosh, Calcutta

It is a pity that cabaret girls are looked down upon by the very people who ogle at them on the dance floors.
R. B. Thapa, Sonamura (Tripura)

It was very disheartening to learn that most cabaret dancers took to their profession merely to earn a livelihood.
Biswajit Roy, Dehra Dun

It seems that only Miss J is unhappy with her profession; she is best advised to come to terms with life and her surroundings.
Sanjay Kumar Mandal, Burdwan

No one can deny the popularity of cabaret in our country and it is time that it is recognised and respected as a profession.
P. Nagender Reddy, Aurangabad

It was a pleasure to read the cover story; I wonder why we have only female cabaret dancers; why can't men perform in the nude or semi-nude for the benefit of female audiences?
Shailesh Kumar Koachgaway, Pathardih (Bihar)

My Nandy's article was disjointed, unimaginative and full of digressions.
Kiran Raivadera, Calcutta

While appreciating the cover story I cannot help observing that the photographs with it were both unnecessary and disgusting.
Samarendranath Mohapatra, Puri

The loneliness of a cabaret dancer's life could have been conveyed without the help of revealing photographs.
Mona Bose, Kharagpur

The cover story was merely an excuse to publish yet another series of semi-nude photographs.
Amit Kumar Sen, Calcutta

One has to think twice before buying SUNDAY these days.
Waheed Siddiqui, Rani Unchegaon (Maharashtra)

In my opinion, SUNDAY is the best national weekly; it is a pity that it has gone wayward.
Omprakash G. Methi, Gondia (Maharashtra)

Cabaret is nothing short of vulgarity and SUNDAY should have nothing to do with it or its exponents.
Syed Hamidul Haque, Chaibasa

I was disappointed with the cover story; it was dull, to say the least.
Biswajit Sen Gupta, Jalpaiguri

Mr Nandy had nothing new to tell us about cabaret dancers and the photographs with his article were stale. What a bore.
M. K. Harish, Cannanore (Kerala)

The hawker folded the 16 August issue of SUNDAY before handing it to me.
Sunil Bikas Banerjee, Sodepur (West Bengal)

SUNDAY is trying to compete with *Playboy* and *Penthouse*; as for Mr Nandy's cover story, the less said the better.
Subhas Chandra Mishra, Vanivihar (Orissa)

Mr Nandy was at it again; but this time he could not draw his readers' sympathy either for himself or for cabaret dancers.
Sandip Sanyal, Cuttack

Mugshots of cabaret dancers would have been enough to illustrate the point which Mr Nandy has tried to make.
Radhakrishna Khatavkar, Bangalore

Hyderabad riots: a biased view

Before reading Syed Majeedul Hasan's *Communal killers take over Hyderabad* (9 August) I was under the impression that SUNDAY believes in the truth; but now I am convinced that the magazine follows an anti-Hindu policy.
K. Rajagopalan, Hyderabad

I wonder why Mr Hasan failed to mention even a single Majlis leader in his report. He also chose to overlook the fact that nowadays in Hyderabad the Muslims assemble in mosques to plan riots.
G. P. Reddy, Hyderabad

Mr Hasan has failed to give a balanced account of the communal riots in Hyderabad. While referring to the RSS and the Arya Samaj he has made no mention of the Majlis leaders who delivered highly communal and provocative speeches after the *jumma* prayers in the month of *ramzaan*.
Dinesh Chandra Sharma, Hyderabad

Mr Hasan should know that the playing of drums and trumpets is part of the Bonalu festival; it isn't meant to hurt the feelings of any particular community. He should also realise that by tracing the history and popularity of the Majlis-e-Ittehaad-ul-Muslimeen (MIM) he cannot wash away the sins of this organisation.
Prakash Joshi, Sibsagar

I was shocked by the report. Many Hindus lost their lives as well; Mr Hasan should have mentioned at least some of them.
Syed Iqbal, Secunderabad

It is wrong to say that Mr Vandemataram Ramachandra Rao as chairman of the AP Official Languages Commission had threatened to "throw out the Muslim employees from government offices if they did not pass the Telugu language tests soon." Mr Rao made a sincere effort to replace English with Telugu in the state and was of the opinion that disciplinary action should be taken against those government employees who did not use Telugu in official correspondence.
B. V. Rao, Peddapally (Andhra Pradesh)

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A Swamy for harijans

If *Tamil Nadu conversions: a vote against Hindu society* (16 August) is any indication then Dr Subramaniam Swamy has certainly changed his political views. Gone are the days when he behaved like a Hindu chauvinist; he is now a seasoned politician with a secular and pragmatic outlook. Self-criticism is no mean achievement and Dr Swamy should be praised for his article directed against a society to which he belongs.

In my opinion, the harijans of Tamil Nadu had no choice but to convert to Islam; the talk about Arab petro-dollars and coercion playing a dominant role in the conversions can hardly be believed. The rot has set into Hindu society and we need people like Dr Swamy (not Vajpayee and Madhok) to stem it.
Bimalendu S. Dutta Roy, Cuttack

Dr Swamy's was a brilliant and perceptive report; thank God we have at least one politician who can call a spade a spade.
Rizwana Akhtar, Cuttack

Thanks to Dr Swamy for his brilliant article.
Maswood Akhtar Rahi, Rourkela

Congratulations to Dr Swamy for exploding the myth that the conversions in Tamil Nadu were procured and that social discrimination against harijans played no part whatsoever.
Md Abdar Ali Gazi, South Akhratala (West Bengal)

Dr Swamy deserves to be thanked for his unbiased attempt to find the cause behind the conversions. The caste Hindus have given nothing to the harijans. Why shouldn't the harijans embrace another faith which promises them peace if nothing else?
Gautam Talukdar, Pecharthal (Tripura)

I cannot understand why the conversions have become such a sensitive issue; surely the harijans of Tamil Nadu have not renounced their citizenship.
Manjur Ahmad, Udarbond (Assam)

The politicians who never bothered about the atrocities against harijans in the past are now making a beeline for Meenakshipuram.
Syed Muthahar Saquaf, Trichy

It is obvious that Islam promises a better life to the harijans. What a shame for us Hindus.
Prafulla Kumar Patsani, Puri

The *Special report* by Dr Swamy was excellent.
John L. Lobo, Bombay

It is heartening to know that an ex-RSS man has ruled out the theory of foreign money and force playing an important part in the conversions. If nothing else, the caste Hindus should now atone for their sins against harijans.
M. Hafizullah Khan, Bhopal

Dr Swamy's article exposed the disease which has been eating into the very core of our society.
Bapi Chakraborty, Calcutta

It would be appreciated if more articles like the one by Dr Swamy are published in future; only then will the caste Hindus change their attitude towards harijans. As for the conversions, I am convinced that the harijans have embraced Islam to take revenge on the caste Hindus who they now regard as *kafirs*.
Krishna Samaddar, Delhi

Life has become more meaningful for the harijans of Meenakshipuram; why is this being considered intolerable?
Md Parvez Siddique, Calcutta

When harijans were murdered, their huts burned and womenfolk humiliated in Belchi and Pipra, where were the Swamys and the Vajpayees? When a harijan MLA from Andhra Pradesh was thrown out of Mantralaya temple by a brahmin priest why did the Shankaracharyas not shed tears? Why this sudden concern for harijans from all and sundry?
Rajan Cherian, Hyderabad

Dr Swamy has failed to provide concrete reasons for the conversions. His article was replete with self-praise; he has made an attempt to portray himself as the saviour of the downtrodden. Far from doing anything in the past to better the lot of the scheduled castes, Dr Swamy now wonders whether "the whole country is up for purchase." He conveniently forgets that it is he who has been purchased by foreign education; the poor man did not know that there were so many people living in misery in India.
Ashok S. Savanur, Solapur

Both the Hindus and the Muslims have exploited the harijans in the past; I see no sense in the recent conversions.
Baidya Nath Mandi, Kharagpur

Good news

SUNDAY would have done great service to the country by reporting on journalist Olga Tellis' petition filed in the Supreme Court to restrain the Bombay civic authorities from evicting pavement dwellers in that city. The national dailies have hardly done justice to this news: only a few inches of 'valuable' space have been spard for Ms Tellis.
A. W. M. Shafquat Aligarh

It is heartening to learn that a journalist from the house which publishes SUNDAY has challenged the government of Maharashtra: obviously, Olga Tellis is not satisfied with mere reporting on injustices.
A. S. Raman, Lucknow

Misplaced fires

The information about the Central Bank of India building under *Must our cities burn?* (16 August) was incorrect. To begin with, the building caught fire in the early hours of 3 January 1974 and not as reported. Further, the building is situated on Calcutta's Netaji Subhas Road, not on BBD Bagh.
T. C. Katrack, Calcutta

The Shantinath Silk Mill in Surat was not gutted; the photograph on page 19 showed the damage done to the mill when an illegally-constructed, three-storeyed building collapsed on it.
Y. J. Vasavada, Navasari

Misleading report

Anil Saari has unnecessarily dragged my name into his report, *There were no conversions in Kanpur on 15 August* (30 August). Indeed, there were no conversions in Kanpur on 15 August; so the question of my presence does not arise. I strongly believe that religion is purely a personal matter and should never be mixed up with politics.
Arif Mohammad Khan, MP, New Delhi

It is surprising that a magazine like SUNDAY has published a thoroughly misleading report by Anil Saari. To put the record straight, we, the undersigned, spent 15 August with Mr Arif Mohammad Khan, MP; together we attended many functions in different parts of Kanpur. And nowhere did anything happen which could be described as conversions. What was conspicuous was the fact that the harijans had joined the others to celebrate independence day. As for the congregation at Nanarao Park, we would like to point out that barely fifty people had assembled there, not 5,000 as reported.
Bhudhar Narain Mishra, MLA, and Rajendra Prasad Mishra, city Youth Congress (I) president, Kanpur

We apologise for the error.—Editor

Utkal: above board

Tooshar Pandit's reply to the letter from Mr R. K. Rout, vice-chancellor of Utkal University, was childish. He seems to have no concrete evidence to prove his allegations against Utkal University.
Deboo Patnaik, Bhubaneswar

I am sure that Mr Pandiit has made a mistake in listing Utkal University among the ten other universities which, he claims, are involved in the degree racket.
S. K. Mohanty, Sindri (Bihar)

Effective and shameful

People like Hitler and Idi Amin did figure on the covers of widely-circulated international magazines, but no one ever tried to glorify them or their deeds. Anil Saari is an exception; his cover story, *Did Ranga Kill?* (19 July), was shameful. Worse of course was some of the readers' response to the report (*Opinion*, 16 August). It is clear that Mr Saari has succeeded in mobilising some support for a criminal. What a shame.
R. C. Pande, New Delhi

Last letter

I pass my mornings with Khushwant Singh's porno daily in one hand and M. J. Akbar's porno weekly in the other.
Sukracv Banerjee, New Delhi

Rs 50 for the last letter

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COVER STORY

The Exotic Ruling Family of Bihar

Power has not gone to Dr Jagannath Mishra's head, it has only gone to his family, report TOOSHAR PANDIT and TIRTHANKAR GHOSH.

One of the most pervasive sounds in the house of Dr Jagannath Mishra is the sound of bells tinkling. This is the sound of devotion to the gods, the sound of bells during a *puja*. Dr Jagannath Mishra, the chief minister of Bihar is a very religious man. He prays to the gods constantly to bring him and his family health, wealth and happiness; he wears half a dozen rings on the fingers to ward off all evils. And the gods have been kind. They have made him the boss of Bihar—a state of being which may not be necessarily very good for the health, but certainly fetches enough wealth and happiness.

Bihar: second only to the vast Uttar Pradesh in the number of MPs sent to the Lok Sabha; the richest state in the country in terms of raw materials, resources, and the poorest state in terms of the living standards of the people. Therefore a state classically ready for corruption, exploitation. A state where gun-toting dacoits run the coalfields, and other kinds of dacoits loot in other ways; a state where corruption no longer arouses any comment. A state in which there is a city called Bhagalpur, where as everyone now knows, the police gouged out the eyes of suspects with needle and acid in order to curb crime. Under the chief ministership of Dr Mishra. Who calmly weathered the national storm that arose, and now has withdrawn the suspension of all the police officers involved. In other words, not one of the policemen has been punished for the Bhagalpur blindings.

Under the chief ministership of Dr Jagannath Mishra, law is an unimportant encumbrance, and order is only what Dr Mishra and his cronies define it to be. How can there be respect for law under a CM who makes one of his closest advisers and ministers a man called Sadanand Singh who openly protects a murderous dacoit called Sudama Mandal, a dacoit whom the police had been searching for (SUNDAY, 21 December 1980)? How can there be respect for law in a state where the CM withdraws a case against himself despite the judge having clearly implied that to do so would be a travesty of justice (see box on the Patna Urban Cooperative Bank case, page 18)? And on top of it, Dr Mishra has brought in nepotism and casteism to a degree that even weary Bihar cannot find a parallel to. Key positions have gone to his relatives (see box, page 14), choice contracts have gone to his brothers (see box, page 14) and any glimpse into a Who's Who of those who really run the state would reveal a surprising proportion of people belonging to the caste that Dr Mishra comes from—the Maithili Brahmins.

Son Manish: display of power

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Dr Jagannath Mishra comes from a rich and influential family in Saharsa. His father, Rabinandan Mishra alone owned over 2,000 acres of land in Baluabazar. Of his five sons, two joined politics: L.N. Mishra of course gained national prominence before dying in a controversial bomb blast, and then younger brother Jagannath Mishra, till then a teacher in a university stepped in to fill the vacuum. The Mishras are still monarchs at Baluabazar, though the land ceiling act may have reduced the amount of land they control. Incidentally, whatever love Dr Mishra may profess for the poor landless agricultural workers of Bihar when making speeches, that love is not visible when the Mishras pay the daily labour who work on their land. Despite Rs five a day being declared the minimum wage, there are many working in the Mishra farms who are rarely paid more than Rs two a day. And there are many who have to toil in these farms as bonded labour for the rest of their lives because of a loan.

Three brothers, Shyam, Mrityunjoy and Kamal, look after the family property, and, also, execute lucrative government contracts. Baluabazar is next to the famous Kosi river, and the multi-million rupee Kosi river project has been a boon not only to the people at large but to the Mishras in particular. An Estimates Committee of the Bihar Assembly found in early 1973 that a large number of the contracts for this project had gone either to the Mishras or their nominees: among the major beneficiaries were two Mishra brothers, Shyam Narayan and Kamal Narayan. First it was obviously L.N. Mishra's influence that was bringing in the lolly, and then in the early Seventies, Dr Jagannath Mishra too became a powerful man in Bihar. In all the governments that Dr Mishra has been in since 1972, either as cabinet minister or chief minister, he has never let go of the irrigation and power portfolio. It is an interesting affection for that particular job: after all, the contracts for projects like the one at Kosi go out from there.

After Dr Mishra became chief minister this time around, one of his brothers Mrityunjoy, was made a director of the Bihar State Co-operative Marketing Union (BISCOMAUN). When the Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad was reconstituted this year, one of the country's foremost protagonists of Hindi, Mr Gangasaran Singh, was dropped and among the new blood inducted was Jainath Jha, who just happens to be Dr Mishra's father-in-law. Dr Mishra has placed a blood relative even in a key post of the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee—the secretary, Sudhir Mishra.

Even 14-year-old Manish, the young son of Dr Mishra, is enjoying the *zamindari* of Bihar that has descended on the family. He can often be seen being chauffeur-driven around Patna—with the official flag flying on the car; only chief ministers are entitled to that privilege, not their sons. Indeed, when Dr Mishra reshuffled the portfolios of his ministers on 26 August, it was Manish whocame into the drawing room crowded with anxious ministers wanting to know what their new jobs would be, and handed them the information about what his daddy had done.

Such is the common belief that everything that happens to the Mishra family is tainted with nepotism, that there was a serious controversy even when Dr Mishra's daughter came second in her BA economics honours examinations this year. Sangeeta Mishra sat for her examinations this year at Patna University, but long before the examinations the president, Mr Anil Kumar Sharma, and Mr Premchandra Sinha, the secretary of the university's students' union had predicted that she was going to do very well indeed in her examinations. On what basis were they making this allegation? They said that the examiners and the papersetters for that year were all indebted to Dr Mishra. For instance, the moderator, Prof. Chakradhar Singh, not only came from Dr Mishra's area but had also sat on numerous boards and committees thanks to Dr Mishra. Today he is not only director of the state-funded L.N. Mishra Academy for Economic Development but also a member of the state planning commission. Another examiner, Bansidhar Sinha, had been appointed member of the state electricity board by Dr Mishra when he first became the CM in 1975.

Even more serious was the charge that the university was bending its rules in order to please the chief minister. The practice in Patna University has been to get at least three of the six honours papers set by people from universities outside Bihar, and they also examine the answer sheets. This year this laudable practice was not followed. Why?

In July, Sharma was arrested on some unspecified charges. It was August before he got out on bail. By then the results had been announced. The chief minister's daughter had indeed done very well in her examinations: she had come second (immediately the whisper went round that Dr Mishra had deliberately asked the examiners not to make her first as then the rigging would become too obvious). Equally interesting was the fact that all the relatives and well-wishers of the key people in charge of the examinations had done well too Tongues started wagging; pressure began to build. Finally the vice-chancellor gave in by announcing the appointment of a committee to probe into this year's examination. This story does not make Dr Mishra guilty, nor does it prove that his daughter did not do well on her own merits: what it does convey is the mood of Bihar, where people are quite willing to believe that their chief minister would stoop so low without a qualm. Indeed, there are people who even believe that Dr Mishra got his own doctorate a bit unfairly, but that's another story. Certainly Dr Mishra has done a great deal for his old teacher who guided him in his thesis, Dr Hargovind Singh. He was first made member of the Bihar Public Service Commission, then vice-chancellor of Magadh University. Dr Mishra actually issued an ordinance when he wanted to make Dr Singh director of the A. N. Singh institute in Patna, because Dr Singh did not qualify for that post. The ordinance kicked up a great deal of controversy, so Dr Mishra made Singh a member of the Legislative Council instead.

Dr Mishra: of rings and relatives

Today, Dr Mishra runs Bihar singlehandedly, virtually as a fiefdom, not tolerating much discussion or debate. The reshuffle was an indication that he had begun to hear the growing cries of dissident charges; but he also was sending out the message that he wasn't finished yet.

Not merely the corruption (the stories give enough evidence of that) and nepotism, but administrative incompetence is taking its toll. The worst example was the government's handling of the Biharsharif riots (SUNDAY 24 May 1981): an obviously angry Mrs Gandhi had to personally fly down from Delhi and use her authority and popularity to restore calm. The chief minister of Bihar was fiddling while Biharsharif burnt.

It is believed that Dr Mishra survives only because of Mrs Gandhi's reluctance to change her chief ministers until they have been given enough time to either prove themselves or commit suicide. Dr Mishra is one of those *travelling towards the second option.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISHNA MURARI KISHAN

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All in the family

Here are some of Dr Mishra's relatives in key positions:

■Chandradhar Jha: The CM's brother-in-law. Appointed chief executive officer of the Bihar Khadi Board. Despite objections from the finance department, the chief minister downgraded the post to appoint Mr Jha. During the 1977 elections, Mr Jha was charged for keeping ballot papers in his house.

■ Bhavnath Mishra: Uncle-in-law. Appointed managing director of the Bihar Land Development Bank. The post is normally meant for a senior IAS officer which Mr Mishra is not.

■Jainath Mishra: Father-in-law. Made chairman of the Bihar Rashtra Bhasa Parishad after the noted Hindi litterateur and former Rajya Sabha MP, Mr Ganga Saran Singh, was removed.

■Shiv Shankar Mishra: Cousin. Appointed executive engineer, PWD, Patna. In 1972-73, he was the sub-divisional engineer, of the river valley project in Nirmali (see box).

■S. K.Jha: Relative. Brought to Patna as civil surgeon. Dr Raj Kumar Prasad, a harijan, was removed from his post before the expiry of his term to facilitate the coming in of Dr Jha.

Shyam Mishra: the contract bagger

■M. K. Jha: Relative. Appointed IG (Intelligence). Not only has Mr Jha been appointed to a top post but his wife has been appointed as deputy chairman of the social welfare board.

■Mrityunjoy Mishra: Brother. Elected member of Biscomaun (a cooperative marketing board) and the Bihar State Financial Corporation.

■S. N. Dubey: Son-in-law of B. K. Dubey, former secretary to Dr Mishra in 1975. Nominated as IAS this year although he was in a private organisation. He has been given rank of joint secretary and brought in on a prize post in the Public Enterprises Bureau.

■Jagtanand Jha: Relative. Now director of public relations. In 1978, Mr Jha was the director of public relations. Prima facie cases of corruption were established against him by the vigilance department and he was granted anticipatory bail. After Dr Mishra became the chief minister, Mr Jha as reappointed to his old post.

■Chunchun Jha: Dr Mishra's brother-in-law's son. Appointed district magistrate, Gaya.

How the Mishra family cornered Kosi contracts

□ This committee has found that most of the contracts from this project (the Kosi project) have been awarded to members of the Mishra family or their nominees from Balua Bazar, Saharsa.

□ The contract for a guide *bundh* (embankment) was given to Mr Kripanath Mishra (Dr Mishra's cousin—uncle's son) of Balua Bazar, Saharsa.

□ M/S Associated Engineering was awarded some contracts for the project. Among the firm's owners is Kamal Narain Mishra, brother of the Dr Jagannath Mishra (Dr Mishra was then the irrigation minister).

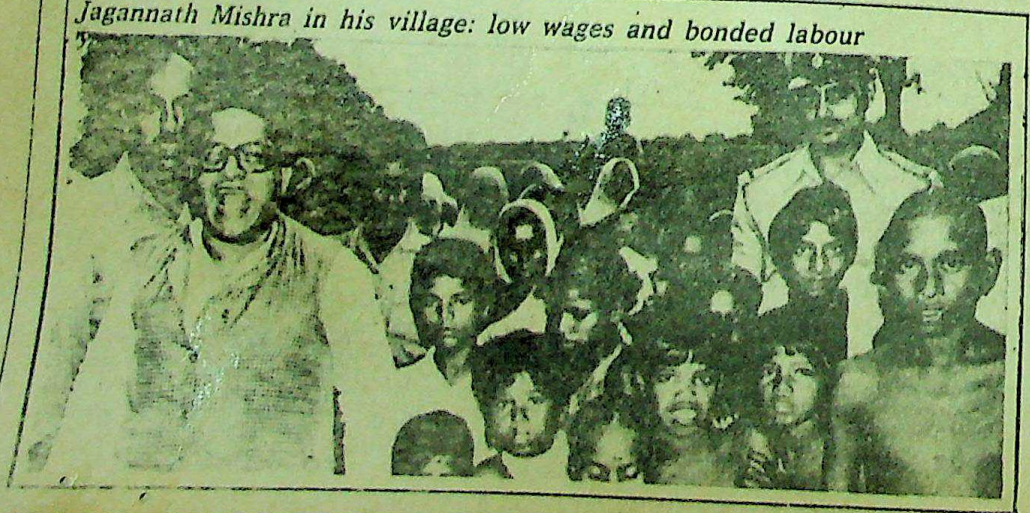
□ A member of the same family, Sudhir Kumar Mishra was given a contract in the irrigation project. His brother, Mr Sushil Chandra Mishra, is the superintending engineer of the project and another member of the same family, Mr Shiv Shankar Mishra, is the sub-divisional engineer, Nirmali.

□ Mr Shiv Shankar Mishra (a member of the Mishra family) was transferred to Nirmali (a sub-division in the project area) as SDO from Sarsi where he had served only for six months. Even now Shiv Shankar Mishra is in the Nirmali sub-division where every year crores of rupees are spent on flood prevention.

□ Mr B. N. Mishra (a distant relative of Dr Mishra) took over charge as the personal assistant to Mr Dinesh Prasad Verma, the then superintending engineer of Saharsa. It is significant that on 11 May 1973 when handing over charge of the Raghopur sub-division (which has four parts) Mr Mishra only handed over charge of three. He did not hand over charge of Karjain division where a link channel is being constructed, the contract for which has been awarded to Mr Kamal Narain Mishra.

□ M/S Associated Engineering was paid a higher amount of money than another contractor, Mr Ravindra Kumar, for an identical job. Both the contractors working at adjacent sites. The payment of money shows that M/S Associated Engineering where Mr Kamal Narayan Mishra has considerable interests was favoured.

Jagannath Mishra in his village: low wages and bonded labour



—Excerpts from the 53rd report (1972-73) of Estimates Committee of Bihar Assembly on River Valley Project (Kosi barrage)

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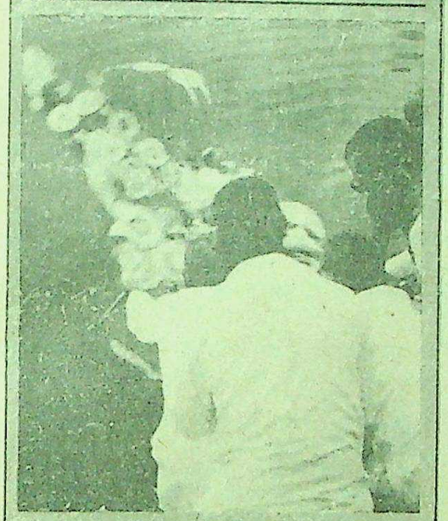
Attack on a church

Sixteen September, 1980. Motihari. What happened that day best describes the nature of the Jagannath Mishra government.

The residents of Chatauni *mohalla* were getting ready for another drab day in their ordinary lives. The Protestant church was quiet; in the small adjoining building Mr and Mrs Vinod Stephen had woken up. Mr Stephen looked after the Navjivan primary school and the Navjivan Kushtha Sevashrama established by the church. The church had started the leprosy centre in 1978 and the school in 1979.

Suddenly at seven in the morning a gang of hoodlums, led by Congress(I) MLA Rai Harishankar, attacked the locality. They looted the few articles in the school and centre



At Janmashtami immersion: Mishras are religious people

premises, cleared out the inhabitants, did not spare even Mrs Stephen, and occupied the premises. Later, they put up a huge signboard announcing that the place had now become the Dr Jagannath Mishra Mahavidyalay.

Till today, justice has not been done to the missionaries who were summarily thrown out. Local Christians have written several letters to the CM, but there has been no response: one of the letters, sent on 15 October 1980 was from Mr Abashlom Masih, president of the Christian churches of north Bihar, West Champaran. Politicians have pointed out to the CM that this was gross injustice, but he has not bothered.

Today the Dr Mishra Mahavidyalay has about 100 students, and 34 teachers have also been appointed. The buildings of the leprosy centre and the school are now student hostels. And the police of course has refused even to register the first information report lodged by Mr Vinod Stephen.

Why did Dr Mishra want to go to Nepal?

There are many reasons why a person sweltering in the hot winds of Patna might want to go to Nepal in the month of May. The weather in Nepal is super, the sightseeing excellent, and for those so inclined Kathmandu offers the only casino in the world where you can gamble in Indian rupees. These are good enough reasons for you and me: but why should a chief minister of Bihar suddenly want to go to Nepal, and without telling the government of India about it? Not only that, why should he want to use his state plane to go there—and specifically demand that the plane not be stopped at Kathmandu but go directly to his final destination, Janakpur?

We have obtained a copy of the message sent by Mr S.K. Chakraverty, deputy resident commissioner at Delhi's Bihar Bhavan (a kind of ambassador for Bihar in Delhi), to Mr K.M. Thakur, secretary to the Bihar chief minister in Patna, on 11 May 1981. The message is numbered 1171/RC. This is what it says: "This refers to Shri Indukant Mishra additional private secretary to chief minister's talk on telephone with me regarding chief minister's visit to Janakpur (in Nepal). Shri Mishra informed me that chief minister would like to fly to Janakpur on state plane on 12th May by 7.45 am from Darbhanga. Shri Mishra wanted me to get the clearance from DGCA for the flight and also to make arrangement for three cars and breakfast and lunch for 15 people courtesy Nepalese embassy. The matter was taken up with Shri V.N. Kapoor, DDG DGCA. He was not agreeable to direct flight to Janakpur and suggested flight route Patna-Kathmandu-Janakpur-Patna. DGCA however agreed to direct landing at Janakpur but when they contacted DGCA Kathmandu the latter did not agree and so it is finally decided that flight plan will be Patna-Kathmandu-Janakpur-Kathmandu-Patna.

"Embassy of Nepal in New Delhi has passed on the message to Kathmandu for making arrangements for three cars and breakfast and lunch etc for 15 persons at Janakpur. Embassy of Nepal confirmed the arrangement at Janakpur. However due to the flight plan approved which involves flight to Kathmandu, Embassy of Nepal is anxious to know whether state government planes would land at Kathmandu and then Janakpur or at Sitamarhi. District magistrate Darbhanga to please inform chief minister. Message ends."

In other words: Dr Jagannath Mishra, UP State Museum, Hazratganj, Lucknow straight on to Janakpur, where he has some relatives, and completely avoid Kathmandu, which is where any passenger flying into Nepal has to land normally, since Kathmandu is the only international airport in Nepal with customs facilities etc. Why was Dr Mishra so insistent upon avoiding Kathmandu? It should hardly have mattered, in the normal course. Even after getting the message quoted above, Dr Mishra's secretary got in touch with the Nepal embassy in Delhi again to see whether it was possible to fly directly to Janakpur. But the Nepalese government, which happily agreed to provide breakfast, lunch and three cars, insisted that the chief minister's plane touch down at Kathmandu. And rather than conforming to this formality, Dr Mishra, who was so keen to go to Nepal on private work in his state plane, preferred to cancel the trip. Was he afraid that officials just might search his plane in Kathmandu and find something embarrassing? In the meanwhile, our ministry of external affairs had also got to know about the incident, and sought an explanation from Dr Mishra for this unusual behaviour. The reply they got was lame. Dr Mishra said that all this had been done by his secretary, *who had been indiscreet, without his knowledge.*

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"Where is there no corruption?"

JAGANNATH MISHRA tells SUNDAY

The interview was fixed for 8.15 pm on 26 August at the chief minister's residence. "But he is flexible when it comes to timings," we were told by his press adviser, D. D. Sinha, who has worked as a journalist in The Indian Nation *and as a PRO in TISCO. Flexible the chief minister was. The interview began after 9 p.m.*

Dr Jagannath Mishra's office is in a large room in his residence at 2, Circular Road. Near the door is a framed quotation from his party chief, Mrs Indira Gandhi: "Needs of the many must prevail over those of the few."

Behind his desk is a huge fireplace, now unused. Over the fireplace is a portrait of Dr Mishra's eldest brother and former union railway minister, the late Lalit Narayan Mishra. In front of the fireplace is a low table with three telephones—two green and one black. Beside the table is a TV set. On all four walls of the airconditioned room are photographs of gods and goddesses—Lakshmi, Saraswati, Durga and Shiva. The room is lit by two powerful table-lamps. Prominently displayed on the table are two framed photographs—one of Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi sharing food, and the other of Mrs Gandhi garlanding the portrait of Lalit Narayan Mishra. There are very few papers or files on the table, but there are three paperweights with Ashoka emblems. Dr Mishra walks in with a couple of ministers in tow, all discussing the reshuffle.

He is wearing a milk-white kurta *and dhoti and a check Jawahar coat. After he dismisses the ministers and the officers crowding the room, the interview begins:*

Q. *How did you come into politics?*

A: I was first in university politics and became a member of the university senate and syndicate in 1966, when I was a teacher in Bihar University. I contested the election to the Bihar Legislative Council in 1968. I have been very involved in politics. In 1972, I contested the Assembly elections.

Q: Were you a Congress candidate in 1968?

A: No. I was an independent candidate but the Congress supported me. The Congress did not put up any candidate. My opponent was a CPI-sponsored candidate, P. N. Mehta.

Q: Did your family own a lot of land?

A: Yes. We were landed people and *zamindars.*

Q: Can we say that you come from a fairly affluent family?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: How much land do you have now?

A: My father had 2,000 acres. Now we have land up to the ceiling limit. My elder brother (L. N. Mishra) sold most of our land to finance his politics.

Q: What do your other brothers do? Do they look after the land?

A: Yes.

Q: Do your brothers stay in Balua Bazar?

A: One brother, Mrityunjoy Narayan Mishra, just older than me, is in Saharsa. He too is in the Congress (I).

Q: Is he, incidentally, the director of three government-sponsored organisations?

A: He is the member of only two organisations—Biscomaun (Bihar state marketing cooperative union) and the Bihar Financial Corporation.

Q: In May 1974, you had made a statement that you wanted to leave politics. Why did you say so?

A: Due to circumstances. I am an university man. I am a teacher. I joined active politics not by choice but was forced to do so by circumstances. I still have an interest in academics and maintain links with the university. I am still guiding my students for their Ph.D. degrees: nine students have got Ph.Ds under my guidance. Even today I am guiding some students in Muzaffarpur and Patna.

Q: How do you find time to teach?

A: Somehow, I make time.

Q: Talking about Ph.Ds, we have been told that your Ph.D. thesis was written by someone else. Dr Hargovind Singh's name often comes

The

On 16 March, 32 dissident Congress (I) MLAs presented a memorandum to Mrs Gandhi. The reason: they wanted a change of leadership in the state. Dr Mishra, they said, had become synonymous with corruption, nepotism, inefficiency and was ruining the name of the Congress (I). Though Mrs Gandhi gave them a patient hearing, she was firm on one point: they should not air their views in public. SUNDAY *has, however, managed to get a copy of the memorandum excerpts from which we reproduce below.*

□The entire ministry was chosen by him. The executive of the legislature party and the office-bearers are all on his side. The speaker and the chairman of the Assembly were chosen without consulting the members of the legislature party. This is the party members' constitutional right. Further, the legislature party does not discuss questions of principle or matters of the state.

□The same is the case with [illegible] cabinet. The chief minister hold[illegible] the major portfolios. The cabinet lacks foresight. The common people have a low regard for most of the ministers. There are, however, a few active ministers but the chief minister does not trust them. The chief minister takes a personal in-

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Corruption is a part of national life

up in this regard. Could you please clarify?

A: I got my Ph.D in 1964 when I had nothing to do with politics. The allegation (that Dr Singh wrote my thesis) is unwarranted. I have been with the university for 15 years. As others have done their research, I did mine. It is an accident that I am in politics. My academic career cannot be lowered by this mean politics.

Q: But was Dr Hargovind Singh, at any time, your teacher?

A: He was my teacher in MA and my research guide.

Q: There are quite a few other stories doing the rounds. One is that Singh helped you, and you rewarded him by getting him elected as a MLC. We have been told that you promulgated an ordinance to make him the director of an institute.

A: These are all absurd stories.

Q: Do you find it difficult to be both a CM and a family man?

A: I manage somehow or the other.

Q: How many children do you have?

A: Six.

Q: Do you manage to pay much attention to them?

A: My wife looks after them.

Q: Your eldest son is...

A: Sanjib. He is doing his first year BSc in Delhi, after doing an year's engineering course in Bangalore. My second and third sons are Manish and Animesh. They are both in school in Patna.

Q: And your daughters?

A: One of them is married. One has just passed her BA (Honours) and the other has passed her Matric.

Q: Coming to your daughter, there seems to be a lot of controversy about a statement made by the Patna University Students Union president...

A: Shouldn't a politician's children study? These comments are very mean and bad.

Q: The VC has said there will be an enquiry into this year's examinations. Is this related to the controversy over your daughter's coming second in the BA (Honours) examinations?

A: No.

Q: It is even being said that actually your daughter came first in the university and you ordered that she be placed second, to avoid the impression that her marks had been rigged. Is this true?

A: (Laughing). Why should I do that? I don't know where she studies or what she does.

Q: She must have received some help and guidance from you in her studies?

A: No, not from me. My wife is also an economics honours graduate. She passed her BA (Honours) in 1964. In fact, my whole family is into economics. My elder brother, Mr L. N. Mishra, was also an economist.

Q: Do you find Bihar a difficult state to administer?

A: The state is politically difficult to run. It is a most challenging job. Poverty and backwardness are the main challenges.

Q: What are Bihar's special problems?

A: Bihar has remained poor although it has tremendous natural resources.

Q: How do you explain the fact that although Bihar has over 40 per cent of the country's resources, it is among the poorest states in the country?

A: Because there is a lack of determination and strong political action.

Q: Do you think that the situation has improved since you took over?

A: It is improving. And I have every hope that this will continue.

Q: Everyone hears a lot about corruption in Bihar. We have heard about corruption from some of your ministers.

A: Where is there no corruption? Corruption is a part of national life, and it is all over the country. If somebody says this only about Bihar, it is wrong and unfair. What about the other states? In Bihar, there have been no scandals in the past one year. In the last year, there has not been a single instance of a scandal that the combined opposition has been able to put up in the House. I don't see where the corruption is. You cannot go on hearsay.

I don't know what a dissident is

Q: A case that is often cited as an example of corruption, in which your name figures prominently, is the Patna Urban Bank case.

A: That was an absurd and politically motivated case. It was I who had ordered the prosecution in 1976-77. If I was involved why should I do so?

Q: Will your government take a stern view if corruption charges against anyone are substantiated?

A: That we have already taken—43 engineers have been suspended on corruption charges. Bihar is the first state where ministers have to submit details about their assets and liabilities. Bihar is the only state where Lokayuktas have been established which have the jurisdiction to go into details of any allegations against any ministers. Now it is upto the people. I have challenged the opposition parties in the Assembly to come forward with any charges of corruption against any minister...

Q: Some of your partymen have submitted a memorandum to Mrs Gandhi against you.

A: I don't know.

Q: There are dissidents, aren't there?

A: There are no dissidents. It is only in newspapers that you read about dissidents. I don't know what a dissident is. (For me) there is only one party and one leader: Mrs Indira Gandhi. The people have not voted us (to power): they all voted for Mrs Indira Gandhi. It is not physically possible for her to run all the states personally and so somebody else is running the states. Who, indeed, is Jagannath Mishra? He is just her loyal soldier.

Q: Do you still enjoy the confidence of Mrs Gandhi?

A: Without that I can't continue even for a minute. Why should I? It is her party. The people have voted for her. Only if I enjoy her confidence I can continue. If not, I must go. After all, the people have voted for Indira Gandhi and nobody else. Not Jagannath Mishra, or anybody. I enjoy the confidence of the electorate as long as I enjoy the confidence of Indira Gandhi.

Q: You are wearing a number of rings. Is there any significance of those rings?

A: It is the individual's faith.

Q: Do you believe in astrology?

A: I believe in God.

Q: And the rings...

A: (Laughs)...

charges

terest in transfers, postings, promotions, etc., and changes his orders frequently.

□Incapable people have been chosen to head boards, corporations and committees. Persons who have in the past Lok Sabha and Assembly elections worked against the Congress have been made directors of boards. The chief minister has made his own candidates presidents, vice-presidents and members of the Zilla Parishads. Some who had been suspended by the AICC(I) have been given posts of presidents and vice-presidents of the Zilla Parishads.

□Corruption is rampant in the government. Transfers, postings, etc. are openly bought and sold. High-ups in the government and the services are involved. The law and order situation in the state is bad. Loots, dacoities, murders are everyday happenings in buses and trains. The CM has made money the basis of politics in the state. Money is collected for various purposes (presumably for the party) but no accounts are maintained. The party elected Dr Jagannath Mishra as the chief minister so that he would work for the good of the state and party. Unfortunately, he has misused his powers to strengthen his caucus and enhance his image.

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The CM who declared himself 'Not guilty'

In 1971, Mr Nawal Kishore Sinha MLA, founded the Patna Urban Cooperative Bank (PUCB) and became its chairman. The bank needed funds and Mr Sinha thought that his friend Dr Jagannath Mishra, who had found a place in Abdul Ghafoor's cabinet as the minister for power, irrigation and cooperation could help. He was right. The government invested Rs 100,000 in the bank by purchasing its shares; the State Cooperative Bank advanced a loan of Rs 600,000; and several state government undertakings, like the Bihar State Electricity Board, the Agricultural Marketing Board and the Agro-Industries Corporation opened accounts with the PUCB.

The bank however fell foul with the Reserve Bank of India almost the day it was born. Three years later, in 1974, the RBI ordered an examination of the bank's accounts and discovered that all its transactions had not been according to the rules. In one instance, the PUCB had advanced a loan of Rs 15,000 to Mr Krishna Singh, a friend of Dr Mishra, on his pledging Patna's Gandhi Maidan (a public property where political rallies are normally held) and the Patna railway junction, as security.

Expectedly, the RBI prescribed legal action against top bank officials: the chairman Nawal Kishore Sinha, the secretary K. P. Gupta, the manager S. A. Haideri, and the PA to the chairman A. K. Singh. It even asked for the liquidation of the bank. Following this, the state government asked its vigilance and the cooperative departments to look into the affairs of the bank. Their inquiries also proved that some of the bank's transactions had, indeed, been irregular. The then chief minister, Mr Ghafoor, ordered the prosecution of the bank officials.

The cooperative department appointed a special prosecutor and a FIR was drawn up. But, curiously, no case was filed. In May 1975, when Dr Mishra became the chief minister, one of the first attacks he faced in the Assembly from the opposition was over his involvment in the Urban Bank. Members demanded an investigation and the CM finally relented: the Assembly's Estimates Committee would go into the matter. The committee, in its report, advised also that some PUCB officials be prosecuted against. The state government did prosecute the bank officials, but spared Nawal Kishore Sinha.

The vigilance department, however, insisted that Nawal Kishore Sinha too be prosecuted. It was then that the IG (vigilance) Mr Ambika Prasad Sinha was suddenly transferred. However, in March 1977, as the state came under the President's Rule, the Governor, Mr Jagannath Kaushal brought back Mr A. P. Sinha to his former post, and he promptly started criminal cases against Nawal Kishore Sinha. In the course of the investigations, Mr K. P. Gupta, the PUCB secretary, turned approver and stated that Nawal Kishore Sinha had withdrawn Rs 500,000 from the PUCB for Dr Mishra and the amount had been deposited in Dr Mishra's account at the Central Bank of India, Dak Bungalow Road, Patna. Dr Mishra was thus implicated in the case (case no 9 dated 1 February 1978, court of chief judicial magistrate, Patna).

Dr Mishra, then moved the Patna High Court for anticipatory bail. Rejecting application, Mr Justice Uday Sinha observed on 13 February 1978: "The petitioner (Dr Mishra) was chief minister of the state and should have been a more responsible person. His conduct should have been, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion...If a lenient view of the matter is taken the conduct of the petitioner will be a Magna Carta to the entire services in the state. If the chief minister can take bribe, why should not other members of the services?...

With villagers : plea of 'not guilty'

Judge: "The case against the petitioner (Dr Mishra) has not been instituted out of political vendetta."

Dr Mishra: "It has" (claiming which, he withdrew the case against himself!)

I do not see how a chief minister can set an example of integrity to the civil services." He also observed: "It is obvious that the petitioner was providing a cover to corruption by shielding Nawal Kishore Sinha."

Dr Mishra then moved the Supreme Court for bail and got it on 20 February 1978. But the court stipulated that "the petitioner will be enlarged on bail furnishing his own bond and of two sureties of Rs 50,000 to the chief judicial magistrate, Patna." Meanwhile, the vigilance department formally presented charges against Dr Mishra and others before the chief judicial magistrate (CJM) Patna and the hearings began on 21 November '79. The case however, was prolonged as both the defence and the prosecution asked for successive adjournments (in all, the case was adjourned on 13 occasions). Commenting on this, the CJM said on 25 September 1980. "It is unfortunate that such an important case in which ex-chief minister who is now the chief minister of the state is an accused for the offence under sections 420, 466, 471, 109, 120B IPC and under section 5(2) of Prevention of Corruption Act read with section 5(1) (a) (b), and (c) of the Prevention of Corruption Act is being neglected by the state and no prosecutor is provided to work on behalf of the state... It is really a mockery of prosecution in the circumstances in which it is being pursued."

Ever since he became chief minister again, in 1980, Dr Mishra had been trying hard to get the case withdrawn. The reason he advanced was that the case was politically motivated—disregarding the fact that the prosecution was actually ordered when Dr Mishra himself was a cabinet minister. The IG (vigilance), Mr A. P. Sinha, however was reluctant to withdraw the case. On his retirement on 1 June 1980, Mr Sudhist Narayan Sinha became the IG (vigilance). He, too, was unwilling to oblige the CM. Mr Sinha was, therefore, transferred to the innocuous post of the chairman of the police building construction corporation. It was clearly a punishment transfer for Mr Sudhist Sinha. He was replaced by a more pliable Mr Shivaji Prasad Singh.

The rest was a formality. Mr Singh, on assuming office, recommended the withdrawal of the case; he said he too believed that it was "politically motivated." And this despite the fact that Justice Uday Sinha of Patna High Court had specifically said that "the case against the petitioner (Dr Mishra) has not been instituted out of political vendetta." Only recently the Bihar government formally dropped the charges against the bank officials. Everyone, therefore, escaped.

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How a CM is corrupted

By ABDUL GHAFOOR, former chief minister of Bihar

It is a peculiar thing. The moment you are sworn in as chief minister, you are surrounded by hordes of people whom you have never seen before. They carry garlands and they proclaim earnestly and loudly that they are your friends. The truth is, they are not.

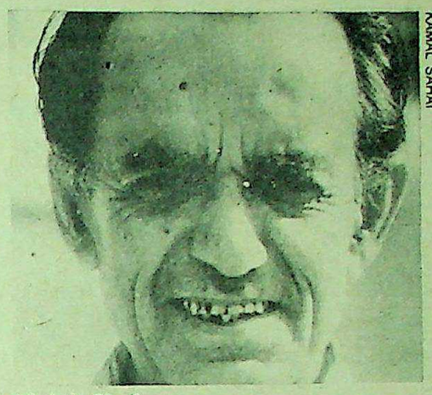
These people are the flatterers who will flock around you as long as you are in power—and not a day longer. They are the hangers-on, the *chamchas*. Being human, one tends to get carried away rather easily by their protestations of friendship and, the temptation that they signify. After some time one gets so used to their presence that it becomes difficult to live without them.

Your real friends, the people who really care for you, fade out. Only their pride prevents them from coming to your aid, even if they can see that you are being misled. However, although they remain aloof, they remain eager for details about their onetime friend and are keen to see whether he still remembers them or not. Meanwhile, the chief minister, surrounded by the inevitable band of flatterers, has very little time for this loyal band of old friends. As time passes, the gap between the chief minister and his true comrades widens and soon a time approaches when there is no one he can turn to for help.

During my own tenure as chief minister, not many people dared offer me bribes. The same week I assumed office I made it clear to my partymen that I would not oblige anyone who came to me with requests for favours, unless it concerned them or their close relatives. This was the only concession I made,

In this context I cannot help recalling an incident which shows how a chief minister, despite the best intentions, can be made use of. When I was in power it was brought to my notice that a certain police official had amassed a vast fortune. It was obvious that he could not have done so unless he was taking bribes, so I accordingly ordered his suspension.

The police official in question then tried every means possible to get the suspension order revoked. Sometimes he would arrange it so that a mutual acquaintance was seated next to me on a flight so as to plead his case. Another time, I faced a unique situation during a by-election that I was contesting. The suspended official visited my constituency and persuaded all voters belonging to his caste to demand the withdrawal of his suspension order as the price for their support. Even this did not work, so he tried getting the ear of some important partymen in order to plead his case. Finally, one of the MLAs from my party visited me in my chamber and said that the marriage of his only sister had been arranged with the brother of the suspended police officer. He added that the marriage would only be solemnised if I revoked the suspension order. This move, he explained, would save him paying a dowry.



KAMAL SAHAI

Abdul Ghafoor

I felt genuinely sorry for the MLA and told him that I would rescind the order if it helped him. As he was leaving the room, I told him that I wanted to be completely convinced that the marriage had been settled before I actually withdrew the order. Accordingly, he showed up a couple of days later with a wedding invitation and this set my conscience at rest.

Sometime later, a former chairman of the Bihar Legislative Council came to visit me and while we were talking he picked up the invitation. He jumped up from his seat immediately and blurted out "Ghafoor Sahab, what are you up to?" I was nonplussed till he explained that the MLA in question did not have a sister.

So for the moment, I kept the wedding card and my order aside. After a few days the MLA came to me to find out what I had done about the suspension order. There were some other people in my room. I sent them out and bolted the door. Now the MLA was alone in the room with me. I took out the card and my order. I told him I was going to call the IG to find out if the card was genuine. As soon as I picked up my telephone to call the IG, the MLA fell down at my feet asking me to forgive him

Here is another example. This involves the present Bihar chief minister, Dr Jagannath Mishra, himself. He was then the minister of irrigation and electricity in my cabinet. One day he brought a note on which was scribbled a name: Nawal Kishore Sinha. He wanted Mr Sinha to be appointed chairman of the Tubewell Corporation. Knowing Mr Sinha's antecedents I told Dr Mishra that the choice of Mr Sinha would be most inappropriate. But as Dr Mishra insisted and as it was his first request to me, I yielded. Later events, however, proved how right I was about Mr Sinha, whose name figured prominently in a series of scandals.

Dr Mishra has acquired the knack of selecting corrupt officers.

No regime can claim to have been wholly free from corruption: not even mine. One can assume K. B. Sahay's regime (a former chief minister of Bihar from 1963-67 who had to face an inquiry commission on corruption charges) as a landmark, for that was when corruption became institutionalised; now it is even respectable. Everyone in the state knows that no work can be done without paying a bribe—whether it is in the secretariat or in the offices. Ministers openly take money for transfers and postings. Bribes are prevalent in every department. A small example will illustrate this. A road near the CM's Patna residence, was recently constructed. It is officially repaired every year-not once but thrice a year. About two and a half months ago, I saw repair work going on and the road is still in a very bad shape. Obviously, the money spent on it must be going into someone's pocket.

In the PWD, for example, it is an admitted fact that more than 50 per cent of the money is diverted towards 'non-building.' What I mean is that a lot of money sweetens the palms of engineers and the contract-awarding authorities. Thus it is not without reason that people complain that the ministers are corrupt.

It is generally believed that the recent reshuffle in the cabinet is to muffle the criticism about corruption as it came in the wake of consistent complaints by many about the corruption of the ministers. But can a leopard change its spots? Can the reshuffle cure the ministers? The persons are the same and their habits will remain with them. Now a stage has been reached where palliatives are not likely to work. And frankly, I doubt whether there is anyone in Bihar who can set things right.

Dr Mishra is young and a comparative newcomer to politics. I had warned him of *chamchas* and I had advised him to encourage honest officers. But it seems that my advice has fallen on deaf ears. I am sorry to say that Dr Mishra has acquired the knack of selecting and picking up corrupt officers to run his departments. And so we are saddled with a corrupt ministry, a corrupt administration and a corrupt people.

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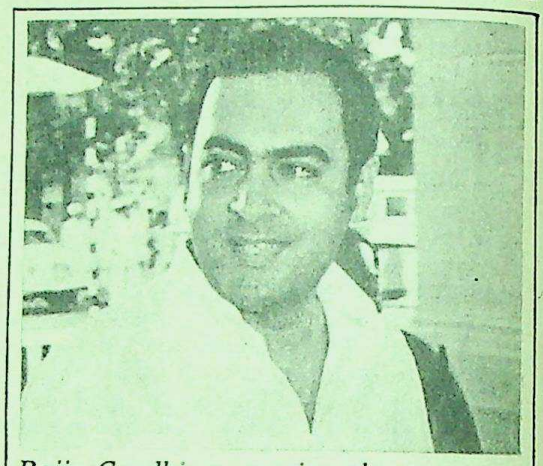
Will Rajiv Gandhi be education minister?

From our Delhi bureau

Till the moment of writing, no final decision had been taken on whether Rajiv Gandhi will officially join the government or not, though the education ministry was being considered seriously as the job for him. One important reason for this was that Rajiv Gandhi could then take direct charge of the Asian Games, and use his influence and abilities to stave off what could so easily become a disaster. After all, if the Asian Games flops India will lose more than money; it will lose face.



Rajiv Gandhi: a sporting chance

Indoor stadium being constructed for the Asian Games

Problem: The chequered career of the Asian Games project seems once more to have taken a turn towards disaster—and there is no longer either time or scope for excuses. Wanted: A leader, with a team which can provide the muscle and the management needed to rescue what could be the biggest flop we have ever known.
Bright Idea: Get Rajiv Gandhi.

Two separate lines on two separate graphs seem, curiously, to be heading towards each other: the downward curve charting the fiasco of the Asian Games project, and the upward curve tracing the rise of Rajiv Gandhi's importance in national affairs. With hardly a year now to go before the Asian Games are due to start, as basic a thing as the architect's designing of the stadium roof has been found to be faulty. It will be, by any standards, a tough job to get everything ready in time—even with sections of the Games being parcelled off to other cities (Calcutta is likely to get some football, for instance). And Rajiv Gandhi has now reached a point in his political career where he must raise his public profile, where he must manage a show successfully to provide evidence to the people that he too can get things done—to run an Asian Games which works, if you like. Therefore: he could become the education minister (without cabinet status), and devote himself totally to the Games (they come technically under the education ministry) leaving other aspects of the job to his co-minister and elderly relative Mrs Sheila Kaul (the Congress(I) MP from Lucknow), who is now minister of state for education.

So many birds would be killed with that one stone. Rajiv Gandhi would begin to acquire experience with the bureaucracy, he would formally enter government—this would be ideal 'management trainee' spell obligatory for the larger tasks he surely has in mind for himself. Not only that, management of the Asian Games sounds like a good reason to enter the government: in any case, it sounds better than untramelled nepotism.

The Asian Games for 1982 were awarded to Delhi during Mrs Gandhi's first long spell as Prime Minister. But the decision came during her "evil days"—in 1976, during the Emergency. Ill fortune dogged that decision. The Janata came to power, and forgot that something like the Asian

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Games had been assured to the rest of Asia. Then in 1979, an organising committee was set up under Vijay Kumar Malhotra, and he submitted contingency plans keeping in mind the lack of time and resources. He visualised minimum construction and maximum renovation of existing facilities and infrastructure.

But then Morarji Desai fell, and in came Charan Singh's government, and the Prime Minister of rural India immediately denounced the Games as an extravagance. If work on the Asian Games did not come to a complete full stop, at least a very heavy semi colon was placed on progress.

Then we saw Mrs Gandhi's victory. V.K.Malhotra a BJP leader, was sacked. A site for extensive construction was selected at Rai in Haryana after the personal intervention of Sanjay Gandhi. Land was earmarked for various projects; tenders were floated. Sanjay Gandhi died.

Now Vidya Charan Shukla entered the scene; he became chairman of the special organising committee. Tenders were awarded. Suddenly people seemed to realise that there was not much time left. And by now the Games were demanding not merely sports complexes but, according to the new managers, new roads and a whole infrastructure of hotels and hostels. The plans were burgeoning at an alarming rate, and since everyone was in a hurry, money was disappearing at an even more alarming rate. (Things have come to such a pass that Mrs Gandhi herself, who has been such a votary of the Games, recently admitted publicly that if she had to take a decision on the Games all over again, she would now say no. But then the commitment had been made and it would have to be met.)

But before Shukla could really become effective, he fell out of favour: he lost both his ministry and his managership of the Games. Buta Singh took over. Buta Singh had had some experience in sports, having been president of the Amateur Athletics Federation, and he understood sports well enough to appreciate the complexity of the requirements. The pace of work was speeded up. But how fast could it go? And what was to be done about the enormous problems—almost havoc—that the constructions were causing? What more can one say than state that Delhi began to look like Calcutta, with all the digging going on. All the hurry at the initial stage was also extracting its price. Designs were found to be faulty; according to some insiders even flyovers are not reaching precisely where they were meant to reach. The authorities arbitrarily began uprooting the capital's beautiful trees before an uproar halted the massacre of greenery. The swamps created by the digging have become mosquito breeding grounds; there are strange diseases now sweeping the city. Delhi is paying a heavy price for the luxury of the Games.

Then came a stunning blow which jolted everyone. It was discovered that the design of the roofs of the indoor stadium and the indoor swimming pool were faulty, due to mistakes made by the architect. A consultant was flown in from London, and he suggested major structural changes in the roof. The government can barely afford the additional expense and the extra time. And this stadium is the heart of the Games.

The time had clearly come for something drastic. In addition to all this, the opposition—particularly the Lok Dal, and even more particularly the eloquent George Fernandes—had been waging a sustained campaign against the Asian Games, calling it a vast waste of money and resources (like cement, steel etc). There was little doubt that large sums of money were being spent: the final cost could go up to Rs 1,100 crores, according to some estimates of overall expenditure. If, on top of this, the Games are a fiasco it will severely damage the credibility of Mrs Gandhi's government. It will be labeled a government which spends rather than works.

The final decision may not be so much in Mrs Gandhi's hands as in Rajiv Gandhi's. Even after his election to the Lok Sabha he has preferred to take what is (purely comparatively) a back seat. He has a little more than three years before the next national elections to the Lok Sabha, and presumably he would like to inform the country about his worth within this period. It will be a bit of a gamble for him—but then his mother did not reach where she is by sitting in a corner.

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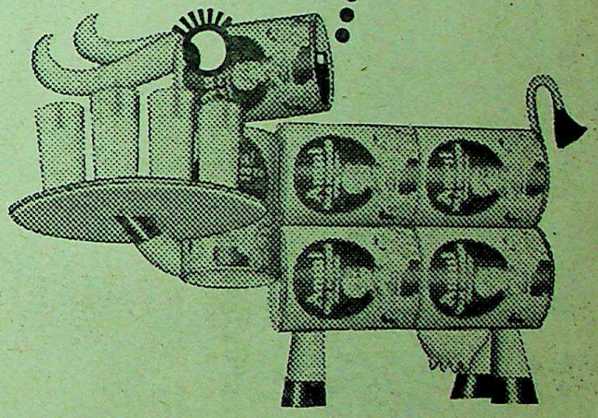

Put 2½ heaped tablespoons of Amul Milk Powder into a ¼-litre tumbler. Stir into a smooth paste with a little warm water. Add hot water up to top and stir. Milk is now ready for drinking. Good for use in tea and coffee, and for making curds and desserts. Makes you thankful for its convenience. Guaranteed pure.

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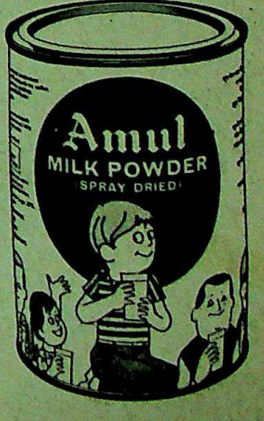

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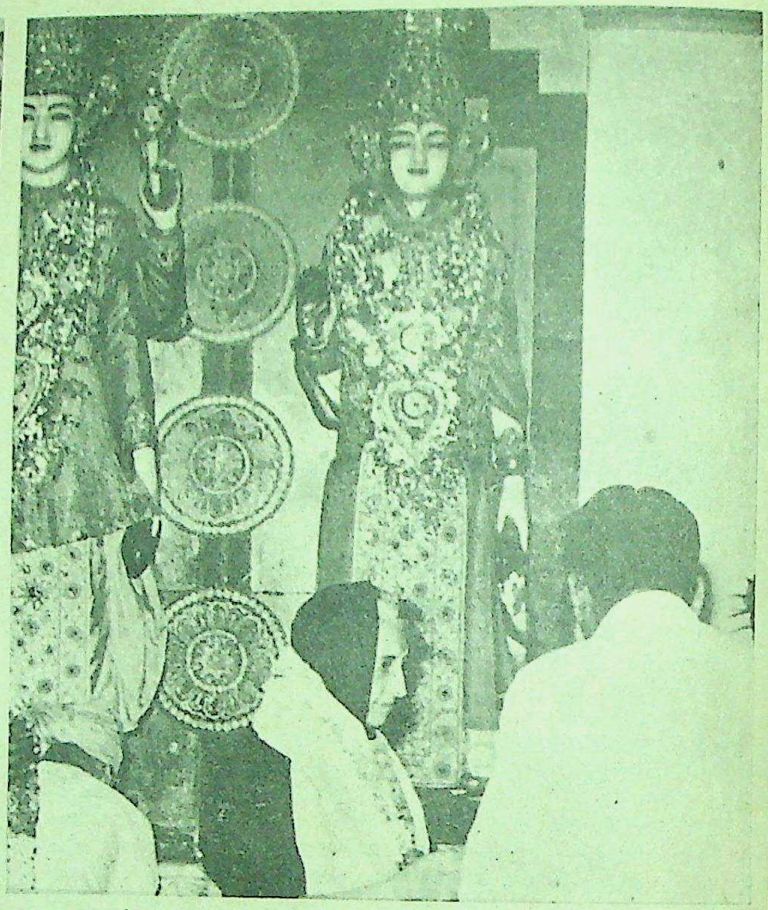
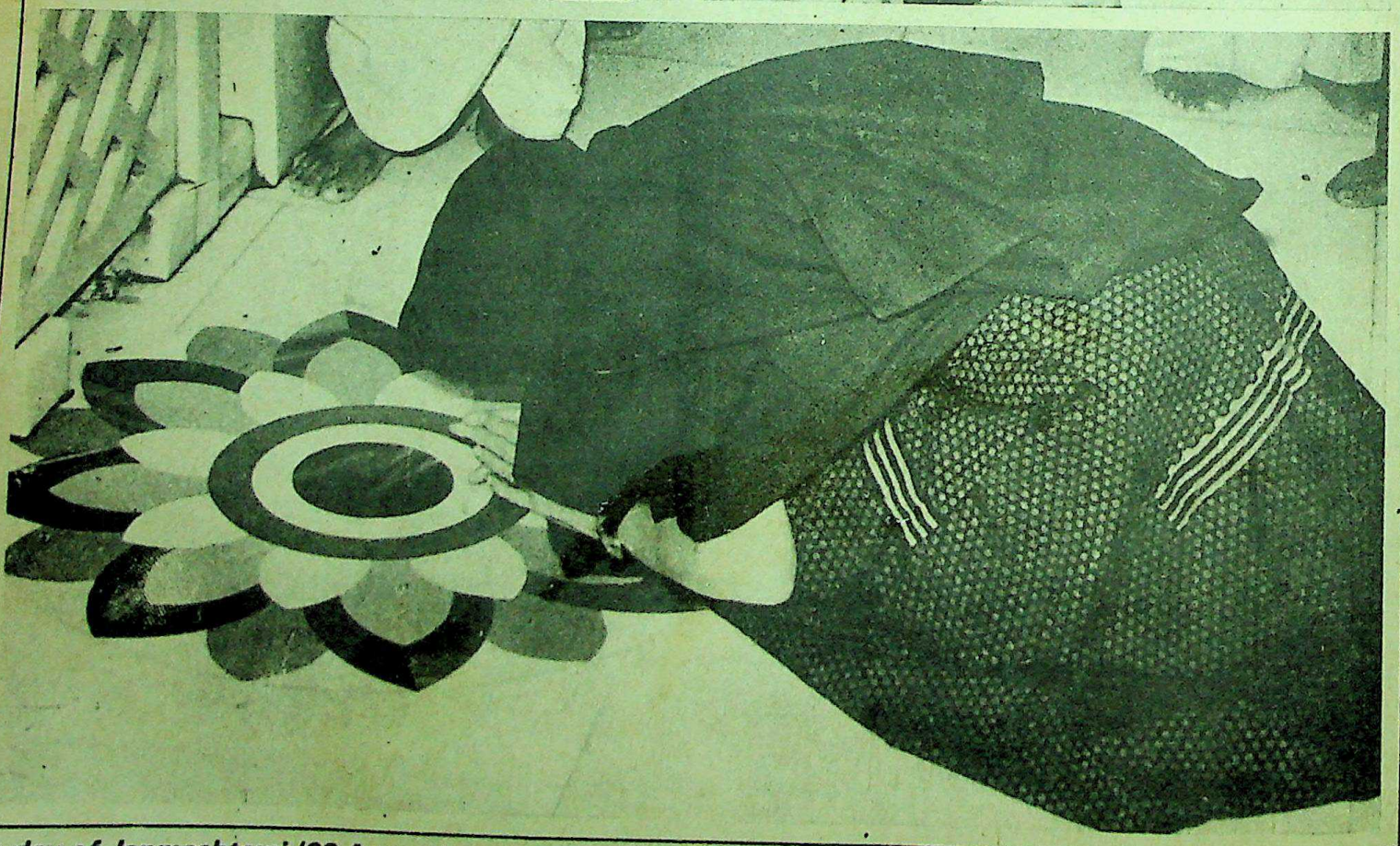
PM worships Lord Krishna





The day of Janmashtami (23 August) saw a VIP visitor at Delhi's Birla Mandir—or, to use its formal name, the Lakshmi Narayan Mandir. Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi came early in the morning, wearing the lovely ghagra of the Mathura region. It was a quiet visit, but photographer Virendra Pravakar of the **Hindustan Times** *was there to take these photographs.*

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Jiyajee style

It's hard to define
But easy to recognise

JIYAJEE
SUITING-SHIRTING
COTTON PRINTS

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The curious case of the Muslim who became a Hindu

On 30 August a 24-year-old Muslim, claiming to be grandson of the Nawab of Chhatari, became a Hindu at a highly-publicised ceremony in Delhi attended by senior representatives of the RSS, BJP and Arya Samaj. A day later there was much embarrassment when it was discovered that he was no legitimate relation of the Nawab. ANIL SAARI met him in Delhi and the Chhataris in Aligarh to report.

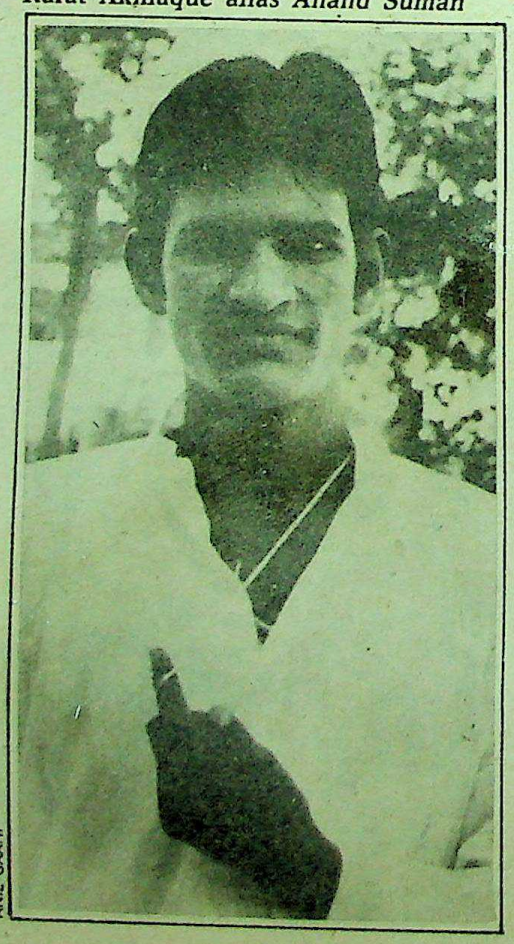
The RSS, the BJP, the Akhand Bharat movement, the Arya Samaj, and orthodox Hinduism in general won a new protagonist on Sunday 30 August. That was the day on which a 24-year-old man called Dr Rafat Akhlaque, a registered homeopath, not only became a Hindu but also swore to become a *pracharak* of the Hindu religion and the RSS. He was converted at the Arya Samaj Mandir in Kirti Nagar, New Delhi in front of a thousand-odd people. Among the notables there were Mahashay Dharam Pal, well-known leader of the Arya Samaj, Mr K. Narendra, the better known editor of the daily *Pratap*, and a couple of local BJP leaders. Five hundred people had been invited to witness the conversion; more than twice the number came—the *prasad* distributed by the new Hindu fell short. Rafat Akhlaque's new name became Dr Anand Suman.

Dr Suman's new mission in life, he told this correspondent in an interview, was clear: "I will go back to the people and reconvert all those who became Muslims, along with my ancestor, during the time of Bahadur Shah Zafar."

And he has strong views on politics too: "I will support the BJP and make Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee the Prime Minister," he says. How exactly will he do that, which so many others have tried to do and failed? "I want to challenge the political parties which think they can survive on Muslim vote-banks. This is no longer possible. Up to now the Hindu was divided; I will unite them." And after he brings about the unity Shri Vajpayee will become Prime Minister (until then, presumably, Mrs Gandhi is safe).

However, more logical is the fact that Akhlaque, or Suman, had an unhappy childhood largely because of the licentious behaviour of his father, Dr K. Akhlaque, who died in 1980. This overactive doctor had five wives, and this turned his son off against both his father and the religion which permitted more than one wife. More dramatic was that one of Anand Suman's mothers was quite young. He was sent to boarding school at an early age, and has lived most of his life in hostels. His father was a successful doctor in Sambhal, and later the son emulated his father and became a doctor of homeopathy himself. It was during his student days that he came in touch with Mr Manphool Singh Diwakar, an RSS leader of Sambhal (in Moradabad district)—Diwakar, in fact, was a tutor to Suman's younger sister. However Diwakar taught Rafat alias Anand Suman a love for the RSS: "The Sangh (RSS) is the only organisation which works for the nation."

Rafat Akhlaque alias Anand Suman



ANIL SAARI

But it was not his conversion on 30 August which created as much sensation as Dr Suman's claim that he was a grandson of the Nawab of Chhatari and a former-member of the Students Islamic Movement (an offshoot of the Jamaat-e-Islami). He claimed that he had been turned off the Students Islamic Movement (of which he claimed to have been president) after they swore at a secret conclave in Hyderabad to create an Islamic republic in India.

One of the most distinguished families of UP, the house of the Nawab of Chhatari, Said-ul-Mulk Colonel Hafiz Nawab Sir Ahmad Said Khan, was waiting in August for a new member to join the family: one of the young brides in the house was expecting. But before she gave birth to a healthy girl, the Chhatari household found itself saddled with another "member" of the family. That was when Dr Rafat Akhlaque, or Dr Anand Suman, claimed that he was the grandson of the 39-year-old Nawab of Chhatari. (Chhatrai is an estate in Bulandshahr district where the family owns farms, they were once the *zamindars*.)

The Nawab of Chhatari is no ordinary nawab or 'rajwada', and Sir Ahmad Said Khan's family is so well known in political, educational and social circles that no legitimate grandson can suddenly emerge: all the children of the family are known to a large circle of people. The Nawab's family itself considers the whole thing to be a joke. The Nawab's third son, Ibne Said Khan, waving his hands delicately around his eyes, told us in Aligarh on 2 September, "Duniya mein tamashey hote rahte hain. Ek yeh bhi tamasha tha (Life is full of *tamashas* and jokes; this is one more of them). We are four brothers and by God's grace all of us are alive. No son of the Nawab Saheb is dead. The name Akhlaque does not run in our family. The Nawab Saheb uses 'Said' and his name is Ahmed

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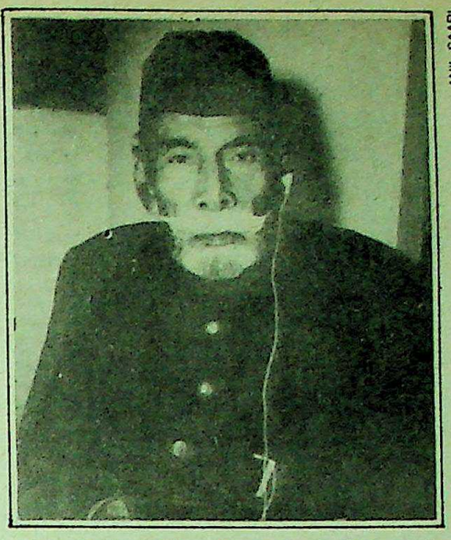
Said Khan. 'Said' is attached to the names of all the children of our family. This boy may be originally thakur by caste like us, but that does not make him one of us. I only wish to stress that he is not a member of my family. He is not my son, he is not my nephew, and he is not my brother." At the same time he insisted again and again that neither he nor any other member of the family had any comment to make about Dr Rafat Akhlaque's conversion to Hinduism, or to his motive in claiming to be a grandson of the Nawab of Chhatari.

Similarly, the president of the Students Islamic Movement, a youth wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Dr M. Zaki Kirmani denied on 31 August that Dr Rafat Akhlaque was ever president of the Students Islamic Movement. Sources close to the Jamaat told this correspondent that they had never heard of Dr Akhlaque before. They also pointed out that the SIM was not founded in 1977, as claimed by Dr Rafat Akhlaque, but in 1974 at Aligarh.

Even a BJP luminary in Delhi seemed embarrassed by the controversy created by Dr Rafat Akhlaque's claim to the Chhatari family. Insisting that his name should not be mentioned, he confessed that too much had been made of this conversion to Hinduism. Nor did he have anything to say about the boy's claim to the Nawab of Chhatari's family beyond saying that Dr Rafat Akhlaque had said he was being disowned because of property quarrels. Dr Akhlaque or Anand Suman himself could not be contacted on 2 September when we wanted to talk with him once again and ask about the Chhatari family's denial of any relationship with him.

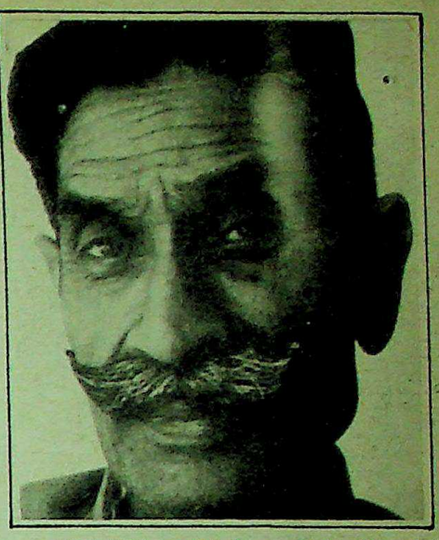
Dr Rafat Akhlaque's family comes from Shekoopur, in Bulandshahr district. His father had once taken a shop on rent at Chhatari from the Nawab's family, and ran a clinic there. It was not very successful, and he moved to Sambhal where h had more luck as a medical practioner. A *munshi* of the Nawab's household told us that they had learnt that the boy's mother was a *pathan* and not a rajput (thakur), but there was hardly any contact between the Chhatari family and the Akhlaques after the latter had moved to Sambhal.

Mr Ibne Said Khan, the Nawab's son who looks after the family estate, said that Dr Rafat Akhlaque claimed that his family had become Muslims during the time of the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. The Chhatari family, on the other hand, "became Muslims at the time of Jehangir, who was secular, mind you. I am saying Jehangir was secular because his mother was a Hindu (Jodha Bai) and his first wife was also a Hindu rajput. Now there is a very long gap between Jehangir and Bahadur Shah Zafar. But I do want to say once again that I am not saying anything about Dr Rafat Akhlaque's change of faith. That is his personal choice. A person has the right to join the fold of any religion. We have



ANIL SAARI

Ahmed Said Khan: Nawab of Chhatari



.e Said Khan: third son of the Nawab

absolutely nothing to do with that, and have no comments to make on it. All I am saying is that he is not a member of my family."

Since the 93-year-old Nawab is quite hard of hearing now, it was difficult for us to talk to him but the entire Chhatari family is at a loss to explain why Dr Rafat Akhlaque has tried to embarrass them by claiming to be the Nawab's grandson. Sombody in the household observed that it could be a case of fantasy born out of frustration. Of the Nawab's four sons, two are at Aligarh—Mr Ibne Said Khan, 59, and Mr Anwar Said Khan, 44. The eldest son, Mr Rahat Said Khan, 62, has long been settled in Pakistan. And the fourth brother, Mr Farhat Said Khan, 60, retired as sales manager at TISCO and lives presently in Calcutta. The family has three branches. The Nawab's own family is *sunni* Muslim. A second branch is *shia* Muslim, and the third is the thakur Hindu family of Barauli-Kashipur. Family members at Aligarh say that the ties between the three branches are still alive, and marraiges in one branch are attended by members of the other branches.

Sir-Ahmad Said Khan, Nawab of Chhatari, has been chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University since 1965. Prior to that, he was the AMU's pro-chancellor for 15 years. In 1937, he became chief minister of UP, and he has twice been governor of the province in pre-Independence days. After Independence, he was in the Rajya Sabha for two terms. Thanks to Pandit Nehru. Sir Ahmad has had an important career in public life, according to sources outside the family in Aligarh. He was one of those who was instrumental in bringing Hyderabad into the Union of India. He served two terms as Prime Minister of the Nizam of Hyderabad—from 1941 to 1946 and again in 1947. During his second term he incurred the displeasure of the communal Muslims at Hyderabad who were rallying under the banner of the Ittehadul Muslemeen. Led by Mr Kasim Rizvi, the Muslemeen, according to friends of the Chhatari family, were in favour of merging Hyderabad with Pakistan, which Sir Ahmad Said Khan opposed. Sir Ahmad had to flee from Hyderabad by air, and the air-lift was arranged by Nawab Halim Jung.

It is, however, alleged by some people that the boy's father, the late Dr K Akhlaque, might be the bastard child of one of the many women inhabiting the Nawab's mansions at Chhatari and Aligarh. During our interview with Dr Anand Suman the venom with which he spoke against the Nawab of Chhatari—"The estate has been built on the oppression of people," he shouted—suggested a deep bitterness against the Chhatari family.

Inconsistency, certainly is not a flaw in Dr Anand Suman's personality. He says he was once a militant Muslim; he talks now like a militant, extremist Hindu, convinced that in Akhand Bharat "Every person in India should be a Hindu first of all or he will have to go. I don't want *kattar* (bigoted) Muslims to stay here. I don't want them to stay here and sing songs in praise of Pakistan. I want to wipe out all that is against Hinduism and Bharat Mata." Wiping out ideological and theological opponents is obviously a particular passion with him, no matter which side he may be on.

As the propagator of the new faith, he has plans to set up a platform under the aegis of the BJP's youth wing; he wants to start a Yuva Kranti Parishad which ought to bring to the land once again the revolution of the range that Gandhi achieved, though Dr Anand Suman is quick to add that he is "not a supporter of Gandhi."

Why did he choose the name Anand Suman? He explained: "'Anand' was chosen by the Arya Samaj leaders and 'Suman' is the name of a girl I was in love with from class one to class ten. She was in class ten when she died. She was a Hindu girl from Sambhal. She also studied at Naini Tal. We had decided to marry. We had decided that either one of us could convert in order to get married, it did not matter who would. When she was in class ten she died. On her death I promised myself that I would never marry anyone else."

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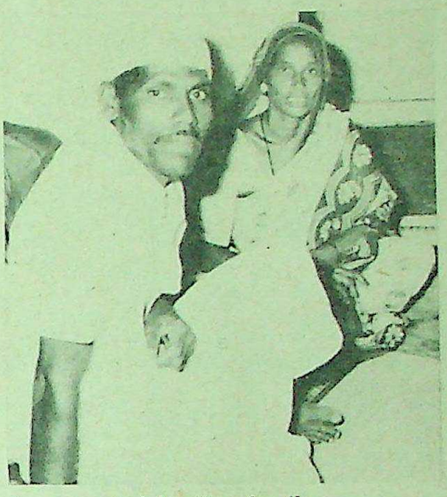
"It is absurd to say that harijans are becoming Muslims because of foreign money"

By H. N. Bahuguna

There is a lot of stupid talk going on about conversions; a lot of gossip-mongering is distorting the whole matter. Even the press, occasionally, participates in this. For example, one newspaper came out with the story that the Shahi Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid had converted one Delhi family to Islam. The Imam had to immediately issue a contradiction: he said quite vehemently that he had never done any such thing. I know that nothing of this sort happened in the Jama Masjid.

The conversions that have become such big—perhaps disproportionately big—news recently are shaking Hindu society. If they can shake Hindu society enough to end the follies that exist in it, I shall be very happy. My views are clear, and I enunciated them recently to some harijans who came to see me. I told them that if they honestly believed in Islam, if they honestly believed that the preachings of Islam were better, then they should accept Islam whatever the reactions might be. But if they were going to Islam only because they were being persecuted by the upper castes, or because of injustices that were inherent in the Hindu system, then it was not sufficient reason for them to change their faith. If they were unhappy with the Hindu system they should try and change that system, improve that system; but leaving it would not be a solution, because they too were part of the system.

The conversions have been the result of economic and social tensions, of deprivation and insult that have left the scheduled castes totally disillusioned. Like a very sick man who has begun to lose his confidence in his regular doctor, they feel that a change of doctors would cure them. They are going to Islam now, but one wonders if they are aware that in India, unfortunately, Islam too is affected by the caste factor. The Sheikhs, Syeds, Qureshis, Ansaris, Idrisis—they may not be officially divided into castes, but they behave like castes. Often, they don't even inter-marry. Very few people are aware of this. It is, indeed, awful that this should be so because the caste system is the very antithesis



A converted harijan family

of what Islam stands for. But that has been the impact of India on Islam. The tragedy is that Islam has been affected by a bad factor of Hindu society: caste.

I am opposed to the caste system. I am opposed to untouchability. The fact that we have not been able to eradicate these problems is not only a failure of government but also—perhaps principally—a failure of society. Conversions, therefore, are not going to solve this social problem.

Nevertheless, all these stories which are being spread about the involvement of money in conversions are quite irrelevant. There is no use trying to say that harijans are becoming Muslims because of the allurement of money. It is even more absurd to say that they are being influenced by foreign money. How much foreign money can come in? And harijans are not insignificant in number. The whole treasury of Saudi Arabia will not be sufficient to maintain all the harijan families for all their lives. But we have all sorts of people making statements of this nature, even people high up in government. Home minister Giani Zail Singh makes one statement in Madras, and when someone challenges this statement, a home ministry spokesman "clarifies" that the particular statement was never made...

Though conversions may create tension, may provoke discussion and debate and cause leaders of Hindu society a bit of worry, they are not a solution for the real problems of harijans. However, Hindus must understand that they are the guilty party. The Arya Samaj now says that it will only work for the abolition of untouchability and discrimination. Very good, but why weren't they working for it earlier? However, let them start even now; I shall be very happy.

The Shankaracharya says that conversions must be banned by law. I can challenge the Shankaracharya on this: there can be no legal ban on conversions in our country. The Adi Shankaracharya (the first Shankaracharya) converted every Buddhist back to Hinduism. How can the present Shankaracharya say that conversion must be stopped by law? They are, after all, inheritors of this tradition. I agree that conversion by fraud is bad, conversion by allurement is bad. But the question is, who will be the judge? Is it not a fact that converted Muslims have said that they were not allowed to sit in buses as long as they were harijans, but were allowed to do so when they became Muslims? It is social disability, social persecution, that has driven them to this kind of extreme step. I am more than sure that, given goodwill and good sense, Hindu society will not have to face such ordeals. But today, we are paying the price for our sins; let us not abuse others.

H. N. Bahuguna

"If conversions can end the follies in Hindu society, I shall be very happy"

"Hindus must understand that they are the guilty party"

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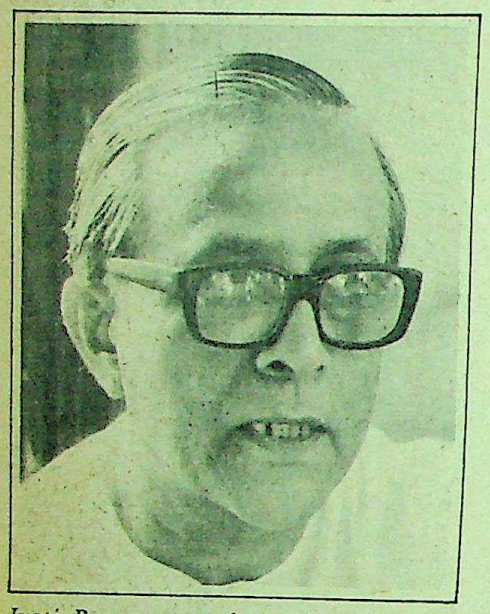
Delhi's plans for Bengal's Left Front government...

It could be toppled during the *puja* holidays, reports *Shubhabrata Bhattacharya*



Jyoti Basu: no confrontation with the centre

Will the *Durga puja* season, the traditional festive time of West Bengal, be the occasion for the centre to dismiss the Left Front government in that state? The proposition is attractive enough—the newspapers in West Bengal close down for a four-day period during the *pujas* and the people are too involved in the festivities to think of politics. At least one section of the Congress(I) leadership in the state, led by the union commerce and steel minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, is understood to be pressing for the immediate dismissal of the CPI(M)-led government of Mr Jyoti Basu. But Mrs Gandhi has not as yet made up her mind.

The main hurdle in Mrs Gandhi rushing to a decision regarding the fate of the West Bengal government is the state of her own party's organisation in the state. The central leadership feels that the faction-ridden Congress(I) in West Bengal is at present not in a position to provide an effective opposition to the Left Front. The main emphasis in the recent reorganisation of the party's state unit has been on promoting non-controversial old faces. The choice of Mr Ananda Gopal Mukherjee, the Lok Sabha member from Asansol (he was among the only four Congress (I) winners in West Bengal) was prompted by the fact that he had the image of being an old party hand, dating back to the days of Mr Atulya Ghosh. Both the general secretaries appointed with Mr Mukherjee, Mr Santosh Roy and Mr Motahar Hossain, too, are old faces in the party. Mr Mukherjee had been a trusted man of the central leadership for quite some time in the past. A seasoned trade unionist from the Asansol belt, he was appointed in-charge of the Delhi state INTUC affairs soon after the 1980 elections. He solved the disputes in the state INTUC to the satisfaction of the central Congress(I) leadership and for a long time he was regarded a dark horse in West Bengal affairs as well. The back seat given to youngsters like Mr Subrata Mukherjee and Mr Soumen Mitra, the two rival youth leaders in the state, is being interpreted as an indication that the central leadership would like to project a "traditional" image in West Bengal.

While Mr Pranab Mukherjee has for a long time, been advocating the dismissal of the government of Mr Jyoti Basu, his arch rival, Mr Abul Barkat Ataul Ghani Khan Chowdhury, the union energy minister, has been advocating a diametrically opposite line. This, perhaps, is symbolic of the sharp differences in the West Bengal Congress(I) leadership. Mr Ghani Khan Chowdhury would like the centre to allow the Left Front government to run its full term in office, till May 1982. He does not favour immediate elections in the state. According to the scheme put forward by his group, President's Rule should be imposed on West Bengal after the term of the present government is over. The scheme envisages a President's Rule in the state for around a year after the government's term has finished and the holding of elections, based on revised electoral rolls, thereafter. The main charge of the Congress(I) against the Left Front government being that it has "indoctrinated" the officials and "rigged" the electoral rolls. The scheme envisages remedy for both. Mr Ghani Khan Chowdhury is believed to have told the central leadership that it should not consider a major change in the bureaucracy because the officials will be on the side of the party in power—and after the imposition of the President's Rule, the ruling party at the centre certainly wields power.

There is yet another proposal before the central leadership, but the authors of the scheme being close friends of the former West Bengal chief minister, Mr Siddhartha Shankar Ray (who has so far failed to regain Mrs Gandhi's favours), it may not be taken too seriously. According to this school, the Congress(I) should realise that since in any case it cannot win the Assembly elections next year, it should allow the CPI(M)-led front to continue in office till the normal end of its tenure. Not only that, even after losing the elections, the Congress(I) should allow the next term of the Left Front in office to pass off peacefully.

Mrs Gandhi: time to topple the Left Front government?

The theory is that by remaining the ruling party in the state for two terms continuously, the CPI(M) is bound to suffer such an erosion in its credibility that it will commit permanent suicide. This scheme is too far-fetched, quite obviously.

The Congress(I) has been approached by two prominent former party-men in the past few months for admission, but in both cases the response from Mrs Gandhi has been lukewarm. Mr Siddhartha Shankar Ray has been close to Mr Rajiv Gandhi even in the days when Mr Gandhi was not in politics. Mr Ray's house in Delhi was among the few houses Mr Gandhi used to visit in the political circuit before joining politics. But that has not helped Mr Ray to gain an entry into the Congress(I) because Mrs Gandhi is yet to forgive him for his volte-face after the 1977 election defeat. After having been one of her principal advisers in the matter of declaration of Emergency, Mr Ray became a principal Indira-Sanjay baiter after the poll

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defeat. That scar will be difficult for him to disguise. Otherwise, Mr Ray is perhaps the best choice for the Congress(I) to project as the chief ministerial candidate in the state.

The other person who did not find it easy going with Mrs Gandhi was Mr Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi. However, he is now reconciled to being in the opposition and has approached the CPI(M) for an alliance in the state elections.

Whether Mrs Gandhi will dismiss the Left Front government during the *pujas*, as advised by a section of her partymen, will largely depend on the choice of Governor for West Bengal. The present incumbent, Mr Tribhuvan Narain Singh, has been told he has to go. But his successor has not been chosen, till the moment of writing. Mrs Gandhi would prefer Mr Mohanlal Sukhadia, the veteran Rajasthan leader. But Mr Sukhadia, who is a Lok Sabha member, is not too willing to leave active politics. At one stage the name of Haryana's former strongman, Mr Bansi Lal was also considered. But Mr Bansi Lal, too, was unwilling to leave active Delhi politics. The one card the CPI(M) has is Assam: The Congress(I) is keen to get CPI(M) support for a Congress(I) government in Assam. Will a fresh term for Anwara Taimur in Assam be the price of Mr Jyoti Basu's continuance in office?

... And how the CPI(M) wants to combat Delhi during President's Rule

BARUN SENGUPTA finds out

Ever since Mrs Gandhi came to power in 1980, one fear that has ruled the Left Front is of being summarily removed from power. Had the CPI(M) had any idea that supporting Charan Singh would have led to Mrs Gandhi's return, it would never have helped topple Morarji Desai. In fact, even one day before the election results, pragmatic leaders like Mr Promode Dasgupta, the WB party general secretary, openly stated that no single party could possibly get an absolute majority. It was generally held that a coalition government with the CPI(M) as a major constituent would be formed at the centre. Instead along came Mrs Gandhi, the lady who had been PM in 1971-72.

The CPI(M) leaders took three important decisions straightaway: first, they would avoid any major confrontation with Mrs Gandhi: neither would they indulge in provoking the centre nor would they join a coalition front against Mrs Gandhi; second, they would support Mrs Gandhi on all possible national and international issues without major compromises; and third, they would step up the process of strengthening their power base, specially in the rural areas of West Bengal, Kerala, and Tripura so that the party could absorb a violent attack from a hostile Congress.

The CPI(M) is, theoretically, a revolutionary party. But it has not participated in revolutionary politics since 1971; even during the Emergency it preferred to keep a low profile.

After 1980, the CPI(M) began a two-pronged strategy: talk with Delhi, and build quietly a solid rural base. The CPI(M) has few illusions about the violence that could take place later. So, in fact, it is preparing itself to use violence if the need arises. The party is strengthening an underground organisation, and is, in fact, collecting arms.

West Bengal's CPI(M) leaders are confident that though Mrs Gandhi might succeed in toppling the Kerala Left Democratic Front ministry by instigating inter-party squabbles, he will not be able to use that method in West Bengal. The CPI(M) is definite that the West Bengal government can only be removed from power by force. And they also know that the Assam problem has bought them time.

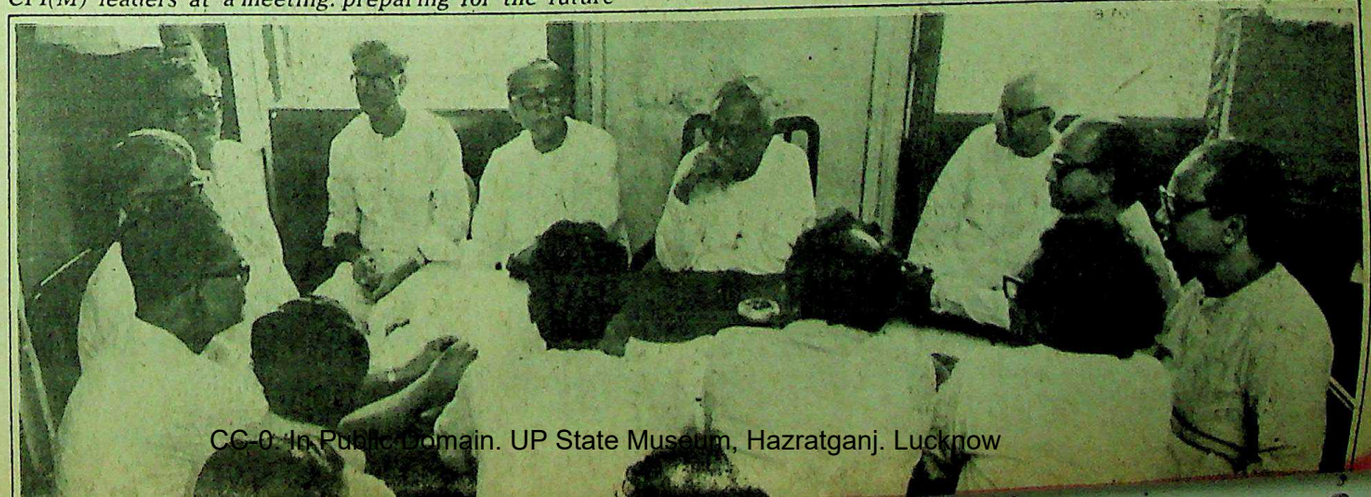
The CPI(M) has consolidated its position through elections to the *panchayats*, the municipalities and educational institutions at a pace never seen during the Janata regime. It has also placed its supporters in government offices and the police force. In addition, leftists are trying to win over the large body of state government employees by increasing their wages and benefits.

There has been a price: an increase in the state's expenditure. Funds originally allotted for long term development projects like irrigation, agricultural development and construction of roads are now being channelised to meet the demands of increased wages. Since 1977, the CPI(M) has concentrated its efforts to raise the standard of living in the rural areas by freely distributing food and money through its various projects like "Operation Barga", the Food for Work programme and other relief measures. However, over the past one-and-a-half years, the relief measures have not been restricted to the rural areas alone: the urban population has also benefitted from the CPI(M)'s largesse. Writers and artists are now being financially aided by the Left Front government. This is being done with the primary motive of building across-the-board support. The CPI(M) is confident that the recipients of the benefits will vote for the party in future elections, or equally important, be voluble supporters in the cities.

Within the party, however, there seems to be a conflict of opinion between Mr Promode Dasgupta, and Mr Jyoti Basu. While Mr Dasgupta feels that the party should become more militant to counter the centre's moves using mass meetings, processions, strikes and *bandhs*, Mr Basu feels a softer line is adequate for the moment. The chief minister thinks that militancy can only worsen the law and order situation and give the centre another excuse to act against the government.

Mr Basu is definite that Mrs Gandhi will not allow the CPI(M) to participate freely in the coming elections. For the moment, Mr Basu is content with remaining in power as long as he can without provoking the centre too much: but the quiet preparation goes on for the future.

CPI(M) leaders at a meeting: preparing for the future



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The Government

Infighting in sugar lobby

The union minister for agriculture, Rao Birendra Singh, is in a fix: he does not know whether to accede to the demand of VasantdadaPatil,the Congress(I) general secretary and the president of the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories that the cases launched against five cooperative sugar factories by the government be withdrawn or to proceed with the cases as demanded by Vikhe Patil, a prominent MP from Maharashtra and a stalwart in cooperatives. The prosecution was launched by the Janata government and in 1979, the CBI was asked to start investigations against five sugar cooperative factories—three in Maharashtra and one each in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The CBI investigations revealed that all the factories had wilfully defaulted in the distribution of 80% of the free sale sugar quota allotted to them. Vasantdada Patil is very keen that the case against at least one of the sugar cooperatives, with which he is closely associated, be dropped and had even approached the union home minister Zail Singh, but drew a complete blank. He has now sought the intervention of Rao Birendra Singh. Vikhe Patil, on the other hand, has threatened that if the cases are dropped he would launch an agitation. Will the agriculture minister sort out the issue?

Promoting Manipur—for whom?

Peculiar are the ways of the Manipur government. Recently, the state government was given a grant of Rs 10 lakhs by the Planning Commission for the development of tourism in the state. As it is, this amount is not sufficient for infrastructural work. But to make matters worse, the administration decided to arbitrarily take away Rs 1.75 lakhs from this amount and set up a publicity unit in Delhi "to build up the image of ministers." There are a number of bills pending with the tourism department, which is now engaged in building a tourist lodge in Imphal. Could not the money be better utilised?

Small-scale units held at ransom

The government has changed the existing nomenclature of 37 items reserved for manufacture in the small-scale sector. Within the item of confectionery, chocolate and chocolate preparations were earlier exclusively manufactured by the small scale units. But no longer. For, by changing the definition, the government has allowed organised large scale industries to enter this field. Over the years, in this manner, more and more large industrial concerns have managed to get backdoor entries to manufacture items reserved for the small-scale sector. While large industrial concerns have often benefitted by collusion with certain small-scale units, it is also true that many small-scale units are being held at ransom by large units by withholding and repeatedly defaulting on payments. A few years ago, there was talk of introducing comprehensive legislation to protect the interests of the small-scale sector, but by all indications, it will be a long while before such legislation is introduced.

'High-rail' robbery?

The Indian Railways could be nailed for many crimes, but there's a new one for the list: instead of carrying coal to consumers who have booked it, the railways have started using the coal meant for some other consumer to run its steam engines. This is just like a truck owner who has been hired to carry diesel to gas pumps, using up the diesel to run his fleet of trucks. No truck owner does this for the simple reason that he would be sued by the contracting party. But the Railways have taken care of this eventuality by a careful choice of its victims. It has left unidisturbed the coal that is meant for the major coal consumers, namely the power stations, cement plants and other large industries. It gobbles up only the coal which has been booked by small-scale industries, which are not powerful enough to take on a big outfit like the Railways. When asked how much coal has been 'hijacked' in this fashion, the official reply is: "No figures are maintained separately on this subject." Naturally.

Scheme to revive sick industries defeated

The central government has recently asked public financial institutions to reduce interest rates under the soft loan scheme for modernisation programme in five sick industries—textiles, sugar, cement, engineering and jute—from 12.5% to 8.1%. But, the conditions attached to it are such, that it may defeat the objective of reviving the sick industries. One condition is that the reduced interest rates will only apply if, according to the financial institutions, the units concerned are capable of early recovery and revival. In other words, the grant of loans on easy terms is left purely to the discretion of these institutions. Even the public sector National Textile Corporation (NTC) which is to nurse back to health 103 textile units under its charge, falls under this condition. Besides, the NTC has also been charged with the task of producing cheaper cloth for the poorer sections. In the face of this, should not NTC get loans at cheaper interest rates? Higher interest rates will increase NTC's losses.

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How Delhi spies on Kashmir politicians

By UDAYAN SHARMA

It is hardly a surprise that Delhi keeps an eye on the states, or that it keeps a slightly more watchful eye on the states run by opposition parties, or that it is most vigilant about what happens in the very sensitive state of Jammu and Kashmir—or, for that matter, that this is true irrespective of whether Mrs Indira Gandhi is in power or Mr Morarji Desai. But who are the eyes and the ears of the centre in the states? The general belief is that intelligence agencies run by the centre perform this role, and this general belief is generally right—but this is not the full truth. Along with the Intelligence Bureau (IB), the centre has other agencies and sources too. And Delhi's need to know extends over a wide area—from potential saboteurs on or across the borders, to internal saboteurs whose ambitions may be to topple governments in the Assembly or Parliament.

The IB's state unit is called the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SIB). The SIBs are normally located in the state capitals, but not necessarily in all the state capitals. For example, the SIB in Madras controls, in addition to Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh too. Normally the head of the SIB is of the rank of DIG, the only exception being West Bengal: the SIB in Calcutta is headed by a person of the rank of IG, or joint director. This, incidentally, is not because the centre feels especially threatened by the presence of a leftist government in West Bengal, but because of the sensitive and potentially explosive nature of the eastern sector which the SIB in Calcutta has to handle. One post of joint director in Kohima has been created to help monitor the east, but even then it is one of the toughest assignments in the country.

Not that the SIB in Calcutta ignores the CPI(M); it keeps a close tab on all the leftists. Before the CPI(M) joined the government in 1967, the SIB used to work in close cooperation with the state's Special Branch, but now doubt has crept in because the Special Branch has been infiltrated by sympathisers and supporters of the leftists. The paradox here is that the top and middle level officials of the SIB in Calcutta are generally on deputation from the state government, so one wonders how pure is the pristine purity of the SIB here, or how it can really be maintained.

Contrary to any misconceptions, the IB and the SIB is not really flush with secret funds which it can disburse lavishly. In fact, its officials are often handicapped by poor facilities, particularly at the district level, where they have to keep a strict distance from the local police. As a result they have to use public transport and cannot avail themselves of the comforts that the *thana* can add to their lives. Usually, IB operatives keep a low profile: at least that is what they are supposed to do.

There is also a branch of the external affairs ministry, headed by a senior IPS official, in Calcutta, which is meant to concentrate on activities across the border, but uses its spare time to take a look at the left parties.

Sheikh Abdullah: watched by the SIB

SONDEEP SHANKAR

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But what is more interesting is the centre's penetration of the state Special Branch in West Bengal, through a group of officers who have been taken into the confidence of the IB. This "penetration" has become "necessary" only after the entry of the CPI(M) into government, and the resulting conflict between Congress and Marxist interests. In any case, this has been a very successful operation, and no one in the state knows who Delhi's real men are in the Special Branch.

The much-and-often-unnecessarily-maligned RAW also functions in Calcutta. But the grapevine says that RAW is going to be bypassed by a new outfit now being set up in Calcutta by a former top policeman whose efficiency has been often tested and proved in the past.

But these are all official agencies. Delhi keeps in touch with what is happening in West Bengal through other channels as well. For instance, people in the business and trading communities who generally have to keep their noses close to the ground in order to survive in their businesses (some of them have become expert double agents, supplying information both to the state and the central governments). One of the worst sources of information about West Bengal is the state unit of the Congress(I) which, technically and legally, should be the best source. But if Mrs Gandhi only depended on her party to give her information about West Bengal, she would learn nothing about the state and everything about which faction of the Congress(I) was doing what wrong where.

Tamil Nadu is one state which, contrary once again to popular conception, has given the centre the least amount of trouble. In fact, the Tamil regional parties seem to vie with each other to publicly support and secretly help whichever party is in power in the centre. And as one intelligence source put it, "The DMK and the AIADMK are capable of supporting anyone in Delhi."

Obviously, the state watched most closely, taken most seriously, is Jammu and Kashmir. The SIB in Srinagar is headed by a deputy director of the DIG rank. He has two assistant directors, one in Srinagar and the other in Jammu. Information from this state is fed to the special desk at the headquarters in Delhi, controlled by one deputy director (rank of DIG) and one assistant director, who process the information and send it on to the director through a joint director.

Thanks to the all-too-keen interest Pakistan and China take not only in Kashmir but also in its politicians and their financial welfare, the state demands some very special attention from our intelligence services. Therefore, RAW, CBI, Special Branch, army intelligence and BSF intelligence are all active in this state. It is now well known that even the Governor plays a part in helping to gather information and brief the Prime Minister: he uses the SIB to get the most accurate possible picture of what is happening, so that his reports to the centre are not a mere formality. And of course tapping phones is part of the approved process of intelligence gathering.

The hardcore, disciplined Jamaat-e-Islami may consider itself to be ideologically foolproof, and its members impervious to either guile or inducement, but it is heavily infiltrated. As has been Lone's People's Conference. Indeed, the situation has become such that every political activist seems to be suspecting the other.

Some of the unofficial sources used by intelligence agencies are surprising. For instance, civilian officers in private and public industries. But the main task of infiltrating the various political groups is done by the SIB. The opponents of Maulvi Farooq (Bakara Party) claim that he was broken and made a tool of the centre during his arrest in the mid-Sixties. Whenever Delhi needs someone to raise a confrontation with the Sheikh, out is brought the Maulvi. He has been on the best of terms with the centre through all the shifts in power. He was supporting Mrs Gandhi till March 1977. And then he became *the* favourite politician of Mr Morarji Desai, who even dined at the Maulvi's house while PM. And now he is Mr Rajiv Gandhi's man in Kashmir.

It is also said—with what degree of veracity is difficult to prove—that the most successful operation of the SIB in the valley was the way in which a member of the family of Mirza Afzal Beg (once the alter ego of the Sheikh) was made a source of all that happened in the National Conference inner circles. Later when the Sheikh was made chief minister and Afzal Beg too became a powerful minister, this person tried to cut off his links with the intelligence officer: eventually the matter was resolved with the officer being transferred to Delhi. It is also alleged that later Mirza Afzal Beg himself fell into a trap laid by the intelligence officers. He began believing that he could replace the Sheikh with the help of Delhi—and he was encouraged in such a belief. Many observers believe—once again such a belief can hardly be substantiated since no written documents vouch for such things—that the Sheikh-Mirza Afzal Beg controversy was carefully engineered.

Mirza Afzal Beg: misled by Delhi

The most powerful intelligence agency in Kashmir maybe the IB, but certainly the most active is RAW. However, it is to the IB that one of the most spectacular intelligence successes must be credited. Mr S. N. Mathur, who later bacame the director of IB, was the DDIB in Srinagar in 1971. To him goes the credit of the 1971 plane hijacking operation, in which an Indian plane was hijacked to Pakistan. Pakistan whooped with joy over this "defection," India stopped overflights across her airspace, and suddenly Pakistan realised it had been tricked by a double agent. This double agent Qureshi was used superbly. According to many people, the SIB really became a crack unit in Srinagar after Mr Mathur's tenure there. Its reporting on Kashmir politics is extremely good. Domestic servants of important politicians are one good source of information about the whereabouts and meetings and 'what was said.' The hardcore, disciplined (supposedly) Jamaat-e-Islami may consider itself to be ideologically foolproof, and its members impervious to either guile or inducement, but it is heavily infiltrated. As has been Lone's People's Conference. Indeed, the situation has become such that every political activist seems to be suspecting the other.

Of course the international intelligence agencies are all too eager to find out ways and means of operating in this highly sensitive region. The Soviets, like the Americans, are active too, but are said to be a little more successful. According to one source, Maqbool Butt, chief of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, who is now awaiting hanging in Tihar jail, was nabbed after a tip-off by the Russians.

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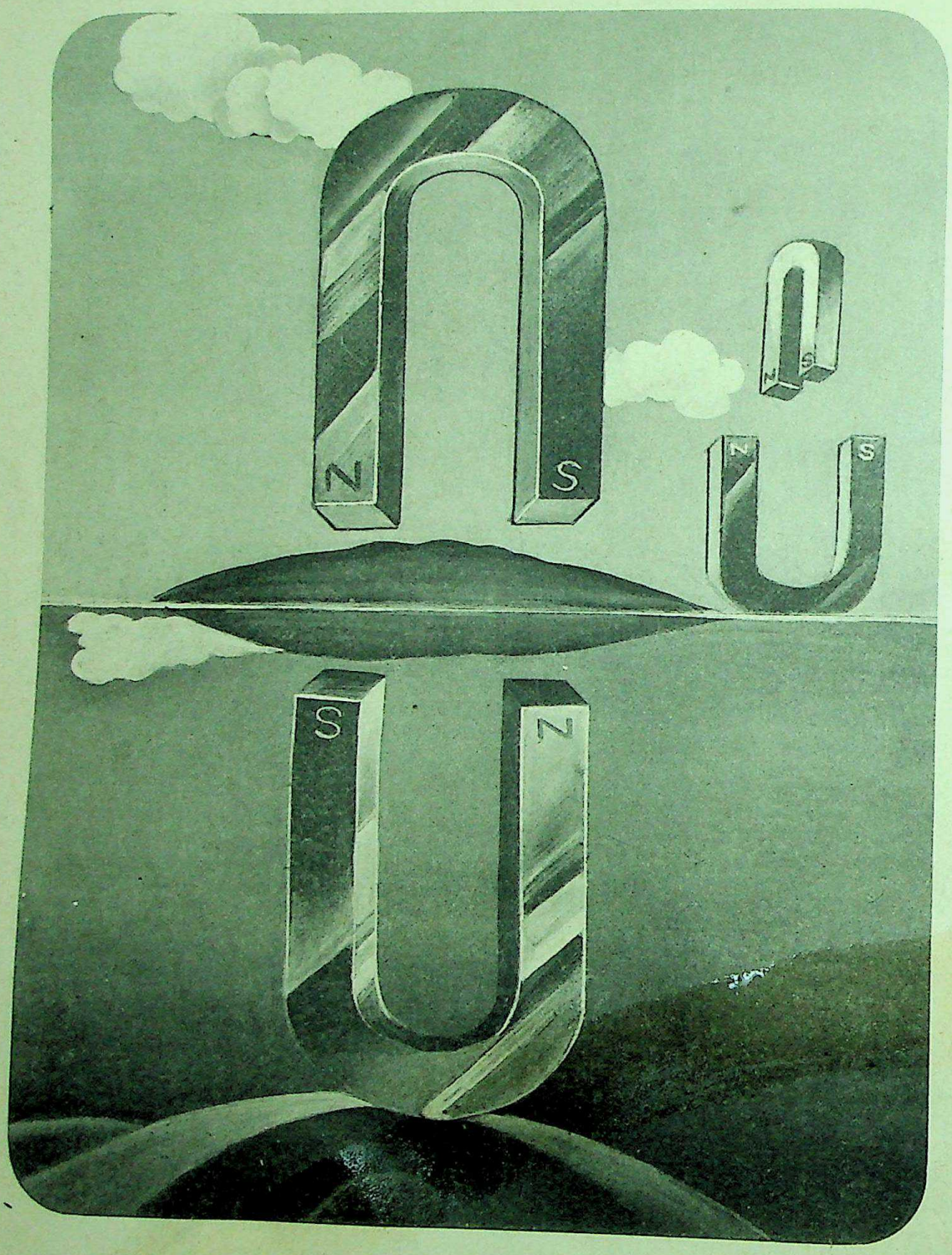

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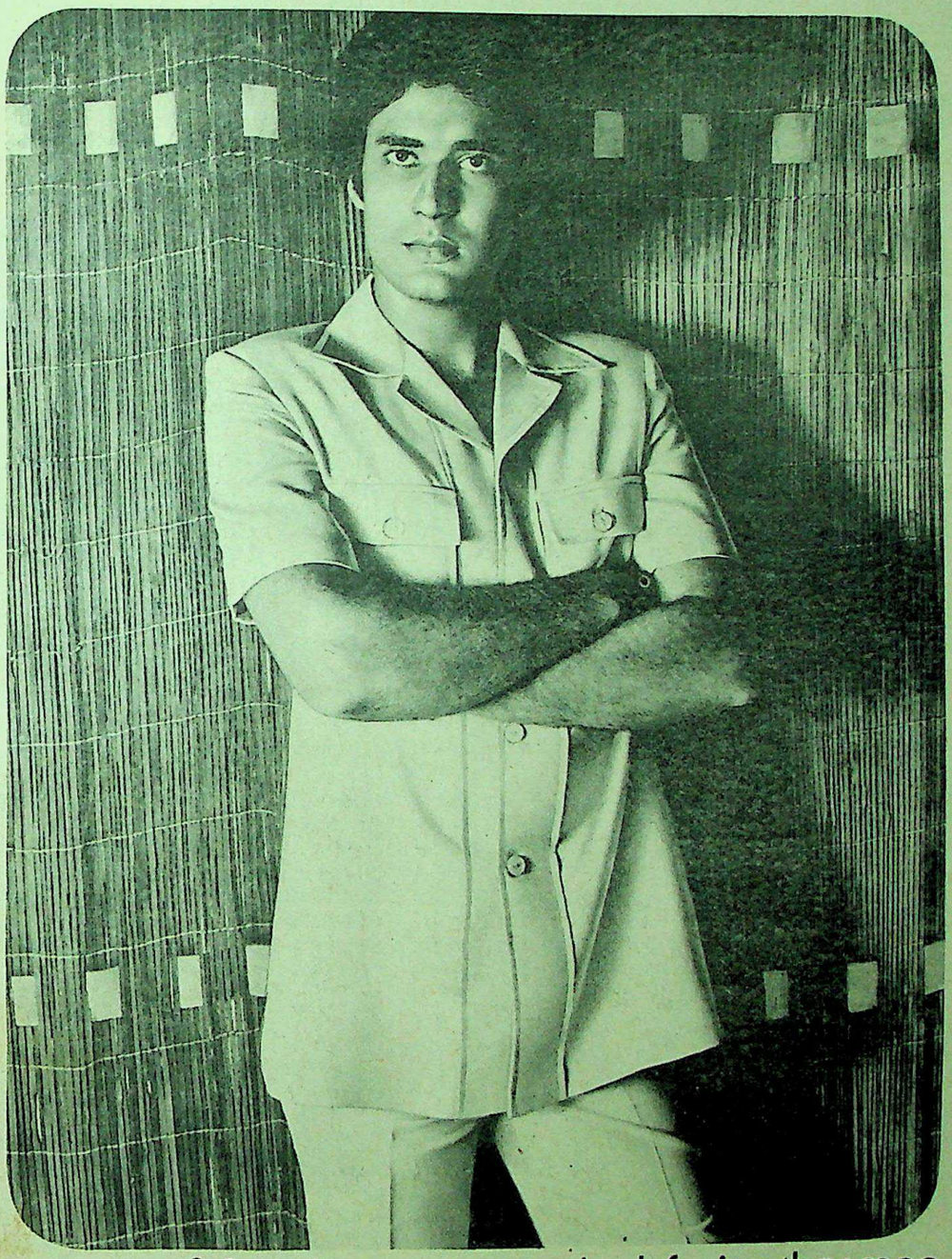

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In case you are suffering from any disease right now, please carefully compare the symptoms of such disease with the symptoms of GAS TROUBLE enumerated hereunder. If you are convinced that the root cause for your problems also is GASTROUBLE, please be assured that there is no need for fear, disappointment or anxiety over your condition. Please use GASTRO and experience fast and full relief from your troubles. It is only natural with human beings to wish to enjoy life with body and mind as much as possible and as long as possible. Hence this advice.

Most of those who suffer from the disease, commonly known as "gas trouble" are not aware of two very important aspects of this ailment. They are not aware that gas trouble gives rise to a host of other serious diseases. Most of the sufferers also do not know what to do about the complaint. Consequently such people lead unhappy and restless lives without eating proper food. Thus they slowly fall into the deep pit of ill health. We invite such people to read through the following paragraphs containing basic details about the disease. No doubt they will be immensely benefited by this knowledge.

When the digestive power called "Jadharangni" gets weakened, the food does not get digested properly and in time. Such semi-digested food ferments inside the stomach and produces foul gases. These gases in turn cause belching, chest pain and other severe uneasiness. These conditions are the main symptoms of gas trouble. Also, when the body is exposed to sun or fire, chewing or smoking are indulged in and when food items like chillies, asafoetida, tamarind, onion, liquor, tea, coffee, butter milk, curd, root vegitables, peas, dry fish etc. are excessively consumed disregarding the nature of the constitution of the person concerned, excessive bile juice is produced in the stomach. This juice causes pain and buring sensation in the upper abdomen and chest. Belching with sour, bitter, fermenting and undigested taste is experienced. This gas gets stagnated in the upper abdomen causing chillness, fever, giddiness etc. The decayed bile juice then enters the intestines and bowels. This produces a gas that travels like electricity. As this gas spreads to the brain, chest, heart etc. with electric speed, the patient feels giddiness, unconsciousness and pain around the heart. Again, the excreta and gas which accumulate in the bowels get heated because of pressure and the gas travels through intestines creating giddiness, unconsciousness, chest pain and similar conditions. All these conditions are collectively called GAS TROUBLE.

OTHER COMPLAINTS DUE TO GAS TROUBLE

Excessive generation of foul gases in the abdomen fills the stomach and creates a feeling of heaviness even when very light food is taken. Low and loud sounds from different parts of the stomach, burning sensation, feeling of disturbance as though from pin pricks, acute biting sensation inside the stomach, feeling as though water moves inside the stomach, emanating gas attacking the region of chest and gnawing pain, constriction the throat, movement of gas up and down with noise, movement of bowels either loose or in the shape of tape or clay, discharge of phlegm (Kapha), tendency to pass motion frequently, burning and itching inside the anus, frequent excessive and discoloured urination, belching with bitter taste, inclination to eat frequently, physical weakness inspite of taking nutritious food, lack of appetite, excessive appetite, cough, nausea, vomitting and pricking sensation in limbs. Piercing pain in the stomach, feeling of being bitten by ants or traversed by insects, feeling of lightness in the chest, increase in heart beats, accumulation of gas in the stomach after hard work, feeling of intoxication, severe pain in different parts of the head, deterioration in eye sight, burning sensation in the eyes, watering from the eyes, reduced or blocked hearing, humming in the ears, bad dreams (experience of many people show that majority of gastric patients have sleep filled with bad dreams), intolerence to noise, desire to lie down always, panting while walking, frequent presence of phlegm in the throat, profuse saliva in the tongue, fungus in the tongue, noxious odour in the mouth, loss of sleep, headache, cold, sneezing, constipation, pains in joints, insatiable thirst, bloodlessness, aversion to work, lack of thinking power, desire to be alone, failure of memory, lack of determination, inability to control passion, bad temper. There are innumerable people, suffering from such miserable symptoms. These sumptoms may manifest singly or in combination, permanently or temporarily. According to Ayurveda all complaints arise from the imbalance of TRIDOSHAS (Vatam, Pittam, Kapham). Of these, the first, vatam is most important. Gas trouble is related to this dosha. When obstructed gas is released from the body through any of the outlets, the patient feels relief. It is clear from this that undue accumulation of gas in the abdomen and its obstructed release are the root causes of all the above symptoms.

GASTRO—The REMEDY

There are single remedies for single complaints. There are also combination of remedies of particular complaints. Some specific remedies are there for a combination of complaints. Gastro is a specific remedy for all the symptoms and conditions arising out of gas trouble. Those who do not know that diseases are caused by the increase and decrease of the vital assets of the body (vata, pitta, kapha) may find it difficult to believe that one medicine can cure several complaints and such persons cannot be blamed for that. They can only be advised to try GASTRO and satisfy themselves. If you are a gastric patient do not be under the impression for a moment that it cannot be cured. The truth is

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contrary to that belief and GASTRO is an example. As you do not know that there are resistance powers in your system, similarly Gastro has the inherent capability and medicinal properties in it to cure gastric complaints and allied diseases. The Ayurvedic teachers of yore have prescribed invaluable ingredients to prepare medicines for the unfailing cure of such diseases, restoration of lost or damaged physical energy and strength and maintenance of the health of mind and body and replacement and rectification of the wear and tear of the human body occasioned by time and age.

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HEALTHCARE

Mysterious disease strikes Delhi

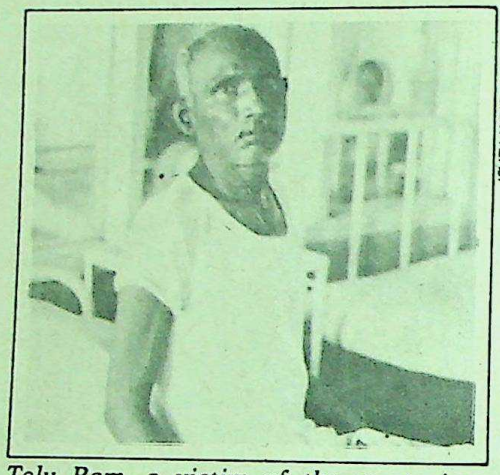
Be careful if you have had conjunctivitis

New Delhi: Close on the heels of the conjunctivitis epidemic in the capital, comes an even deadlier foe: a hitherto unknown disease which paralyses—and even kills—its victims. The outbreak of this polio-like disease was detected in mid-July. In fact, statistics indicate a close relationship between this strange disease and conjunctivitis. Thus far, very little is known about this disease except that it attacks adults—knows no social or economic distinctions, does not believe in sexual discrimination, usually gives a day or two's notice—and renders useless any one or all four of a person's limbs. Over 200 people have been admitted to the city's major hospitals with this frightening disease. Two of them have already died, at the time of writing, and the total number of people affected might run into thousands.

"I had this redness and pain in the eyes (conjunctivitis) and two weeks after being cured, I suddenly felt feverish one night. The next morning my left leg went weak and the muscles had a fluttering sensation, like a bird flutters when you catch hold of it by the feet. Then a dull pain set in and my leg went numb. After a few hours the same thing happened to my other leg and gradually my hands too—they felt as hard and immobile as ice—that's when I was taken to hospital," said Telu Ram (45), a sweeper with the municipal corporation of Delhi and a patient at the Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. Other accounts are more or less similar, the common factor being a two-week-old history of conjunctivitis, pain in the limb or limbs, and then paralysis. In the more severe cases, the chances of the paralysis remaining permanent are high. As for the rest, some have been able to fight the disease and have recovered completely, while others, showing signs of improvement, are normally discharged from hospital with instructions to visit for periodic check-ups. The mystery, however, remains unsolved. The nature and origin of the disease are unknown (an article in *Neurology India* dated 1964 being the only instance of a disease similar to this, being cited), medical opinion differs on the methods of treatment. Further, the duration of paralysis is, at best, a matter of speculation.

"Frankly, I am intrigued," says Dr G. K. Ahuja, associate professor of neurology at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), who has not been giving his patients any drugs. Painkillers in extreme cases, and physiotherapy, is all that the patients are being given at the AIIMS. Of the 20 patients admitted since mid-July, 10 have been discharged. "Though none of them had completely recovered, we expect them to be normal after a few periodic visits," explains Dr Ahuja. Polyradiculopathy is what they call it at the AIIMS. In simpler terms, "it is a non-specific response of the nervous system to a virus, conjunctivitis, in this case, and not a specific virus by itself."

Dr P. B. Mazumdar, the medical superintendent of the Dr Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital, an experienced neurologist, feels otherwise. "It is a disease stimulating polio, possibly a virus, though not any one of the three recognised strains of poliomyelitis viruses; the major difference being that polio normally attacks children. This new disease is being seen in adults only and there appears to be some sort of a relationship with conjunctivitis," he explains. The RML hospital, being bigger than the AIIMS, has been able to admit 50 patients, 30 of them were discharged after showing signs of improvement. "We have been giving our patients a cortisone preparation and vitamin B-complex," states Dr M. P. Dubey, head of the department of medicine at the hospital, who is as baffled by the strange disease as his colleagues in the medical profession.



DEBASISH CHATTERJI

Telu Ram, a victim of the mysterious disease

At the Safdarjang Hospital, one of the largest in Delhi, the authorities were apparently unaware of this new disease and were not able to furnish any data. Surprisingly enough, the National Institute of Communicable Diseases in Delhi, seemed to be blissfully unaware of the outbreak of this disease even a few days after reports appeared in the newspapers. A complacent Dr M. Dutta, deputy director of epidemiology, confessed, "We are still collecting facts and are unable to give any data at the moment," despite the fact that the disease broke out over a month ago. His ignorance was further displayed when he said, "So far we have checked medical records for polio-like diseases at a few hospitals and the incidence seems to be the same as in other months this year and in corresponding months in previous years."

Newspaper reports, often misleading and inaccurate, have already created a scare among literate sections of Delhi's populace. Many doctors in the city relate how they have had to reassure frightened patients (and even perfectly healthy people) that they had some minor ailment, easily identifiable and easily curable, and not this strange new disease. To avoid this disease, one has to avoid conjunctivitis—most of us know how to, by now. Beyond that nothing else is known. Consolation may be derived from the fact that as yet this paralytic disease is nowhere near attaining epidemic proportions. But if you have had a recent attack of conjunctivitis, you had best keep your fingers crossed.

Debasish Chatterji

Khushwant's mail watched

New Delhi: The government in Delhi has been intercepting the postal mail of not only its known opponents, which might be expected, but also of some of its most famous supporters. Number 72 on the list of those whose mail was being intercepted (before a furore in the Lok Sabha ended it) was none other than Mr Khushwant Singh, the former editor of the *The Illustrated Weekly of India* and present editor of *The Hindustan Times*, who has consistently supported Mrs Gandhi through the Emergency, and then through the more trying Janata *raj*. In fact, the reward for such support came when Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi nominated him a Member of Parliament. One reason for such action might be that the "Sanjay group", which is, to put it mildly, in the doghouse these days. Indeed, one of the most prominent and powerful members of this group, Akbar Ahmed (an MLA in Uttar Pradesh) even went through the ignominy of receiving a disciplinary letter from his party chief. Who could have imagined that this would be the fate of one of Sanjay Gandhi's closest friends?

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Libya's Gaddafi hits out at the USA

London: On 1 September Libya's Col Gaddafi threatened to attack US bases in the Mediterranean. It was a brave—if impossible—threat. But he is carrying on his one-nation war against a Reaganite America to a point where the Middle East would explode. The most dramatic battle in this war occurred on 26 August when two Libyan airforce jets were shot down over the Gulf of Sidra. Americans said that two of their F-14 Tomcat fighters were attacked by two Libyan SU-22s over international waters and the Americans shot back the Libyan jets in retaliation. However, the Libyans maintained that eight F-14s had threatened the two SU-22s in Libyan airspace and that one Tomcat was destroyed. What casts doubt about the American claim is the apparent foolishness of the Libyans in despatching two comparatively low performance aircraft to tackle the Sixth Fleet, a part of Task Force 60, which consists of two aircraft carriers (the Nimitz and the Forrestal with 100 planes each), four frigates, four cruisers, four destroyers and two destroyer escorts. It has come to be known now, that the American decision to organise a major naval exercise in the disputed waters was taken with the unanimous consent of President Reagan and his senior advisors.

Americans claim that during the first two days of the exercise, there were several intrusions by Libyan fighters. At 7 pm Libyan time, on the third day, Pentagon says, two F-14 planes spotted two Libyan SU-22 jets at a distance of 30 to 40 miles, on their cockpit radars. The SU-22s passed under the US jets and one of them fired an Atoll missile, which has a range of upto four miles, from a distance of less than two miles. It missed. The Americans fired back with Sidewinder missiles that hit both the aircrafts. The pilot of one of them was seen to eject, but no parachute was noticed from the other.

The new stipulation worked out after eight years of sluggish negotiations at the Law of the Sea Conferences, which has not been ratified yet, provides coastal states with a 12-mile territorial sea and a 200-mile 'exclusive economic zone' within which they have the sovereign rights to natural resources. But the movement of ships, aircraft and submarines belonging to other states cannot be resisted in any way. So, the US fleet was well within its rights, 60 miles from the Libyan coast.

But some questions remain. Did the Libyans really fire first? There is no evidence barring the American version to prove this. If they did, were they, by any chance, goaded into doing so? Finally, why did the US planes, having avoided the Libyan missile and given their superior speed and manoeuverability, not simply fly off? The exultation shown by members of the Nimitz crew when television cameras visited them in the Bay of Naples, a couple of days after the outbreak of hostilities, gave the impression that the Americans were celebrating some kind of a victory. Said David McLintock, a former US Navy pilot who had served in the Gulf of Sidra, on American TV soon after the incident, that provoking the Libyans into an attack has been a regular feature of previous operations.

Libya's Col Gaddafi is regarded in Washington as "the most dangerous man in the world" and the seeds of the recent air clash was planted 12 months ago when President Carter, worried about the hostages in Iran, ordered the Sixth Fleet to steer clear of controversy. The US Navy, which has staged its "war games" in the Gulf of Sidra area at least four times in the past seven summers, considered this as quite unacceptable. Some time early this spring, according to the Pentagon, the commander of the Sixth Fleet, vice admiral William Bowden, sought permission to ignore the Carter directive. The matter being sensitive, the idea was formally put to the National Security Council. The meeting took place in June. In July, William Bowden was given the permission to proceed with the manoeuveres and briefed about the confrontation risks.

President Reagan's hatred for Col Gaddafi is "well known." Indeed, his best ally in the Arab world, President Sadat of Egypt, calls Gaddafi "a madman." Other Arab regimes are less critical but admit to his "eccentricity." He came to power after a revolution in 1969, and almost immediately, succeeded in ousting the American and British bases in his country, and in obtaining more favourable terms from the American and other oil companies stationed in Libya. Ever since, with his Islamic fundamentalism and revolutionary ideals, he has been a thorn in the flesh of the West. In fact, he now maintains that the Americans propose to "invade" his country, and promises to defend the country as well as the Gulf, even if this means "a third world war."

On assuming power, the Reagan administration lost little time in adopting a tougher attitude. There has been widespread speculation in the American media about the CIA planning a coup in Libya, and even preparing to assassinate Gaddafi. These reports have been stoutly denied by the White House, but the concern expressed by some leading senators, suggests that the matter cannot be totally ignored.

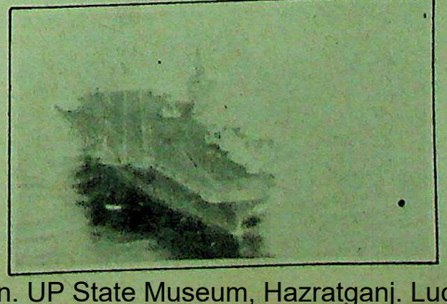
US-Libyan relation is at a breaking point. Over the years, American support for Israel has formed the basis of growing hostility between Washington and Tripoli, and expanding purchases of Soviet arms by Libya have caused increasing alarm in the United States. Another irritant has been Gaddafi's campaign of killing Libyan dissidents exiled in Europe and America. The thread snapped as it were, when Libya intervened with arms in the civil war in neighbouring Chad.

As for the Soviet reaction, looked upon as crucial and watched with great interest in the West, a Tass release villified the US military operations and bases abroad, but offered no sympathy to Gaddafi. Interestingly in Europe, despite the happiness at the Americans' rejection of Gaddafi's excessive claims to Mediterranean waters, there are distinct qualms about President Reagan flexing his military muscle. West Germany, in particular, views the episode as yet another case of the Reagan preference for "cowboy action" rather than intelligent calm.

Ashis Ray

Russian SU-22

The US aircraft carrier, Nimitz



Tomcat with a Sidewinder missile

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COURT ATTIRE

The law clerk in her blue jeans

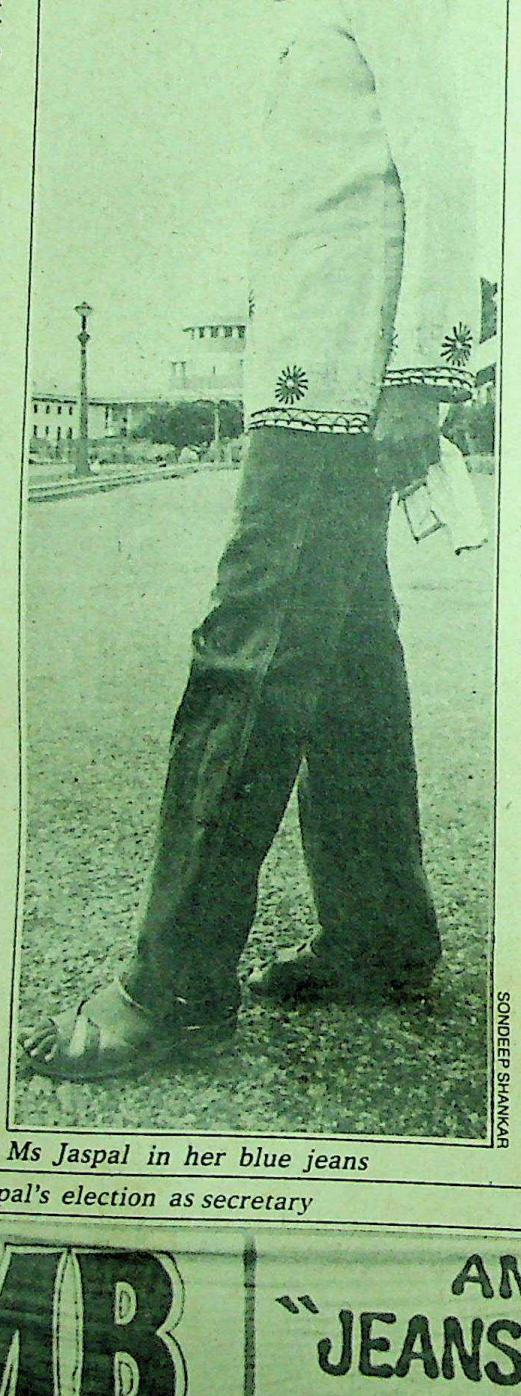
New Delhi: The bespectacled man behind the reception counter at the Supreme Court was at sea when we asked him where the advocate L. C. Goyal could be found. He was also a bit indifferent. The moment we said that the advocate's clerk was Adesh Lata Jaspal, the confused look disappeared. And so did the indifference. "Oh, you mean, the girl in the jeans? Chamber No 39," he replied, his face lighting up in that dark reception room.

Chamber 39. Ms Jaspal was not there, but everyone knew where the girl in the blue jeans (who had become an overnight celebrity, even internationally, when Chief Justice Y. V. Chandrachud asked her on 19 August not to come to court in jeans) was: Court No. Five.

Outside the court room, dressed in flowing black robes over starched white saris and with equally starched looks were two women advocates whom we asked for the whereabouts of that elusive lady in the blue jeans. "Why do you want to see her?" shot up one eyebrow. "You press people are disgusting. You want to make a mountain of a molehill. The Chief Justice was right, there is such a thing as a decent dress, and jeans are not a decent dress for the court...and she was wearing flowers in her hair and dangling earings..."

Inside the court, it was much as it would have been the day Ms Jaspal wore her un-wanted jeans (the make of the jeans is Wanted and it is suprising that the advertising whiz kids have not asked Ms Jaspal to model for them although she has had a couple of film offers). The Chief Justice was behind the bench. Ms Jaspal (21), sat quietly nibbling her pencil, wearing a steel grey *salwar-kameez*.

Ms Jaspal thinks this is much ado about nothing: "Why, I have been to court so often in jeans. Usually I wear those small tops, but that day it was a pink *kurta* with full sleeves..."



SONDEEP SHANKAR

Ms Jaspal in her blue jeans

At this point in the conversation (we were sitting in the canteen opposite the Supreme Court) Mr Goyal interrupted us: "Perhaps the Chief Justice did not mean jeans as such. After all the army officers wear khaki jeans, in the navy they wear blue jeans... Jeans is just the name of the cloth. What the Chief Justice probably meant was that the jeans were tight-fitting..."

"Were they?" we asked Ms Jaspal.

"Yes," she said demurely. "But jeans are always tight-fitting..."

There are no Supreme Court rules as such about court etiquette and clothes. But the bar council has a set of rules. The proper dress in court is white blouse or shirt and black coat. Convention, however, has it that a white sari with a white blouse is the standard dress for women advocates.

According to Mr Goyal, the court marshal called him after his case was over and asked him who the lady sitting next to him was. Later, the Chief Justice, according to Mr Goyal, asked him to tell his private secretary and clerk that saris were still available in the market, and that a sari was the proper dress.

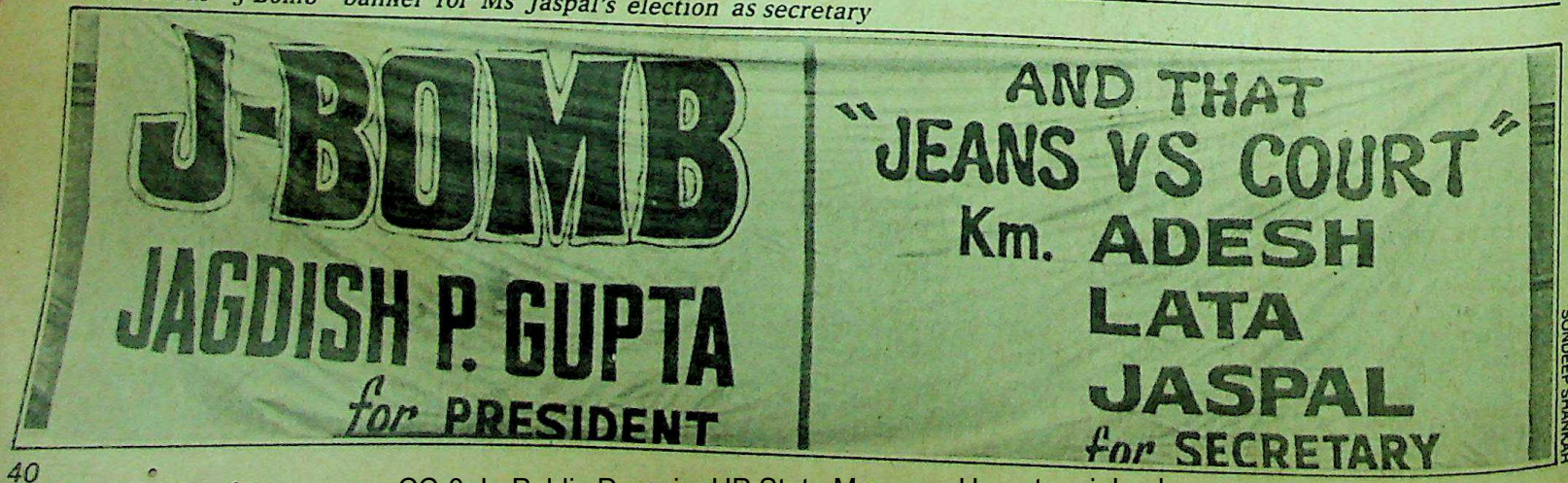
But Mr Goyal and Ms Jaspal, who began to work with him in 1980, did not leave the matter at that. Ms Jaspal wanted to know whether the Chief Justice was "making a suggestion or giving a directive." "If he was making a suggestion, she would wear a suit, but if it was a directive, she would like to file a writ, this is what I told the CJ," said Mr Goyal.

Later, when the latter went to see the Chief Justice in his chambers, he told her that he was only making a suggestion and that it did not look very "nice" if advocates and clerks wore jeans to court. Ms Jaspal said, "He told me that since I was a student of law I should come in a sober dress, at least in court..."

Ms Jaspal has certainly put away the jeans for the moment, at least to court. Her mother does not allow her to wear them there. But they have not been put away for good. She wears them to the law centre where she is contesting the elections for secretary of the students union. It is certainly making hay while the sun shines. Banners have appeared all over: "Jeans vs Court" and the contestant is referred to as J-bomb.

Madhu Jain

The famous "J-Bomb" banner for Ms Jaspal's election as secretary



SONDEEP SHANKAR

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IRAN

Shocking assassinations

Teheran: "It is possible that we will be killed tonight by someone, but we (would) have lived for Islam..." The man who said this in an interview to SUNDAY (1 February) was laid to rest at Tehran's Behesht Zahra cemetery on 31 August this year. He had been killed by an incendiary bomb; his face was burnt beyond recognition—only from the marks on his teeth was he identified as the former Prime Minister and the newly-elected President of Iran, Mohammed Ali Rajai (48). Also killed by the very same bomb was Mr Rajai's trusted friend and Iran's Prime Minister, Mohammad Javad Bahonar (47).

Two months ago a bomb planted at the headquarters of the Islamic Republican Party had claimed over 70 important political lives; stunned and angry, Ayatollah Khomeini had asked: "Who are they? Are they human beings or savage beasts who dare not show themselves? Who are they who send other people's children to carry out sabotage?" These questions were obviously rhetorical; the world knew that ousted President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr had called his supporters out into the streets to show Khomeini that he wasn't a spent force in Iran. But if the *mullahs* were confident on the streets, they had every reason to be apprehensive of what would probably happen in future; for Bani-Sadr had escaped from Iran and had taken with him a dreaded leader of the leftist guerillas, Massoud Radjavi (32).

When Bani-Sadr surfaced in France he set up the National Council of Resistance, appointing Radjavi as its leader. It was a marriage of convenience: the left merging its cause with the moderates'.

"The Ayatollah's regime has the ability to mobilise but it cannot organise the people," said Radjavi in an interview to a French daily, *La Croix*, a few days before Iran lost both its Prime Minister and President in the bomb blast. Outlining his strategy to oust the religious dictatorship of the Ayatollah, Radjavi said: "Eighty per cent of the people are against Khomeini but they are frightened by the executions.....Our objective is a general insurrection." He claimed that on 24 July, the day Mr Rajai was elected President, his terrorists had carried out 190 armed operations all over the country. The signs were ominous; but the *mullahs* paid no heed. Understandably, Radjavi has a very poor opinion of the security arrangements in Iran: "Bani-Sadr and I left Iran right under the nose and beards of the *mullahs*."

Radjavi and his *mujahideens* would probably be the deciding factor in Bani-Sadr's longrange war against Islamic fundamentalism in Iran. Their loyalty to the exiled leader can be judged from the fact that it was only after Bani-Sadr's sacking as President that they took up arms against the Ayatollah's regime. The real basis of the Radjavi-Bani-Sadr alliance is, of course, the hatred for religious dictatorship which "destroys the right to think."

"I know that now in Paris there are elements opposed to the Islamic revolution," said Ayatollah Khomeini at the funeral of Mohammed Ali Rajai and Javad Banohar. What he chose not to disclose is the fact that the very same elements in Paris have posed the most serious threat to his regime and created a political vacuum in Iran.

FOREIGN STUDENTS

Khomeini hates leftists

New Delhi: What appears to have become a civil war in Iran is spilling over to India as well. On 27 August, 185 students belonging to the leftist People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (PMOI) began a six-day hunger strike outside the UN office in New Delhi in protest against the executions of leftists by the Khomeini government after former President Bani-Sadr left for France on 19 July. It did not take more than a day for the pro-Khomeini students to react: at 6 am on 29 August, while the hunger strikers were asleep, they attacked them with screw-drivers, knives and bicycle chains, seriously injuring 21 of them who were later removed to hospital.

There were, till the beginning of last year, over 7,000 Iranian students in India. Many of them were called back after the Iranian government passed a law requiring all those who had graduated to return home and to go to the battle-front. But there are thousands who have yet to return and they belong to different factions, ranging from pro-Khomeini fundamentalists to the Marxist-Leninists and the Kurds. Those who resorted to violence on 29 August belonged to the Union of Iranian Students' Islamic Associations, a wing of the ruling Islamic Republican Party; their victims were supporters of Massoud Radjavi, the leader of the National Council of Resistance recently set up by Bani-Sadr to remove the Ayatollah's formidable regime

In 1978 it was much the same fervour; but the enemy then was the Shah and the hero was Ayatollah Khomeini. The cloth masks they wore then were black; today they are appropriately red. There is another significant difference this time: the demonstrators do not march to the Iranian embassy (they don't accept it as their mission anyway). Said one of the students: "It is too dangerous. The police are inside the building and they will shoot us. We don't mind dying, but not here. In Iran, yes, for our cause." Ironically, this student was also one of those who had marched for the Ayatollah two years ago. "We supported Khomeini because he was the head of all groups," said another student. "But the last two years have shown that Khomeini's slogans are hollow." This student believes that the release of the American hostages was a trade off for the $2.7 billion given to Iran and for the Talbot deal for automobile production in that country.

The leftists are conspicuous in their red masks. They don't consider Khomeini a true Muslim. "He has a reactionary understanding of Islam," they claim. Islam should not be forced down the throat, says one of them. They fear that the Indian government might deport them in order to keep the Ayatollah happy and the flow of Iranian oil to India steady. (During the Shah's regime the Indian government had planned to deport a number of Iranian students to their country where they would have faced a firing squad; eventually they were packed off to France.) But as long as they remain in India the street wars will probably continue.

Madhu Jain

Iranian students in masks demonstrate in Delhi

JAGDISH YADAV

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Does government want to check black money?

Bombay: Tax officials claim that the latest hawala raids have caused panic in the stock exchanges. Many hawala agents have come forward to "confess." Officials also say that zeroing in on the hawala agents is a time-consuming process and requires checking, ferreting out information, following it up with clues that are very skimpy. A diary found, for instance, has entries written in code or mere numbers which have to be deciphered. They normally deny everything and the courts take their side because there is no concrete evidence. Thus, finding the culprits is an unending process.

More than a question of logistics, the issue is a lack of political will, since a government that really wants to track down culprits can do so. Everyone knows what is being sold in black and white. Right behind the income-tax offices on Queen's Road is a string of buildings on New Marine Lines where every flat is sold on black money transactions. The tax department can make a start from there.

The capriciousness with which the hawala subject was handled belied the serious repercussions on the country's economy. As the well-known tax consultant and advocate Y. P. Trivedi said, the sophistication and ingenuity of the Indian business community, made the American mafia look like kids. Nowhere in the world have businessmen complete hold over the economy as in India.

The present hawala raids started about eight months ago when a pretty, young stenographer fell out with her boss who was in the hawala business on a small scale. One thing led to another and the tax sleuths uncovered hawala transactions valued at Rs 40 crores. Hawala is primarily a commercial word in Marwari, Hindi and Gujarati and means literally "transfer." The commercial connotation is "bogus transaction" or "bogus entry." Principally, there are two types of hawalas: purchase and sale hawala and money/loan hawala. And the one who gives a bogus bill is called a hawalawallah. Mr Trivedi recounts that he once cross-examined such a person. That man told him quite blandly, "I can give you a bill for anything, even for an elephant. If you want a bill for having bought a Boeing (aircraft) I can give you one for that too. After all I only have to make a bill, I don't have to give you the item." This is the ingenuity of a hawala transaction. In the case of purchase and sale hawala, if one wants to inflate purchases and deflate sales, the hawalawallahs show fictitious sales, purchases or expenditures made by an intermediary who was paid through account payee cheques. Later the intermediary returns the money in cash which becomes black money. When profits are high, one can "buy" losses this way, which means one can convert white money into black, making India the only country in the world where you can "buy" losses.

There are a large number of hawala agents in the city and they are necessary for people who deal in commodities where super profits exist: in polyester, filament yarn, cement, steel, dyes and chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textile, machinery and spares and foodgrains. These agents are generally nondescript.

Hawala is born of the needs of the tax evader and black money holder. For everything one does in the country today, one needs black money. For instance, even transferring a tenancy right which is against the law, fetches a fancy premium. Purchase of flats is paid for in black to the tune of 80 per cent and despite raids, some months ago on estate agents and chartered accountants, flats continue to be sold at a ratio of 80:20.

The question uppermost in every citizen's mind is whether the government is sincerely interested in reducing the evils of black money. For instance, we are told of raids on filmstars, businessmen and others. In 1980 the income-tax department conducted 3,746 searches on various premises and cash and valuables worth Rs 19.25 crores were seized. Between 1 April and August this year, there were 758 searches and Rs 10.76 crores were seized. And this as everyone knows is the tip of the iceberg. The raids hardly have any effect. Each case taken to court lasts at least five years and assessment takes equally long. And, meanwhile, black money continues to be made by the hour.

Olga Tellis

How a government is playing with human lives

Lucknow: Mr Mohan Singh, Lok Dal MLA and the party's chief whip, lashed out at the UP ministry of health, especially its officers, in the last Assembly session for succumbing to graft. Till the time of writing no inquiry against the department has been instituted.

According to Mr Singh, the ministry of health invited tenders for the purchase of ayurvedic, allopathic and homeopathic medical kit bags to the tune of Rs one crore and 68 lakhs. According to the conditions of the tender, only those firms which possess licenses for production and sale of medicines could put in their bids. Among the firms which submitted the tenders, the lowest was given by M/S A.B.L. Research of Hapur, UP. Also taking part in the tender were three Delhi firms: among them was the firm which had quoted the highest, the Delhi State Small Scale Industrial Corporation (DSSSIC). The DSSSIC does not possess the necessary license for the production or sale of medicines. The two other Delhi firms came to know that they would not qualify for the tenders because of their high rates so they withdrew in favour of DSSSIC. But not before they had pressurised the joint director (health) of UP, Mr R. P. Dass. According to Mr Mohan Singh, Mr Dass was made to accept the tender of the DSSSIC for a 'consideration.' What the two other Delhi firms would do was supply the DSSSIC with the medical kits which in turn would be sold to the government. The order for the purchase was given to DSSSIC despite protests from the deputy director of the UP industries directorate who is a member of the purchase committee. It is interesting to note that the DSSSIC were to supply both ayurvedic and allopathic medicines. This is illegal.

The purchase committee had decided before passing the orders, that the 12 drugs which were to be supplied with the medical bags should undergo a sample test to prove their genuineness. The medicines were sent to the government test house in Lucknow which found five of the 12 medicines, spurious. The joint director, Mr Dass, then sent the medicines to the drug inspector asking him to have them tested at two private test houses: the Shri Ram test house and the Analytical Testing Corporation. The drug inspector raised objections saying that sections 23, 24 and 25 of the Drug Act did not permit him to have the medicines tested at private testing houses. Soon after the drug controller changed the order and had the medicines sent to two government test houses: the government Analysis Centre at Lucknow and the National Test House at Calcutta. The reports from the government test houses were the same: five of the samples were spurious. Despite the reports from the government test houses, the UP health ministry went ahead with its purchase. Till the time of writing, Rs. 80 lakhs have already been spent for the purchase. The state government, it seems, is bent on playing with human lives that are going to be treated with spurious drugs.

Santosh Bhartiya

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SUN GRACE

Suddenly.. it's Sun Grace

Bask in it.
Exuberate in it.
Feel it. Wear it.
Live it.
The colour.
the mood.
the vitality
of it is like
a new day
in your life.

SUN GRACE
Fabrics
Exclusive Dress Materials
Commander
Lordship Shirtings
From Mihir Textiles and Matulya Mills

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

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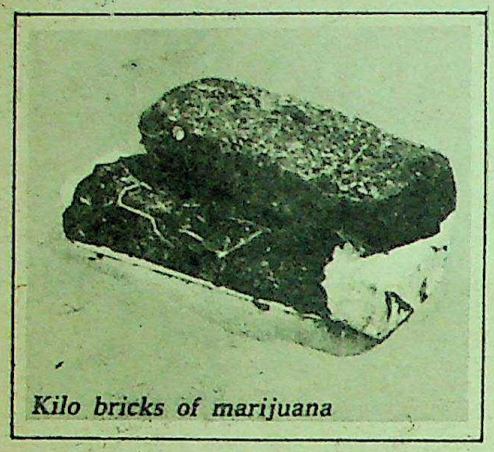
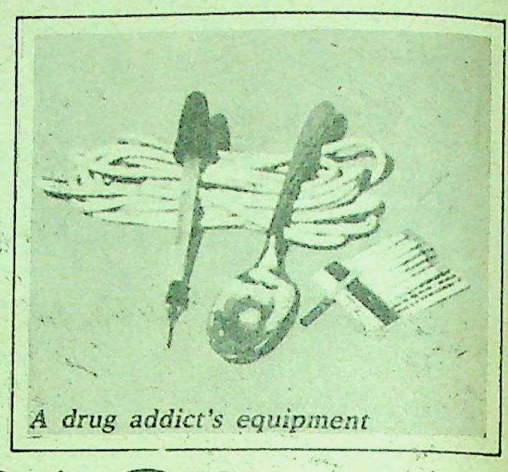


Kilo bricks of marijuana

SONDEEP SHANKAR



A drug addict's equipment

DRUGS: A PASSAGE THROUGH INDIA

MADHU JAIN reports how drugs produced in the Golden Crescent make their way West through India, along with local consignments

It was an innocuous pile of fork lift tyres lying around in open crates at Frankfurt airport. While unloading, one of the tyres fell on the ground and developed a hair-line fracture. Within seconds narcotics squad dogs rushed to the tyre and began to bark. The game was up.

The Germans immediately warned the American customs: the tyres had been airlifted from New Delhi and were headed for New York. And when four men turned up to "take delivery of the merchandise," the police were ready. There were 300 grams of the finest hashish in each one of the "made in India" tyres. In all, 100kgs of hashish were found. This was only *one* of the consignments.

Meanwhile, the Germans had also warned the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in New Delhi. The airway bill was found and the men at the Delhi end, including a young Stephanian, were arrested. One of the Indians of Jama Masjid area who had been involved in rubberising the tyres flew to the United States to testify against the four men who had been arrested. They were sentenced to no less than 15 years' imprisonment each on the evidence of this Indian. But the Indians in Delhi, though arrested were soon out on bail and have yet to be sentenced. (Hence, no names.)

For narcotics, it has become more than a passage to India. It is a passage through India. This country is becoming a very important transit point for drugs, a clearing house into which come opium-based drugs like morphine and heroin from the infamous *Golden Triangle:* Laos, Burma and *Thailand, and, the Golden* Crescent: *Afghanistan, Iran and* Pakistan, and

SONDEEP SHANKAR

then out again to the West, this time suitably white-washed.

An Indian, or even a foreigner, with Delhi or Bombay as his embarkation point, is not likely to be searched by European customs officials as thoroughly as someone flying directly from Bangkok or Kathmandu into Europe. It costs about Rs 5,000 to hire a courier to take out the drugs in, say, a guitar. For harder drugs like heroin, a courier can he paid anything upto Rs 10,000.

India is a very convenient cauldron for drugs. Drugs find their way into this country from the Golden Triangle either through Burma to Imphal and then goes to Bombay or Delhi—and finally to the West. Drugs too come in from Nepal which has a 1,800 kilometre border with India. Drugs are now pouring in from the Crescent, where the poppy fields are flourishing in the absence of control by the governments and drug traffickers are literally making the best of a bad situation.

There are other equally important reasons why more and more drugs from the Crescent are coming into India. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the land route which was used to carry the drugs to Europe (the other route was by air) became useless. (Even the Turkish guest workers who carried drugs to Germany were caught.) Moreover, less heroin is being produced in the Triangle after recent droughts. Indian airports, consequently, have become more popular and less dangerous take-off points. Again, narcotics from the Golden Triangle, until a couple of years ago, used to find its way to Hong Kong where Western syndicates would swoop down to collect their consignments. But the

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severe penalties for both drug users (abusers is more appropriate) and traffickers were effective deterrents. The death penalty in countries like Burma and Thailand and even Turkey scared away many smugglers. The *Midnight Express* certainly does not stop in India.

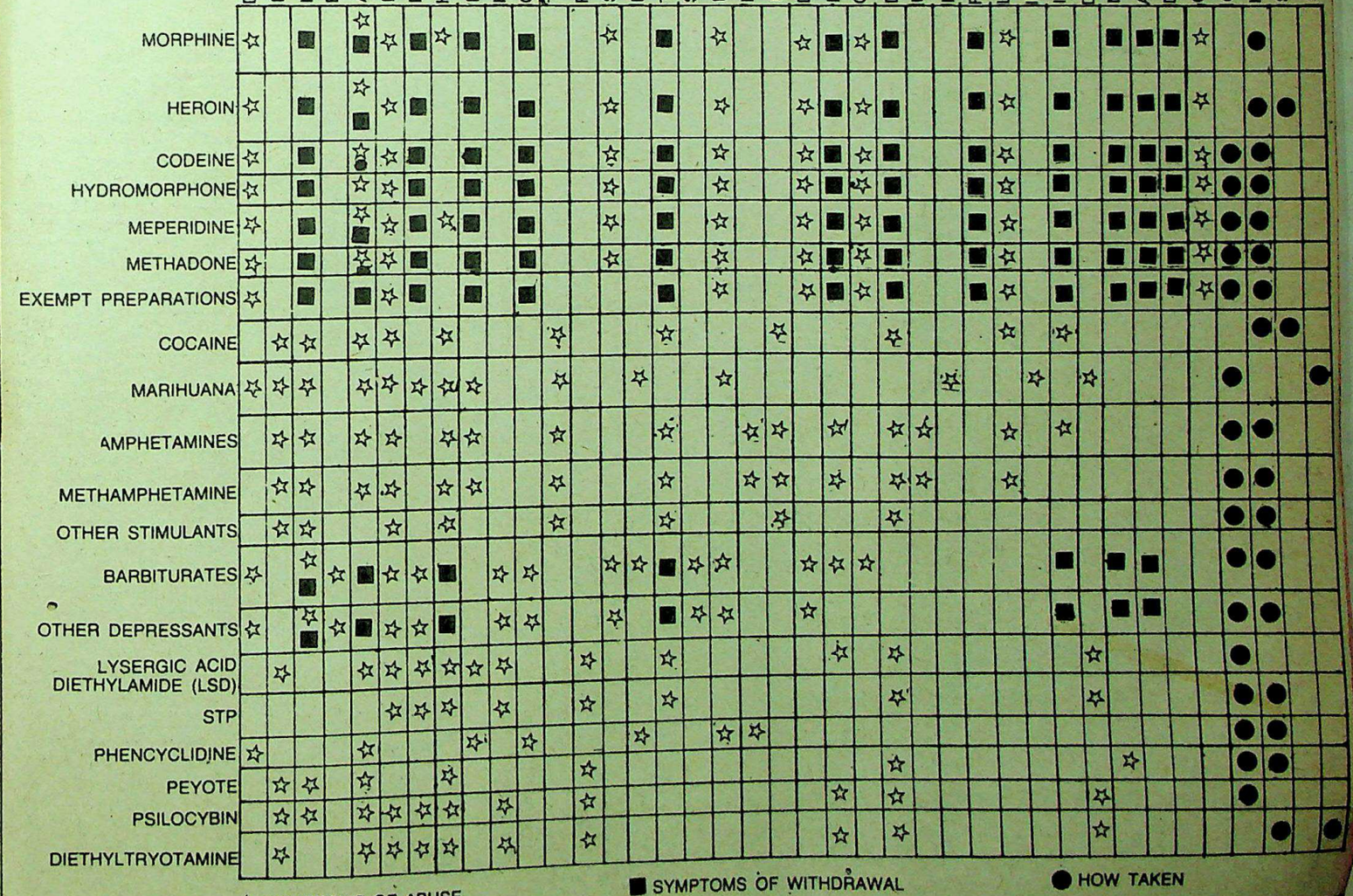
India's importance as a transit point increased because it is considered a "soft" place. In India, a distinction is made between drug abusers and traffickers: the former get about a year in jail or less; while the sentence for possession of narcotics is upto seven years but seldom more than three years is given. The fines are ridiculously low—seldom over Rs 30,000 for traffickers.

But what is even more tempting for the dope smugglers is the fact that it is very easy to get a bail order in India. If you have money, the right connections and an ample amount of grey cells, India is the ideal place for a drug trafficker to operate from. There is an Israeli drug trafficker who has been in Delhi for several years. This tough-looking former commando has a house in Vasant Vihar. He conveniently arranges to get arrested on a bailable offence—a few grammes of opium "found" on him are enough—and then bribes court officials not to bring his case forward. Since he is on bail, he can't leave the country, even though his travel documents are no longer valid. Business continues as usual, normally from a hotel off Connaught Circus.

Easy bail and the lenient anti-trafficking laws are not only attractions for the drug traffickers but also for the drug addicts. India has become a perfect haven for drug addicts and "pushers" because drugs are cheap and easily available. And even more important is the fact that the police often look the other way for a small amount of money or for other "favours" if the "junkie" is female and white. Nor is getting a false passport a difficult matter. There are many printing presses turning out perfect passports which can be had for a price.

There is an intricate narcotics network in India which is rapidly getting more efficient, sophisticated and deadly. It involves not only the peddler on the streets in the notorious Paharganj area in Delhi but also a millionaire smuggler in Bombay who has excellent connections among some

Drugs and their symptoms



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very influential people. (The police know who he is but have no proof because he never carries more than a gram of heroin or any other drug on him and is too clever by half.) In between are scores of other people—hippies, junkies, pimps, customs and police officials, doctors, lawyers, travel agents and exporters and importers. The millionaire, who lives near Napean Sea Road, has an obliging mother-in-law in west Delhi who often stores the "merchandise" for him. Unfortunately, on a recent raid on her house the police only discovered that irritating one gram of heroin—probably a sample. Only this man's alleged Delhi associate, Kishore Deb Mukherjee who lives in Karol Bagh, was arrested and convicted abroad in 1978 for possession of heroin, hashish and cocaine.

The network runs deep and wide and its tentacles have spread even into jails. Last year an Italian model was flown out of India by the Italian embassy after a two-year spell in an Agra jail. She had been caught with some morphine and was sentenced to jail. But once there, this model, who lives in Munich, continued to get her regular supply of morphine. She had to prostitute herself to inmates and jail officials to earn money for the drugs. When she entered the jail she was a beautiful girl of 22. When she left she looked twice her age: her face had become bloated and ugly.

Tihar jail has recently become infamous for drug trafficking within its walls. One of the doctors who has treated some of the drug addicts there told this correspondent that it was obvious that the addicts were regularly getting their supplies. "If they weren't, they would be violent and desperate... you can't imagine how desperately their bodies need the drugs. If you touch the stomach of a morphine addict, who has been off the drug for some time, it is as if an animal is kicking from within. But the ones I saw were quiet..." So if toothpastes, soaps and cakes get in, so do drugs. Even the CBI director, G. S. Bawa, grudgingly admits this. Some people say that the Mafia is behind the scene, pulling the strings. But police and customs officials in India do not believe this—despite the fact that one of the Mafia's hired killers, Ilyas, an Egyptian, was deported from India in February after he spent several months in Delhi trying to kill Walter Harrisson, a taxi driver who witnessed many of the narcotics transactions. Most officials believe that the big bosses—the ones behind the scenes—are Indians who use the hippies and junkies as buyers, pushers or couriers.

Smugglers have merely diversified. They have added narcotics to the list of commodities they trade in. The arithmetic is simple and stunning. One kilogramme of hashish costs Rs 2,000 in India. In the United States, it fetches as much as Rs 32,000. Hashish oil costs 150,000 dollars per kilo and morphine which can be bought for Rs 30,000 a kilo sells for 700,000 dollars.

A DRUG ADDICT'S PARADISE

It was supposed to have been akin to the legendary Shangrila. A lush, tropical green visage. A home for exiled monks, from Kampuchea, Vietnam and Tibet. And an atmosphere of peace and tranquility, ideal for meditation. Disturbed only by the distant hum of DTC buses plying on Mehrauli Road.

But, inside it was more akin to hell. The Buddhist Youth Hostel at Ashoka Vihar, in Delhi, a kilometre away from Qutub Minar, was a paradise all right—a paradise for drug addicts. There were a dozen drug addicts from West Europe in various stages on the journey to 'chemical-nirvana' when we entered the derelict, evil-smelling canteen at one end of the hallowed ground reserved for the Buddhists. Pandit Nehru had originally supported the idea for a centre of world Buddhist fellowship here. But it was for a nirvana of a very different kind indeed.

Two of the "junkies," stared blankly at the ceiling. The rest sat huddled over a chess board. These people must once have been the beautiful flower children. They had withered. Not one of them could have weighed much more than a 100 pounds. One of them had every inch of his chest and arms tattooed with snakes and dragons. There was even a cherubic German blonde in her teens with the baby fat barely off her cheeks. But the pink from her cheeks had vanished. When she smiled, she was metamorphosed into an old woman: there were hardly any teeth, those left were charcoal black. She was far on the morphine trail.

As soon as our photographer took out his camera, the glazed looks disappeared. The hippies (or whoever they were) descended on him like hawks. "No pictures," they snarled. The French girl who had taken us to this hostel tugged at my sari in quiet desperation and said, "It is time to go... these people are dangerous. They will even kill..."

People have disappeared from here. And nobody has been the wiser for it. A few years ago a drug addict died of an overdose and he was cremated before anyone could identify him. The police don't enter this little Eden of drug addicts. The lodge might not have diplomatic immunity, but it has something which might even be better—religious immunity.

The police only enter when called—for instance when there are violent fights and drunken brawls. Some plainclothesmen also hang around in the hostel and they all tell, with that unmaskable glee of a voyeur, of the naughty goings-on in the hostel: orgies, and white women bathing out in the open. (The farmers of Mehrauli have protested to the police about this because they feel that this has a corrupting influence on their families.) The wonder is that while the officials in the "field" know all about this youth hostel, the information has not made its way to the bosses on top. Recently, however, a senior police official has come to know that since the mid-70's this hostel has been turned into a den of iniquity.

The junkies, on the day we visited the hostel, may have been in a foul mood because they now have to find a new hideout: there was a notice outside the office of the lodge's secretary which said that everyone would have to leave by the end of August. Where else could they find a place so secure?

The secretary, a rather forlorn-looking Cambodian monk who left his country in 1972 (he was in Pune until last year), was quite perplexed when we wanted to talk to him. What he saw around him certainly wasn't Buddhism. "There is no Buddhist activity here. People who used to give us money now ask us if this place has become a night club. They think that the cups and plates and cupboards they donate will go to the hippies. They wonder where the monks have gone."

The monk, who looked as miserable as a captain forced to go down with the ship, was quite ready to return to Cambodia, in spite of the communists. There used to be a head monk who used to go round the hostel with a stick each night asking the "guests" to pay the customary Rs four a night. But ever since he went to the United States last year, even this has stopped. The lodge has even found a mention in a special guide book for the wandering youth published in, of all places, Poland.

But these evicted "guests" need not worry too much. They can quite easily disappear into that vast underworld of the drug addict in Delhi. Convenient little guest houses off Connaught Circus or the seedy hotels in Paharganj provide refuge for the drug addict in Delhi. There are, of course, the religious centres in the country. Godmen sprout in India as easily as that *fleur de mal*—the poppy. Cannabis grows wild in places like Manali, and the drug addicts flock to these places, like a herd. Some remain there for a decade or more. Goa and Nepal are the most populated, but Benaras, Hardwar, and Manali are getting equally crowded.

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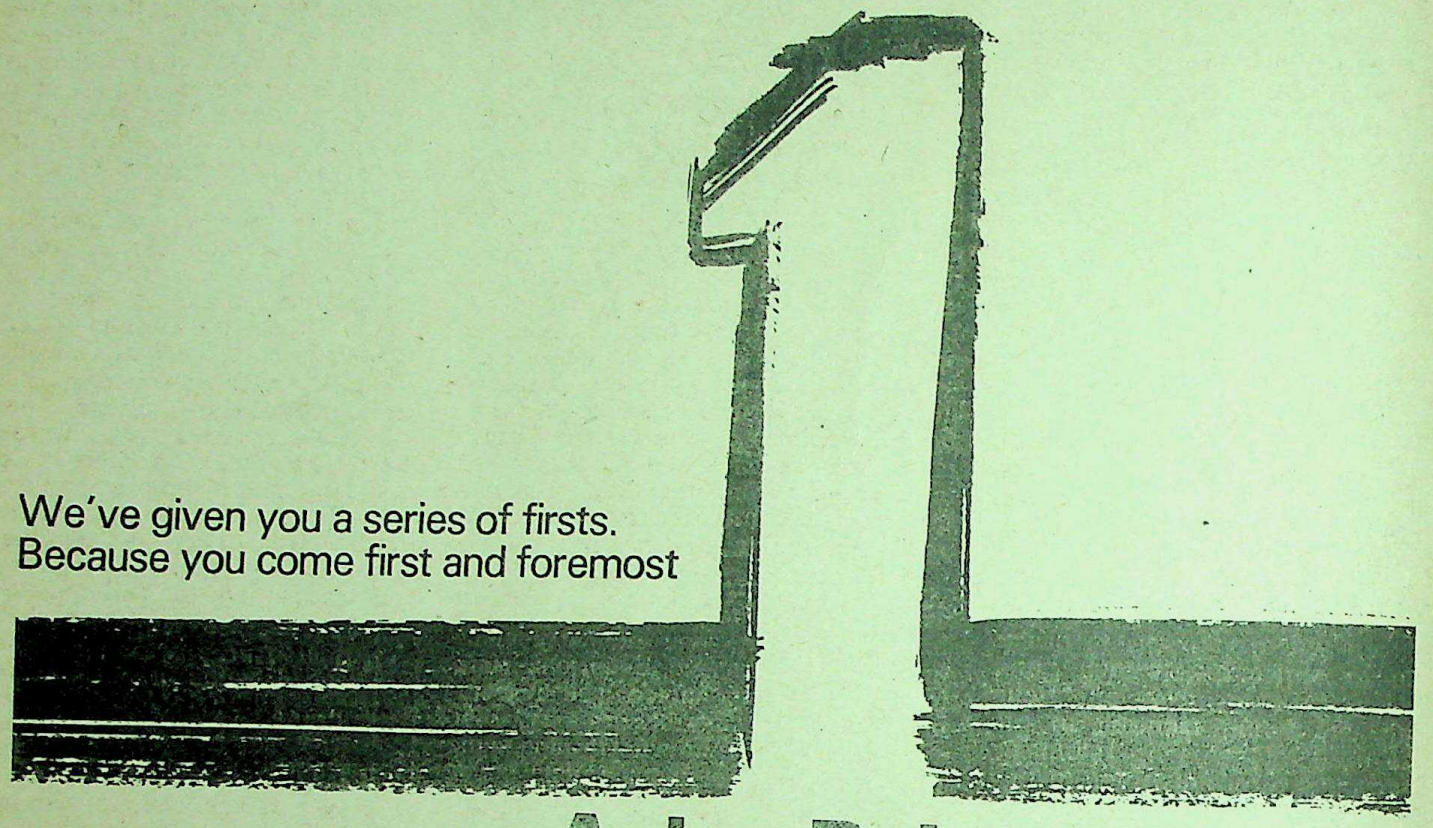

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in the United States. Since the prices are considerably lower in Europe, the hard drugs end up in the United States.

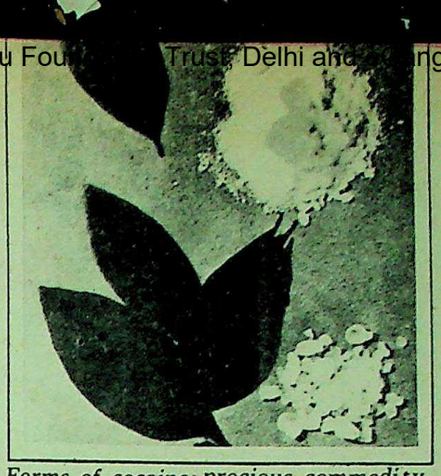
The prices become surreal when it comes to heroin. A kilo of heroin can make a smuggler a millionaire overnight. One kilogram of heroin in today's narcotics-hungry market sells in wholesale, for almost 300,000 dollars. But the dope kings are very greedy and have found ways of adulterating drugs and increasing their profits. Thousand grammes of heroin diluted at 90% purity will fetch only 300,000 dollars. But when diluted further, that kg goes a very long way indeed. For example, it would produce 2,000 grammes at 45% purity.

This is one of the reasons dope kingpins tend, increasingly, to get the opium processed in the source countries rather than take it out in its unprocessed forms. Perhaps, this is why as many as five illegal morphine factories have been discovered in the last six months in South India. Over two and a half kg of morphine have been seized from clandestine factories. Says Mr G. S. Bawa: "Smugglers no longer find it convenient to take out unprocessed opium. So it is being refined here. More and more morphine factories are being discovered in the opium-growing areas... We recover about five tonnes of illicit opium a year. Now if detection is only 25%, as it is in the case of other crimes there would be 25 tonnes of illicit opium being produced each year."

India produces 800 tonnes of illicit opium annually. It used to be 1,200 tonnes until last year, but the world market was glutted when Australia began to export opium—as did Turkey when it resumed its cultivation of opium.

There are 54,000 hectares under opium cultivation in India, spread over Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, on which work about 22 million farmers. The opium production which extends over nearly 75,000 villages, is controlled by the Central Narcotics Bureau. Opium smuggled out from these opium-fields is barely enough for local consumption according to Mr Bawa. In fact, a lot of opium from Pakistan filters through Punjab, where it sells for about Rs 2,000 per kg. Punjab has traditionally been the land of opium-eaters. And still is. Landlords often add a bit of opium in the tea of the agricultural labourers so that they work longer. Some of the opium has also found its way, in cargo boats, to Ceylon and to Mauritius. The two governments have in fact complained to India about some of the illegal opium entering their shores.

Some illicit morphine factories have been discovered in Ghazipur and Banaras. The latest was found in Shahdara on the outskirts of Delhi when 550 gms of fine quality opium and 10 kgs of opium solution prepared for the extraction of morphine, 8.5 kgs



Forms of cocaine: precious commodity

of opium, chemicals and equipment needed for making morphine were discovered. Interestingly enough, one of the arrested, Jeetu, was a dismissed employee of the Ghazipur opium factory—as is the case in many of the people employed in the clandestine laboratories. An African drug addict we met also claimed that there were quite a few morphine laboratories in and around Mehrauli.

No heroin factory has as yet been found. But one of the foreign narcotics experts in India believes that one is bound to be found within the year in an opium-producing area in India.

"India really is a haven. You have all the natural products, skilled chemists, and large areas where the arms of the law have no access to. A deadly combination. It could be in Neemuch, Amritsar, UP or anywhere." Many heroin labs have been found in Afghanistan where the Pakistani chemists have been busy making heroin. (Pakistan is also a major source for heroin from West Asia.)

For illegal morphine manufacturers, India offers another advantage—some of the chemicals needed for making heroin is easily available. In western countries, firms which use acetic anhydride, the essential chemical needed to produce heroin have to account for it. In India it is found lying unattended, in synthetic textile factories. It is also used in cough mixtures and in aspirins.

There is yet another dangerous trend emerging. According to Mr R. M. Singh, who looks after narcotics cell in the CBI, "Pharmaceutical laboratories are illegally diverting morphine. For instance, the Government Opium and Alkaloid Works Factory in Ghazipur generally gives morphine ampoules to doctors and to pharmacies. In Hathras, near Aligarh, a private firm was authorised by them to get morphine sulphate and to make morphine ampoules...but, they sold two bottles of 500 grammes each to a smuggler. These people were arrested on 22 May this year near the Ashoka hotel."

It is obvious that narcotics officials—of the CBI, the DRI or in various state police forces—have become more active. One of the DRI men told this correspondent that Mrs Gandhi had sent a circular asking the narcotics officials to become more vigilant. But it is not clear whether there is more drug trafficking and abuse in India or whether the narcotics officials have just become tougher. Police officials complain that our laws are too lenient.

"Our judges are fairly lenient to western drug addicts. They do not realise the gravity of the problem," a police officer said. Moreover, the narcotics officials or even the customs officials cannot investigate or arrest drug traffickers. They have to turn to the police—even though they are the ones who are supposed to stop drug offenders.

"In our country even murder is a bailable offence, let alone drug trafficking," said a frustrated official complaining about the laxity of the laws. Nor are the customs officials at Indian airports vigilant enough.

And the problem is becoming all the more serious since Indians, especially the younger ones, are increasingly becoming drug addicts. College students, the unemployed and the sons of affluent fathers are now taking to drugs. Even heroin and cocaine—the latter mostly in Bombay because it is more expensive and fashionable. "We are on the road to the psychotropic substances. LSD, amphetamine, all these are available here, only they are now becoming more popular. And the possibility of Indians taking to morphine and heroin is there," says R. M. Singh.

Sadly enough, some of the Indians begin on drugs while in school. There is the well-known case of Ravindra Singh who died of an overdose of a morphine injection at the age of 21 in 1978. In his book, *I was a Drug Addict*, brought out by his father, Brigadier Gyan Singh, Ravindra Singh writes that he started on *charas* (hashish) while in the eighth class at Mayo College in Ajmer. He went on to harder drugs. And, finally to heroin and morphine when he met some addicts in India and Nepal. His case is not uncommon. There are many cases of public school boys becoming drug addicts while still at school and their going on to LSD or morphine or even heroin.

Mr Bawa blames the hippie girls for this: "The psychological lure of the fair skin is getting them entrenched...especially the young Indians. It is the liberated hippie women who are at fault." Some police officials believe that the drug addicts make friends with rich, young students from public schools. Once they get them 'hooked' they keep on fleecing them for money.

Occasionally, one sees an emaciated young Indian lying outside the CBI office in Ramakrishnapuram. A former student of a public school in Delhi (where he started taking drugs), the son of a rich father this boy, in his early 20s has been turned out of the house and lies languishing in front of the building occasionally trading information for a whiff of confiscated cocaine. The police officials don't give him more than a few years to live. In fact, many consider it to be a very optimistic estimate. ■

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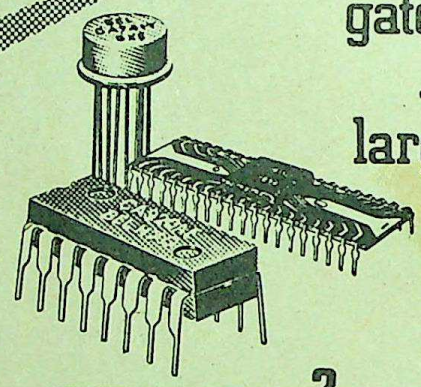

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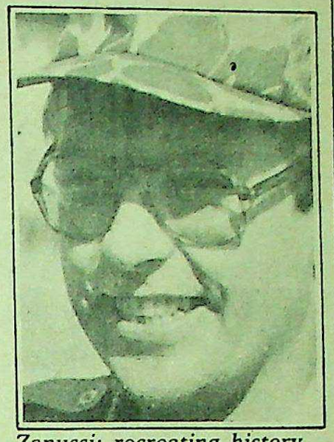
THE WORLD

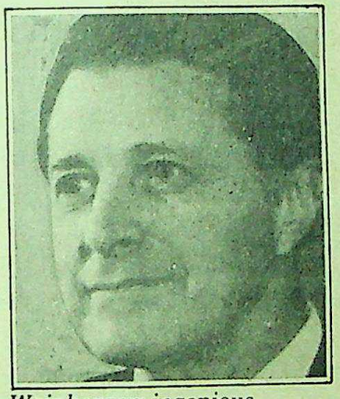
Celluloid scare

Polish filmmaker Krzysztof Zanussi sent the shivers to Washington while shooting his latest film *From a far country*, a cinematographic record of Poland during the last 50 years. "I was shooting the scene of the Soviet liberation of Krakow in 1945," said Zanussi. "I used a lot of Polish tanks. An American satellite passing overhead relayed the scene of the tanks moving towards Krakow and the Americans thought that the Russians had invaded Poland. There was absolute panic." Zanussi later went on television to explain that the whole thing was make-believe.



Zanussi: recreating history

Weinberger's 'red book'



Weinberger: ingenious

US defence secretary Caspar Weinberger has come up with a novel idea: releasing in book form what has so far been regarded as highly confidential data on Kremlin's nuclear and conventional arsenal. Mr Weinberger hopes that this book will help America's European allies to "appreciate the Soviet threat." According to his assistant in the Pentagon, Richard Perle, it would mean "the most massive declassification of previously secret material in our history." In the Pentagon the proposed book is being referred to as 'Caspar Weinberger's little red book.' But the CIA and the Pentagon's intelligence chiefs have not yet agreed to allow publication of "overhead photographs"—the ones taken from American spy satellites and reconnaissance aircraft. They argue that such photographs would reveal too much about the quality and scope of American information-gathering techniques.

Great expectation

The news that Ching-Ching, a Chinese panda now in the London zoo, may be pregnant has caused a great deal of excitement throughout the world. Ching-Ching was artificially inseminated with the sperm of a male panda when, after three years of close observation, it was found to be going through its 'fertility period' (in a panda this period lasts not more than three days).

Mother-son feud

Former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike feels that her 32-year-old-son Anura ("a young man in a bit of a hurry") is trying to replace her as leader of the opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Mrs Bandaranaike has been deprived of her civic rights for seven years by a Presidential commission for alleged misuse of power. Anura Bandaranaike claims that his mother is trying to impose her choice of Parliamentary candidates for the next elections; he has also accused his married sister, Chandrika Kumaratunga, of playing a "Sanjay Gandhi-like role" in helping Mrs Bandaranaike. "My daughter is helping me in my work because I have to have someone helping me. My son is not helping me," replies the mother to her son's allegations.

Bandaranaike:troubled mother

Briefly

Ted in love?

Edward Kennedy: not lonely

Estranged from his wife, Joan, senator Edward Kennedy has found comfort in Hollywood actress Susan St James. The two of them were photographed recently while swimming and sailing near the Cape Cod town of Hyannisport. According to *The New York Post*, the senator was merely "consoling" the actress after she broke up her affair with a Mexican film producer.

'French leave'

If the plans now being studied by the government take shape, workers in France will be permitted to take a year off on reduced wages so that unemployed hands can take over their jobs. The workers' jobs will be guaranteed once they return from their year-long holiday.

Cold service

Britain's only school for butlers teaches the 'Jeeves-in-training' how to turn down passes from sex-starved wives of American tycoons. Those who pass out from Mr Ivor Spencer's School for Butlers after a six-month grind are in great demand in Houston and New York; and prospective employers in the USA insist that applicants must be trained in the art of repelling the sexual advances of high-society women with utmost tact and courtesy.

BBC goes black

The BBC has appointed its first black woman television newsreader: 31-year-old Moira Stuart who is not too sure how the viewers will receive her. "If I am criticised there is very little I can do," she admits.

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THE RISE OF THE JATS

Along with the decline of the Mughal empire in India, the Rajputs too slowly but steadily faded out from the national scene. The Jats, Marathas and the Sikhs filled the vacuum: they consolidated their strength and emerged as powerful political forces. The Jat chiefs, Badan Singh and Suraj Mal, displayed spectacular courage and enough intelligence to not merely build an empire but also to keep it. K. NATWAR SINGH, our ambassador in Pakistan, in his book, *Maharaja Suraj Mal, 1707-1763* recreates a comparatively little known but vital chapter in Indian history. This is the concluding extract from his book.

Suraj Mal: Early campaigns

The decline of the Mughal empire also initiated the decline and eclipse of the great Rajput houses of Mewar, Marwar and Amber. Rajasthan became 'a zoological garden with the barrier of the cage thrown down... the fiercest animal passions raged throughtout the land, redeemed only now and then by individual instances of devotion and chivalry...' For three centuries the Rajputs had won the respect and gratitude of the people of India. The high virtues of courage, good character and honour were associated with them. By the eighteenth century they were a played-out race, steadily but surely falling into the background of national life.

No outside power could compete with the death wish of the Rajputs.

Portrait of Maharaja Suraj Mal

'The houses of Jaipur and Jodhpur vied with each other to destroy themselves. There was no crime a Rajput would not commit for the sake of land. Father killed son and son murdered father. Women of the noblest rank gave poison to their trusting kinsmen. None, not even the highest born descendant of the God Rama, shrank from buying the aid of an alien plunderer to decide domestic contests.' No amount of glossing over this deplorable state of affairs can hide the reality. The Almighty inflicted on a long-suffering people wholly unworthy rulers.

The sad sunset years of Rajput fortunes coincided with a Maratha, Jat and Sikh dawn. In Rajasthan the chronic inter-state and inter-clan rivalries wholly preoccupied Rajput chiefs. As time went by the Marathas and the Jats began to have much say in their affairs.

During the 1720s and 1730s the Bharatpur Jats were treading cautiously and Badan Singh was not the man to rock the boat. He was content with not doing anything spectacular or dramatic, and we hear little about them. Badan Singh and Suraj Mal gave every day of their lives to consolidating their position at home. Not only Soghar but other Jat chiefs who came in their way were eliminated without hesitation, with a firm and decisive hand. Up to the invasion of Nadir Shah they kept out of the way of the rulers at Delhi, busy with their grand buildings and gardens and enriching themselves. No excess which would attract attention at Delhi was committed. Survival in the initial years was all that mattered.

Badan Singh amply justified the confidence Raja Jai Singh placed in him. He maintained cordial and respectful relations with the Jaipur ruler. Each year he visited Jaipur, where Jai Singh, not the most considerate of men, extended every courtesy to the Sinsinwar and treated him like a Raja. The suburb of Jaipur where Badan Singh stayed was named Badanpura. This close link between the two did not go unnoticed and benefited Badan Singh and Suraj Mal in their dealings with troublesome Jat chiefs not belonging to the Sinsinwar clan. The patronage of Amber had its uses.

When Peshwa Baji Rao visited Jaipur in 1736, Jai Singh held a big *durbar* in his honour. Badan Singh could not attend, but Suraj Mal represented him. The young man was welcomed like a prince by Jai Singh. The *durbar* was not an unqualified success. The Peshwa's manners left much to be desired and caused aristocratic eyeb-

The city palace at Jaipur, built in the early 18th century.

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rows to be raised. At Jaipur Mughal ceremonial and etiquette were strictly if not joyously observed. During the *durbar* Jai Singh, noticing the condescending attitude of the Peshwa, asked Baji Rao why he did not treat him as he did the Raja of Udaipur. Baji Rao's crushing reply was, 'The Raja of Udaipur is equal in rank and status with my own king, Sahu Maharaj, who had never considered the Musalman Padishah of Delhi as his sovereign, while you are nothing but a Mughal *mansabdar*.' It needed some nerve to say this as Baji Rao was keen to enlist Jai Singh's support to obtain from Delhi the *subadari* of the province of Malwa. Baji Rao did not stop there. He added injury to insult. He puffed his *hukka* and blew the smoke in the face of his host. Laws of hospitality forbade Jai Singh from creating a scene which would have only made an already nasty situation worse.

When Jai Singh introduced Suraj Mal to the Maratha, Baji Rao made disparaging remarks about Suraj Mal's humble origins. The young Sinsinwar kept calm and responded with a dignified silence. But his guardian, Thakur Shardul Singh of Halena, could not contain himself and returned the compliment by reminding the Peshwa of Shivaji's humbler origins. The first Jat-Maratha encounter was not a happy one.

Badan Singh kept himself aloof from the Amber-Maratha and Maratha-Mughal exchanges. Like the Rajputs, the Jats, while recognising the emperor as their sovereign, raised not a finger when Nadir Shah invaded Delhi in 1739. But they took full advantage by making inroads into Mughal territory in the disarray following that invasion.

As their hold over their own people and territories tightened and as their wealth increased they began to flex their muscles, but guardedly. 'The fame of Suraj Mal's capacity for leadership and tough fighting qualities of his troops spread rapidly and there came repeated solicitations for his sword from the highest in the land.'

The first excursion that Suraj Mal made outside the Jat country was in May 1745 when he led a Jat contingent under emperor Muhammad Shah in his expedition against Ali Muhammed Rohilla, and 'fought creditably in that campaign'. In the next year he helped the Governor of Aligarh, Fatah Ali Khan, to regain his estate from Asad Khan Khananzad. At Chandaus, Suraj Mal routed the forces of Asad, who was killed in the battle. The exploits of Suraj Mal in this campaign and in the following two are described in colourful detail by Sudan in *Sujan Charitra*. From the Chandaus battle Suraj Mal returned with a fair amount of cash and had made himself beloved of his Jat brethren in the Aligarh area.

When Jai Singh Sawai died in 1743 Badan Singh lost a patron. Jai Singh had ruled for forty-four years. The first half of his long reign was a saga of success and achievement and during it he built the pink city of Jaipur and the famous observatories at Delhi and Jaipur; but his later record was devoid of glory or success. He failed against the Marathas. After failing to keep them out of Malwa, and inducing the emperor to make a complete surrender to them in 1736 Jai Singh returned, to his own state and gave himself to sexual excess. He always had a weakness for alcohol and now the habitual 'use of aphrodisiacs to stimulate his failing powers entirely ruined his health, till at last he died of a loathsome disease on 21 September 1743. Three wives and countless concubines committed *sati*.'

His death was followed by the customary fratricidal war between his sons, Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh. Madho Singh's mother hailed from Udaipur and the Rana of Mewar successfully used his influence and authority to get formidable support for his nephew. The Marathas vacillated and finally backed Madho Singh as did the rulers of Jodhpur, Bundi and Kotah. Only the Bharatpur Sinsinwars stood by Ishwari Singh, honouring their pledge to Jai Singh. Badan Singh, without the accident of noble birth, possessed the qualities which are associated with it. Ishwari Singh inherited all his father's vices. Virtue he had none. At the time of Ahmed Shah

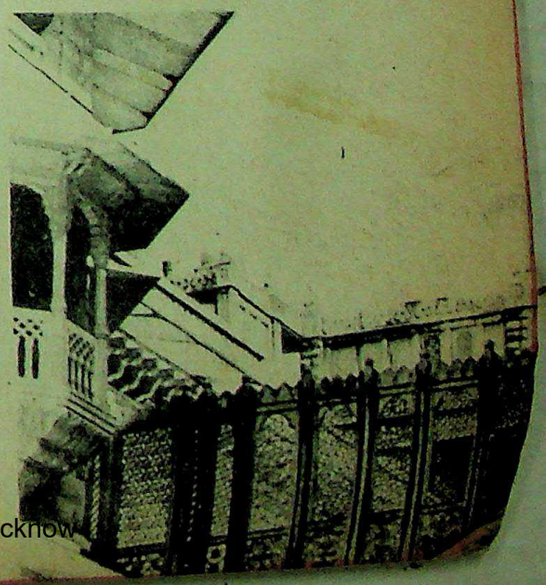
Thakur Badan Singh

Abdali's first invasion he had run away from Manupur in March 1747. Even his wives had chided him for his cowardice. Aware of the weak character of Ishwari, Thakur Badan Singh asked Suraj Mal to proceed to Jaipur to help him. Suraj Mal left Kuhmer with 10,000 hand-picked cavalrymen, 2,000 troopers and 2,000 spear-bearers. His contingent consisted of Jats, Gujars, Ahirs, Meenas, Rajputs and Musalmans. Ishwari Singh received Suraj Mal with honour due to an equal. The Jaipur forces were led by Shiv Singh. With Suraj Mal were his uncles and cousins, Sukhram Singh, Gokalram Singh, Sahaj Ram Singh and others.

The armies of Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh met on 21 August 1748 at Bagru, eighteen miles south-west of Jaipur. The monsoon was not quite over and the ground on the second day drenched both sides.

On the face of it the contest was unequal. Ishwari Singh's opponents outnumbered him seven to one. Madho Singh had an impressive array of famous names on his side, Malhar Rao Holkar, Gangadhar Tatiya, the Rana of Mewar, the ruler of Jodhpur and the Rajas of Bundi and Kotah. With Ishwari Singh was only the little-known Suraj Mal. What Suraj Mal lacked in numbers was made up by the quality of his troops; well-trained, adequately paid and ably led. There was no central coordinating agency on Madho Singh's side. He was in no position to give orders to his allies who were all senior to him and did not take kindly to any form of discipline.

Kanwar Shiv Singh, the chief of Sikar, led the van. Suraj Mal was posted in the centre and Ishwari Singh commanded the rear. The artillery duel on the first day ended indecisively. The advantage on the second day was with Madho Singh. On the second day Ishwari Singh lost his commander-in-chief, the valiant Sikar chief, and he appointed Suraj Mal to lead the *harawal* (van) on the third day. A furious and mighty battle raged throughout the day. Then the Maratha chief, Malhar Rao, sent Gangadhar Tantiya with a strong detachment to surprise the rear of Raja Ishwari Singh. Gangadhar marched undetected and fell upon Sardar Singh Naruka of Uniara, one of Jai Singh's more able commanders. He threw the rear division into confusion and pressed vigorously upon the artillery posted in the centre. The gunners were cut down and the cannon spiked; defeat stared Ishwari Singh in the face. In sheer desperation he asked Suraj Mal, his last hope, to challenge Gangadhar. The young Sinsinwar obeyed without a moment's pause and delivered a flank charge upon the advancing army. A grim struggle between the half-victorious Marathas and the stubborn Jats lasted two hours. At last Gangadhar was halted and pushed back. Suraj Mal, restoring the broken rear and leaving Sardar Singh Uniara in command there, returned to the van to fight on the other front. In that supreme hour of peril he fought with



...upon the upper reaches of Golbagh palace in Bharatpur.

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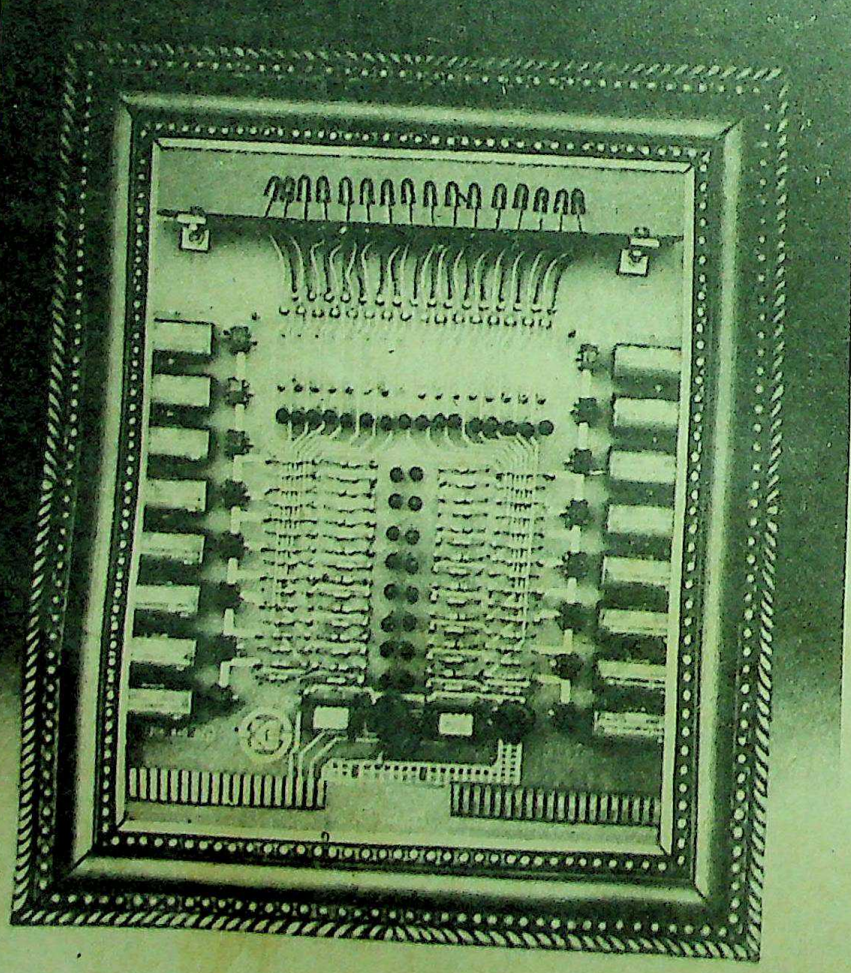

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superhuman valour, 'killing', says a contemporary chronicler, 'fifty and wounding one hundred and eight of the enemy with his own hands'. Then night fell and the combatants parted to tend the wounded and cremate the dead and get ready for the morrow. Suraj Mal's valour saved the day and made him well-known.

A graphic account of the battle of Bagru is given by Sudan in *Sujan Charitra* and also by the Bundi bard, who had the distinction of being Raja Suraj Mal's namesake. He wrote:

'The Jatni did not in vain bear the pain of travel,
The issue of her womb was Suraj Mal,
The scourge of enemies, and well-wisher of Amber,
Turning back the Jat began,
to fight Malhar in the van,
Holkar was the shadow (night)
and the Sun: (Suraj)
the two champions well matched in conflict.'

Within a few months of Bagru, providence offered Suraj Mal another opportunity to prove his strength and enhance his fame and power.

On 21 June 1749, the Jodhpur ruler Maharaja Abhay Singh died. He combined an uncontrollable temper with an alarming weakness for opium. As *subedar* of Gujarat he had not distinguished himself. On his death he was succeeded by his son Ram Singh. The young man's joy was shortlived. His maternal uncle Bakht Singh threw his *turban* in the ring. Ram Singh turned for help to Ishwari Singh of Amber. Emperor Ahmed Shah backed Bakht Singh and in November sent Mir Bakshi Salabat Jung with a force of 18,000 men to help him. The Mir Bakshi decided to proceed to Ajmer not by the well-established Delhi-Agra road, but *via* Mewat, which was under the Jat Raja. The plan was for Salabat to retake from the Jats portions of territory captured by them in his *suba* of Agra and Mathura. After dealing with the Jats the Mir Bakshi was to proceed to Ajmer and unite with the forces of Bakht Singh.

The Mir Bakshi's progress was leisurely. He first stopped at Patuadi for ten days. Thereafter he ravaged Mewat and captured the mud fort of Nimrana in the Jat kingdom. This minor success made the Mir Bakshi overconfident and he haughtily dismissed an emissary from Suraj Mal and decided to teach Suraj Mal a lesson. Ajmer and Jodhpur were for the time being forgotten. Suraj Mal held his hand. He was watching and waiting. When the Mir Bakshi got to Sarai Sobhachand, the Jats descended on him. Suraj Mal with a mobile force of 6,000 surrounded the Mughals on New Year's Day 1750. Suraj Mal had with him important Jat chiefs. Sudan in *Sujan Charitra* mentions Gokla and his brother Surat Ram Singh. The latter led a mounted troop of 1,500, while Balram Singh had 1,000 troopers. Suraj Mal's brother Pratap Singh led 500 horsemen. The Mir Bakshi was surrounded on all sides. He asked Delhi for reinforcements. They arrived too late. Retreat was blocked by the Jats, 'their mounted matchlock men closed in small bodies and discharged volleys upon the confused Muslim troopers without dismounting. Such a mobile force as Suraj Mal's mounted matchlockmen could hardly be brought to the grapple in the darkness of night.' The Jats charged with speed and determination causing many deaths. Among those killed were two important Mughal commanders; Ali Rustum Khan and Hakim Khan. Salabat Khan was now at the mercy of Suraj Mal.

After three days Salabat thought discretion the better part of valour and sued for peace. Suraj Mal did not wish to have the blood of an imperial *Umra* on his hands and graciously accepted the peace offer. This was an act of statesmanship; he was winning and he made no move to provoke further the Mir Bakshi or arouse suspicion at Delhi. The Bakshi had earlier demanded over twenty million rupees from Raja Badan Singh for the few villages which the Jats had taken. These, the Bakshi alleged, were a part of his *jagir*. The money demanded was out of all proportion to the value of these villages and Badan Singh had no intention whatsoever of paying even a tenth of the sum. Suraj Mal asked his very young son Jawahar Singh to conduct the peace negotiations with the Bakshi. This was the young prince's debut as a soldier-emissary. He conducted himself to the entire satisfaction of his father and grandfather, and gave no indication of the bellicosity which in years ahead was to cause much heartache and bloodshed.

The Mir Bakshi accepted the term on which the Jats would agree to peace:

i) The imperial government would promise not to cut down pipal trees;

ii) nor hinder the worship of that tree;

iii) not to offer any insult or injury to the Hindu temples in the region;

iv) Suraj Mal would collect fifteen lakh rupees from the Rajputs as the revenue of the province of Ajmer and pay it into the imperial exchequer, provided the Mir Bakshi did not proceed beyond Narnol...

The Jat gains were considerable. Victory over an *Amir-ul-Umara* was not an everyday event. Salabat Jung should have known better than to antagonise the one power that alone could have protected his *subah* of Agra. This success gave Suraj Mal and the Jats new confidence. It proved their military potential. The terms of the treaty were a public recognition of the Bharatpur rulers' superior position in Braj Mandal, justifying their title of Braj Raj. Lastly this victory gave the Sinsinwars undisputed leadership of all Jats. At the age of 43, Suraj Mal was the coming man in Hindustan. With the death of *Nizzam-ul-Mulk* in 1748 there was no one to match his military strength, diplomatic skill, administrative ability and soundness of political judgement or his understanding of the temper of the times.

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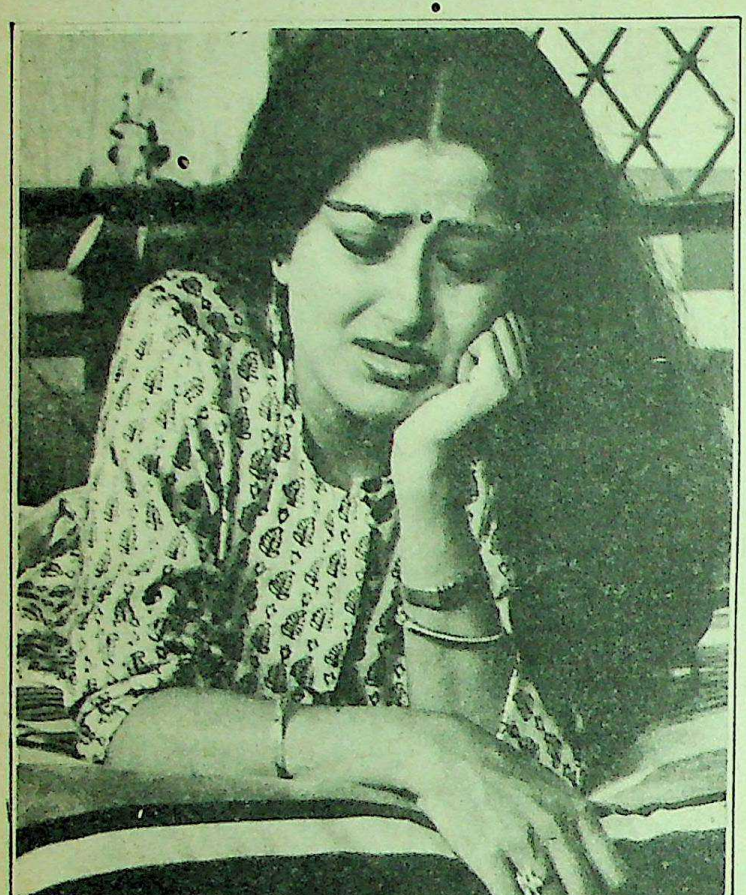
KHAAS BAAT



Moushumi in a still from Yun Bhee Hota Hai

When even a puny-sized *Kiran Vairale* who is very confident of her looks, snorts in disgust at *Padmini Kohlapure*'s looks and says that she herself has better looks than her, the latter's confidence gets badly shaken. To add to her eternal pimple problem, she has this newly-sprouted double chin and a tendency to become fat, all of which depress her very much indeed. With *Christie O'Neil* and *Rati Agnihotri* looking so slim and pretty at *Dev*'s party it is hardly surprising that Padmini was visibly disturbed.

What's wrong with *Chintu Rishi Kapoor*? Where is that bubbly youthfulness which endeared him to the entire young crowd, since his *Bobby* days? Like *Rajesh Khanna* before him, whose popularity was at its peak just before his marriage and lessened immediately after it, the same tragic fate seems to have affected Rishi whose status may not have been as great as Rajesh's before his marriage but at least he wasn't as obscure as he is today. In fact you hear more of *Neetu* than him.

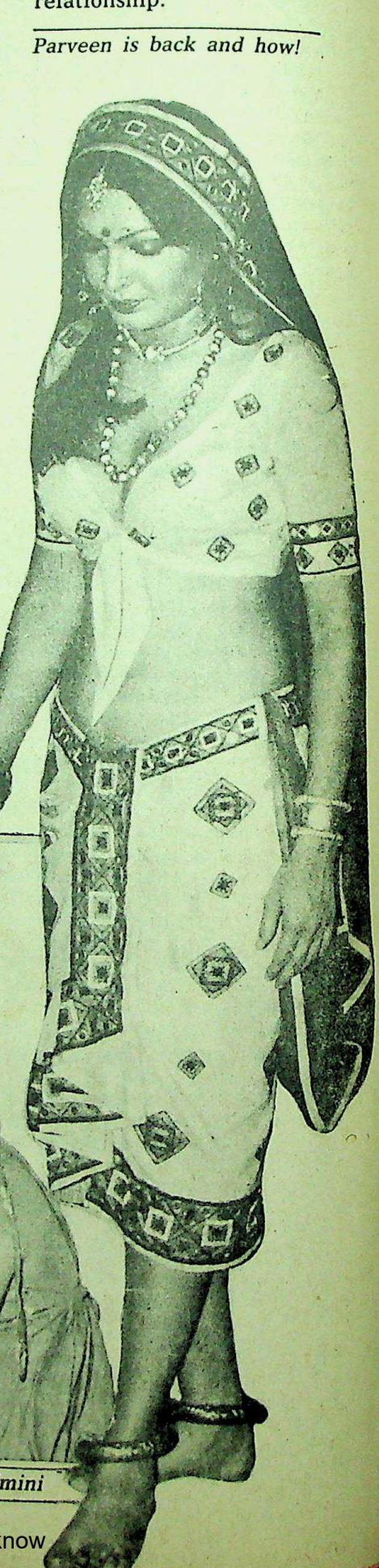
Looks like *Moushumi Chatterji*'s career is really jinxed. When her film *Daasi* was about to be released there was a spate of publicity announcing the revolution it was going to cause in her future. But the other actress in the film, *Rekha*, managed to share equal if not more plaudits with her, and her hopes dwindled. Then with the exit of *Parveen Babi*, during her spell of illness, Moushumi had quietly bagged Babi's role in *Manmohan Desai*'s *Desh Premee* and thought she would suddenly shoot up when she did this prestigious hit-maker's film. But Parveen is back again with a bang and the whole industry is agog wooing her back into the fold so Moushumi is out in the cold once again. And that is not all. There was a lovely role for her in *Nagi Reddy*'s next film with a host of stars led by *Rakhee* and *Sanjeev*, and she was sure that being Nagi Reddy's favourite heroine, this film with its plum role would help her win the accolades. Unfortunately, she was coolly replaced by *Deepti Naval*. Now if that isn't a jinx, what is?

Why is poor *Tina* being made the scapegoat in the family feud: *Sunjay* versus *Sunil Dutt*? Whatever happens between father and son is not her fault. Sunil did not take her in either of his productions. That is enough to put two and two together and say that he is showing his hatred for her because he doesn't want to encourage her relationship with his son. After the financial burden Sunil had to face to fight Nargis' inevitable fate, it is fair that he should work out success-spinning films. If he wants more successful stars like *Smita Patil* and *Padmini Kohlapure* in his productions, then why should anyone mind? Outside calculations are doing their best to see that relations are completely wrecked between Sunil and Tina.

A close friend of *Manoj*'s had once remarked to me that for all his success as an actor, Manoj Kumar has zero individual star-power. Which means, in simple words, he is simply not a matinee idol, in spite of all those money-spinners he is bringing out and managing to make while every other multi-star-filmmaker has failed miserably. This person also tells me that Manoj Kumar does not have a single fan who asks for a fan-photograph of him. Yet the same people flock to see his films by the millions.

Now that *Mahesh Bhatt* has openly begun saying uncomplimentary things about the poor girl *Parveen*, (I say she's poor because he has his wife and child to go back to and she has no one!) guess who he is cottoning after? Old girl *Shabana* of course. Shabana has known him for a long time now, in a very platonic relationship.

Parveen is back and how!



DURGAPRASAD

Kiran: better looks than Padmini

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KHAAS BAAT

With the box-office success of *Bhagyaraj's Vidium Varai Kathiru*, karate fifth degree black-belt holder *RVT Mani* is now hanging on to the industry with the film *Kiaiai*. But the moustachio is far from a happy man. Just at a time when he wants to give up playing the thug and prove himself as a "character actor," the grapevine says that two offers to play the role of a psychiatrist and a *sanyasi* have fallen through, and *Balu Mahendra* is seriously considering signing Mani up for a tough policeman's role.

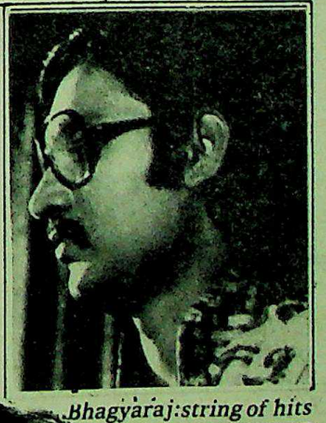
Smita Patil's success in *Chakra* has sent a whole lot of new faces scuttling to the studios aspiring for "rustic roles." "I can't understand though why directors keep harping on *Suhasini* all the time instead of trying us out," said an indignant *Kalpana*, who like most others cannot see that she made the mistake young *Suhasini* has not. She has shown directors too much of her anatomy in too short a time, and so put herself in a position where she is considered only for the sexier roles.

Urmila: climbing the ladder in the Malayalam industry

Saritha in Those Seven Days

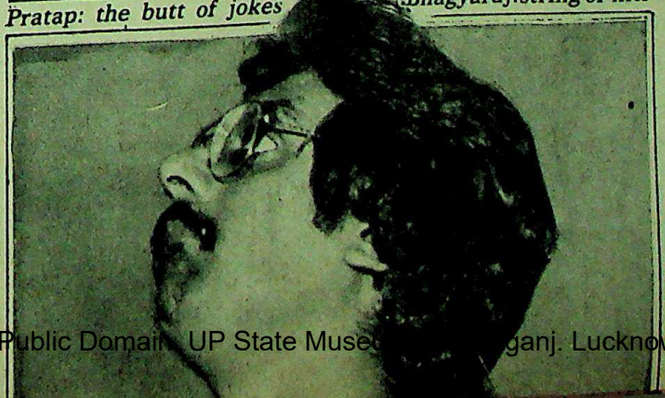
With his late night drunken sprees becoming more and more frequent, *Pratap* is once again the butt of stale one-liners, like, "why did Prathap take a ladder to to the drinks party?" Answer "because he heard that the

Kudos to *Dasari Narayan Rao* whose *Premabhishekam* is doing brisk business here. While his contemporaries have so far been content to talk about artiste-upliftment, Dasari has managed to do something concrete instead. An institution, Dasari Educational Trust, with a revolving fund of Rs five lakhs has been set up for the promotion of education to the children of artistes.



Bhagyaraj: string of hits

Pratap: the butt of jokes



The box office may not be kind to thirty-year old *Girish Kasaravalli* but the award selecting panels certainly are. Remember *Ghatashraddha* his first feature film in 1978 that bagged awards for the best music *(Karanth)*, the best child artiste *(Ajit Kumar)* and the Dada Saheb Phalke award? Now his *Mooru Darigalu*—the story of a sensitive college girl, *Nirmala*, creditably played by Kannada producer-director *V. Krishna Swamy's* daughter *Sriranga*—appears to be on its way to similar acclaim, having already captured four Karnataka state awards. "I can only put down its box-office failure to faulty distribution," says Girish.

Actress *Roopa* seems to be coming out on top. She is quick to talk shop about a large family (referring to the industry of course), equate *Kamal* with her northern hero *Sanjeev Kumar*, and discuss *Povel Blay*. (Much later did it transpire that the movie in question is nothing but the *Goldie Hawn* starrer *Foul Play*). Says Roopa: "As much as I admire her (Goldie's) acting, I will never be branded like her: a sex symbol. I'll continue to wear a saree and insist on the big difference between glamour and sex-appeal."

"Which *mordern* man wants to look at something as drab as the saree anymore?" asks *Supriya* who showed off her ample flab in *Plagaripa Banathale*. The self-styled glamour queen appears to have permanently discarded the saree to wear over-tight sweaters and micro-minis from the *mordern* wardrobe she's been boasting about. The ploy seems to have worked though, and she has been chosen to play the lead in *Sisirathil* a Malayalam version of *My Fair Lady* in which the fair lady ultimately turns into a glamorous dancer.

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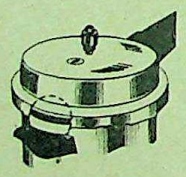

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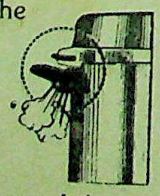

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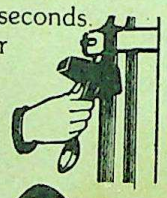

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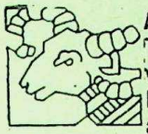
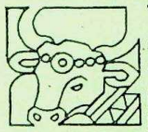
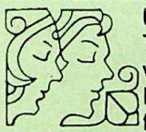
By AMRITLAL



ARIES (15 April—14 May) This is going to be a busy week for you, socially. Friends and relatives will add to your share of joy. But, your work will demand a great deal of your attention. Do not be disheartened by hardships and obstacles you might face at work. Patience and courage are all you need to tide over your difficulties. There are chances that you might have to undertake a journey. **Good dates:** 20, 22 and 25. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** Southwest.



TAURUS (15 May—14 June) A moderately successful week lies ahead of you provided you are cautious in your words and actions this week. The financial front does not look too bright, although there are chances of unexpected gains. Consequently, you are advised to exercise caution on the financial front. Try to curb your impulsiveness and refrain from taking erratic decisions. **Good dates:** 21, 23 and 25. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 5 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



GEMINI (15 June—14 July) This unfortunately is not a very lucky week for you. Exercise caution on all fronts. Pay full attention to your work and do not neglect even the most insignificant details. A new friendship will prove to be very helpful. However, do not get carried away by the friendship, but keep a close watch on your purse. This is not a good week for change or for romance either. **Good dates:** 20, 23 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North.

CANCER (15 July—14 August) This is a very good week for romance, courtship and marriage. So, do not hesitate to pursue matrimonial correspondence that has been pending for so long. However, a word of caution: do not take a hurried decision. For those with emotional problems, this week you will be able to rid yourself of your problems. The professional front does not look too bright, so be careful. **Good dates:** 22, 24 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 5 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.

LEO (15 August—14 September) This unfortunately, is not a good week for you. Be on your guard: a friend is out to deceive you. You are likely to enter into heated debates with your superiors at work, which will not be helpful for your future. So, try to check your temper and avoid getting into controversies with people who matter. You might lose a friend because of your outspokenness. **Good Dates:** 21, 22 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 5 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.

VIRGO (15 September—14 October) This is a week of mixed fortunes. Those in service are likely to face difficulties at work. But those on the lookout, are likely to find a job. Controversies and arguments are at best avoided this week, for they will not be beneficial in the long run. The health of an elderly member of the family is likely to cause you some problems. Keep an eye on your health too. **Good dates:** 22, 23 and 25. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** Northwest.

LIBRA (15 October—14 November) This is a week of success for you, so forge ahead on all fronts. There are chances of windfall gains, but the financial front is not very bright. So, try and exercise caution in dealing with property matter. This is not a particularly good week for making any changes. But, in case a change is absolutely essential, do not hesitate to consult your elders. **Good dates:** 21 and 24. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 6 and 8. **Favourable direction:** South.

SCORPIO (15 November—14 December) A very good week for businessmen. Do not hesitate to undertake new contracts. For those in service, this is a lucky week. Push forth your plans for chances are that they will be approved by your superiors. Your only problem this week is your health, which might give you some cause for anxiety. The domestic front will not be peaceful. This, however, is not a good week for romance. **Good dates:** 22, 23 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December—14 January) This is a very good week for romance. Love and matrimonial matters will make steady progress. Debts and pending law-suits should not worry you this week. A word of caution: lack of funds may prevent you from implementing some of your plans. Do not be depressed, this is only a temporary phase. **Good dates:** 20, 23 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 6. **Favourable direction:** East.

CAPRICORN (15 January—14 February) Financially this is a good week for you. Business deals will be successfully undertaken this week. Law-suits and debts are not likely to cause you any anxiety. Speculative ventures are best postponed for the moment. The domestic front will remain peaceful. A word of advice: exercise caution in dealings with members of the opposite sex. Keep an eye on your health. **Good dates:** 23, 24 and 25. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.

AQUARIUS (15 February—14 March) This is not going to be a very bright week financially. So, you are advised to avoid speculation and gambling. Keep a close watch on your finances and you are likely to tide over the problems this week. Your spouse is going to be very helpful and give you some sound advice regarding your profession. Pay attention to what your spouse has to say. **Good dates:** 20, 21 and 24. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 6 and 8. **Favourable direction:** North and East.

PISCES (15 March—14 April) This may turn out to be a fairly good week provided you are discreet on the professional front. You might avoid getting into controversies with your superiors and keeping your associates in good humour. This, unfortunately, is not a good week for romance, so be careful of the recently developed friendship with a member of the opposite sex. Keep an eye on your health. **Good dates:** 23, 25 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 6, 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.

For those born between 15 September and 14 October: You are, by nature, extremely hard working which accounts for your financial affluence. Your affluence may show signs of wearing off around middle-age, but that is only a temporary phase. In an attempt to make quick money, some of you have a tendency of going in for races, gambling and buying lottery tickets. If you are a businessman, chances are that you will succeed in no time, for your intuition will carry you through the toughest of times. Those in services are likely to be associated with education, forestry, and agriculture. Your hobbies include creative arts and reading.

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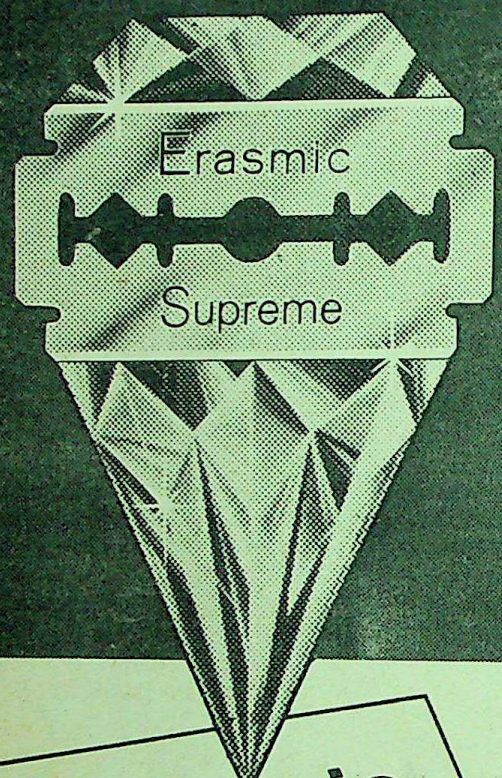
The blade with the DIAMOND EDGE



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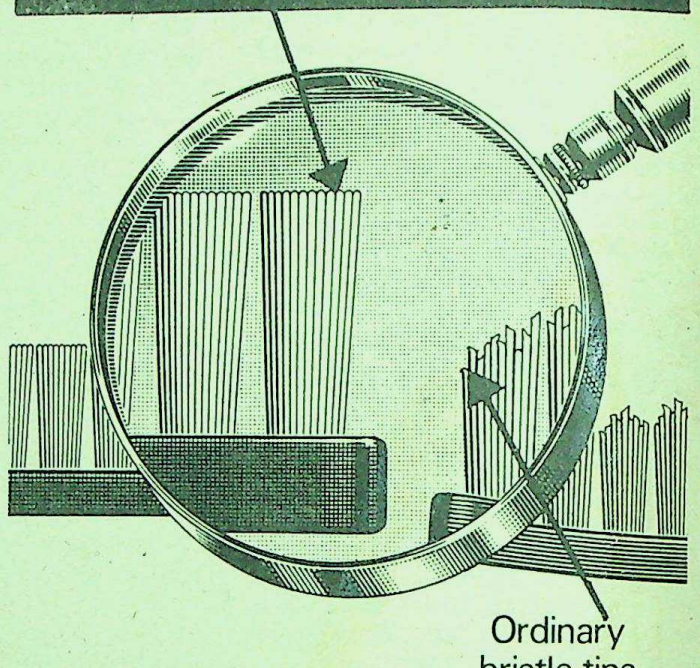

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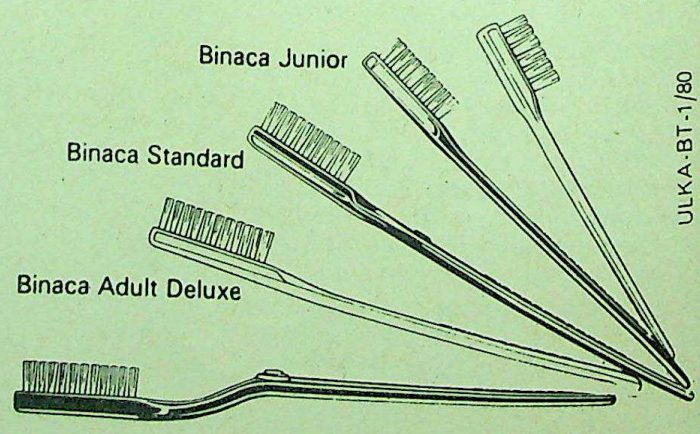
The Binaca family of toothbrushes – there's one for everyone.



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this india

prize rs. 30 for the entry given first

NEW DELHI: The name of Lalu, a dog in south Calcutta is in the voters' list to the exclusion of his master. Participating in the discussion on a private member's bill in the Rajya Sabha, Mr S. P. Mitra (Ind) said a former Chief Justice of Orissa used to feed Lalu regularly. Eventually he found mention in the voters' list as Lalu Roy but none bothered to enlist the former Chief Justice. Mr Mitra, himself a former judge of Calcutta High Court, was speaking about what he called the 'perfunctory manner' in which the electoral lists were being prepared in Calcutta—*Times of India* (Susmit Das, Orissa)

FEROZEPUR: Mr Suraj Parkash Mehta, an assistant in the office of the district education officer, Ferozepore, has been under suspension for about two years. He is getting 50 per cent of his salary without doing any work. Mr Sat Pal Gupta, posted as clerk in the office of the block education officer, Moga, was suspended in August last but he is yet to be charge-sheeted. According to state government rules no employee should be kept suspended for more than six months—*Tribune* (G. Singh Salaria, Pathankot)

JAORA: A *patwari* of Banwada village in Ratlam district was transferred five times in a month. The *patwari*, Mr Nand Kishore, was transferred from Banwada to Jaora on 5 July, only to be posted back to Banwada on 15 July. Five days later, he was sent to some other area, but was transferred again to Jaora on 25 July. He was again issued transfer orders on 29 July. Out of sheer disgust, Mr Nand Kishore has now proceeded on leave—*Times of India* (R. P. Srivastava, Raigad)

NEW DELHI: A young woman forced to leave her husband because of alleged dowry harassment led a demonstration outside her husband's house in South Extension on Saturday morning (22 August), demanding punishment for the treatment meted out to her. Holding aloft an effigy of her husband and waving placards denouncing "dowry-hungry dogs," the demonstrators shouted slogans for nearly an hour. As people from neighbouring houses and school children gathered round them, the demonstrators set fire to the effigy to demand justice for all wives tortured for dowry. The demonstration was organised by the *Nari Raksha Samiti* but in the forefront was the 23-year-old woman who wants her husband punished for the pain, she says, he has caused her—*Indian Express* (Kajal Chakraborty, Calcutta)

TIRUPATI: While the Harijans have been embracing Islam for some time now, a Muslim wants *puja* to be performed in his name at the abode of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala. According to Tirumala Tirupati *devasthanams* sources, he has donated Rs 1 lakh for his name to be included in the *udayasthamana seva* scheme, under which a donor can have a special *puja* performed in his name to Lord Venkateswara every year on the day of his choice. The *devasthanams peishkar* said donations were pouring in and soon *udayasthamana seva* would be performed every day—*Hindu* (S. Nahar, Nilgiris)

NEW DELHI: A diminutive Mr K. C. Pandey found himself passed over during question hour in the Lok Sabha today (18 August). "I am here, sir, I have put the question," the Congress(I) member protested as a puzzled Speaker Balram Jakhar, skipped questions in the absence of several members from the House. "Please forgive me," the Speaker requested Mr Pandey informing him that he could not sight him after he had called out his name. A lady member quipped: he should stand on the bench—*Indian Express* (Rani Bhatia, Ambarnath)

NEW DELHI: It was "wrestler" versus "phantom" in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday (20 August) when the House was seized with a calling attention motion of fixation of remunerative prices for paddy. Addressing a hefty Mr R. Mohanrangam of the AIADMK—who was pleading the cause of the paddy farmer—the agriculture minister, Mr Birendra Singh, remarked: I would rather take him to be a wrestler than a paddy grower. Mr Mohanrangam shot back at the bald-headed minister that he too was reminded of the phantom in a film screened recently in the capital, rather than of a cultivator. A voice: Let's have an exhibition wrestling match. Minister: There are no rules here. It is all free style. Mr P. Ramamurti of the CPI(M) got up to request the chairman to instruct the rules committee of the House to draw up rules for wrestling—*Indian Express* (Asahai, New Delhi)

without comment

I will not do active politics for one year. I do not want to behave as some of them did with me. They started opposition the moment I took charge as the chief minister—Jagannath Pahadia, former CM of Rajasthan

It is the historic necessity for all Congressmen to come under the charge of Mrs Gandhi—D. B. Chandre Gowda, former Karnataka Congress (U) president

To be a soldier of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and the illustrious Nehru family is no ordinary privilege, and like everything in life you don't acquire something for nothing—Arjun Singh, Madhya Pradesh chief minister

It is difficult for us to say whether they (the USA) consider us as friends or not—P. V. Narasimha Rao, union minister for external affairs

The question of an alternative is floated by Mrs Gandhi herself so that everyone will admit there is no alternative to her—Jagjvan Ram

It would be egotistical to say that my joining Congress(I) will make any qualitative change. I am not going to change the scene—Y. B. Chavan in *Weekend Review*.

I have no personal ambition, no personal stakes, I have no riches, no fortune. Money hardly attracts me. This chair is somebody's gift. I will be here so long as I am wanted—T. Anjiah, Andhra Pradesh CM in *Current*

People who are called intellectuals in India are mental slaves of the West because they defend Western concepts of democracy—A. R. Antulay, Maharashtra CM quoted in *Current*

We feel convinced that the press and the state need be neither sworn adversaries nor compulsory allies—Vasant Sathe, union minister for information and broadcasting

Journalists are paid well, but it is a useless profession—West Bengal CM Jyoti Basu quoted in *The Daily*

We are brethren of that party which is the largest party of India—Farooq Abdullah, president of National Conference

Neutralism has become dangerous—Col Qadhafi, Libyan President

They prepared their own deaths and committed suicide—Bani Sadr on the death of Iran's President and Premier

Illustration/Debashish Deb

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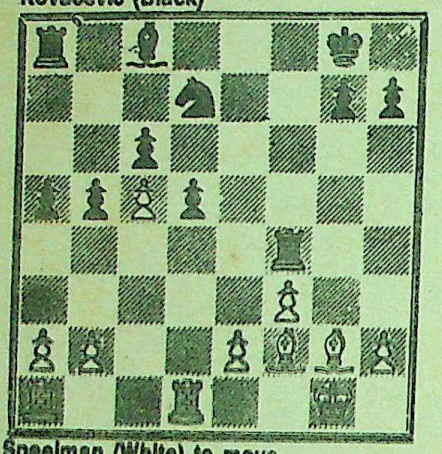
chess

Kovacevic (Black)



Speelman (White) to move
Position after Black's 23rd move

So now we have five grandmasters. When the FIDE Congress in Malta confirmed Jonathan Speelman's title I recalled the moment eight years ago at Hastings when Jim Slater announced his plan to award prizes to the first five English grandmasters. At the time it sounded at best as a piece of benevolent wishful thinking, as England had never in its history produced even one grandmaster. Yet when Tony Miles gained the title in 1976 somehow the impossible suddenly seemed so accessible. Nevertheless, the fact that one person has the title makes it so much easier for others to acquire, and Jonathan Speelman's rise to the title was particularly impressive. His first norm came in the Philips and Drew tournament in London last April and his second a mere six months later in Yugoslavia. I can think of few who have gained the title so emphatically or in such a short space of time.

Of course there is nothing magical about the number five and I should expect to see several more English grandmasters in the coming years. Jonathan Mestel, a natural tightrope walker, has been tottering on the brink of the title for some years now. That Nigel Short will become a grandmaster is inevitable, and Bill Hartston would certainly join the club if he found enough time to play in tournaments regularly.

The crucial factor in Speelman's success has been his ability to temper his natural attacking instincts and play more soundly and positionally. I give a powerfully played game which he won in Yugoslavia en route to his title.

White: J. Speelman. Black: V. Kovacevic
Queen's Gambit, Catalan System

1. P—Q4, N—KB3; 2. P—QB4, P—K3; 3. P—KN3, P—Q4; 4. N—KB3, B—N5+ 5. B—Q2, B—K2; A well-known manoeuvre in this opening. The point of the check is that the white bishop on Q2 will later obstruct his own development.
6. B—N2, O—O; 7. O—O, QN—Q2; 8. Q—B2, P—B3; 9. R—Q1, P—QN4; 10. P—B5. P—QR4; 11. B—K1 A nice solution to the problem of what to do with the bishop. On KB4 it would be exposed to . . . N—R4 and . . . P—B4.
11. . . N—K5; 12. QN—Q2, P—B4, 13. N—N3, Q—B2; The right plan, to undermine white's pawn wedge with . . . P—K4, but the wrong execution. 12. . . B—B3 and 13. . . Q—K2 is a more harmonious set-up.
14. N—B1, P—K4; 15. N—Q3, B—B3; 16. P x P, N x KP; 17. N(B3) x N, B x N; 18. P—B3, N—B3; 19. Q—Q2! Threatening to win a bishop with 20. P—B4, B—Q5+ 21. P—K3.
19. . . N—Q2; 20. B—B2, P—B5? Suicide. Black hopes to compensate for his positional inferiority by opening some lines around the white king, but merely succeeds at exposing the weaknesses in his own camp.
21. P x P, B x P; 22. N x B, Q x N; 23. Q x Q, R x Q;

DIAGRAM

24. P—K4! Very strong. If 24. . . P x P; 25 P x P followed by R—Q6 and Black's QBP becomes unbearably weak.
24. . . B—N2; 25. QR—B1, N—K4; 26. B—N5 N x P+ 27. K—R1, R—B3; 28. P x P, P x P; 29. P—B6! B—R3; To capture the pawn would lose the knight.
30. R x P, QR—KB1; 31. P—B7, B—N2; 32. R—Q8 Avoiding the trap 32. R x P? N—K8!! with mate on KB6 suddenly threatened.
32. . . B—B1; 33. R—B1, B—N2; 34. B x N, R x B; 35. R(B1) x R, B x R+ 36. K—N1, B—N5; 37. B—Q6 and Black resigned.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

Had a brilliancy prize been offered in the American trials for the next Bermuda Bowl, it might well have gone to Ron Rubin for a subtle and original defensive play in the final trial.

Dealer, North Love all

	♠ Q J 7 3 ♥ Q 8 7 5 ♦ Q 8 2 ♣ A 3	
♠ K 4 2 ♥ K 9 6 ♦ A 9 4 3 ♣ Q 9 5	N W E S	♠ A 10 9 6 5 ♥ J 4 3 2 ♦ 7 5 ♣ J 4
	♠ 8 ♥ A 10 ♦ K J 10 6 ♣ K 10 8 7 6 2	

The bidding went:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	—	No
1 ♣	dble	redble	2 ♠
No	No	2NT	3 ♥
4 ♣	No	No	No

Rubin led a low spade to his partner's Ace. A heart return looks fairly natural and would have defeated the contract, but East preferred the Jack of clubs. South won in dummy, ruffed a spade, and played King and another club, leaving West on play in this position:

	♠ Q 7 ♥ Q 8 7 ♦ Q 8 2 ♣ —	
♠ K ♥ K 9 6 ♦ A 9 4 3 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ 10 9 ♥ J 4 3 2 ♦ 7 5 ♣ —
	♠ — ♥ A 10 ♦ K J 10 6 ♣ 10 8	

If West exits with a low diamond, declarer can win with ♦ 8, ruff a spade, and enter dummy with ♦ Q for a discard on ♠ Q. So what can the defence do about it? Rubin made a fine play – the 9 of diamonds. Suppose now that declarer wins with ♦ Q, unblocking the 10, ruffs a spade and leads ♦ 6: West can go up with the Ace, blocking the second entry to dummy.

Alan Truscott, in the *New York Times*, made much of the fact that this defence was played on the first board of the match. Personally I have always found it easier to be alert on board 1 than on board 72!

TERENCE REESE

stamps

Many of the stamps issued in Austria during the 1920s were in distinctive designs strongly influenced by both the Art Nouveau of pre-war Vienna and the new Art Deco. Elements of both can be seen in the high values of a long series issued in 1922-24. The portrait, symbolising the Austrian republic, owes its sinuous lines and flower-like truncation to Art Nouveau, but Art Deco provides the geometric side-panels and the angular numerals. The design was the work of Wilhelm Dachauer, who later became rector of the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts and continued to design stamps for Austria until his death in 1951. Another of his stamps, one of a series issued in 1926 to raise funds for children's charities and featuring scenes from the Nibelung legends, is reproduced on a recent 3-schillings stamp which marks the centenary of the artist's birth in 1881.

C. W. HILL

quiz

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the founder of modern Zionism ?
2. With what would you associate the international style ?
3. On which date did Christopher Columbus sight land after he sailed out ?
4. The word Mach, used to denote speed, came from a Czech-born German physicist. What is his name ?
5. What is Panay-Hiligaynon ?
6. Where is the Painted Desert ?

ANSWERS

1. Theodor Herzl, a journalist who reported the Richard Dreyfus case for an Austrian paper.
2. Modern architecture. *International style* was also the title of a book by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson published in 1932 in which theories of modern architecture were outlined.
3. On 12 October 1492, Christopher Columbus sighted what he thought was America.
4. Ernst Mach.
5. It is a language spoken by nearly four million people in the Philippines.
6. In Northern Arizona, USA.

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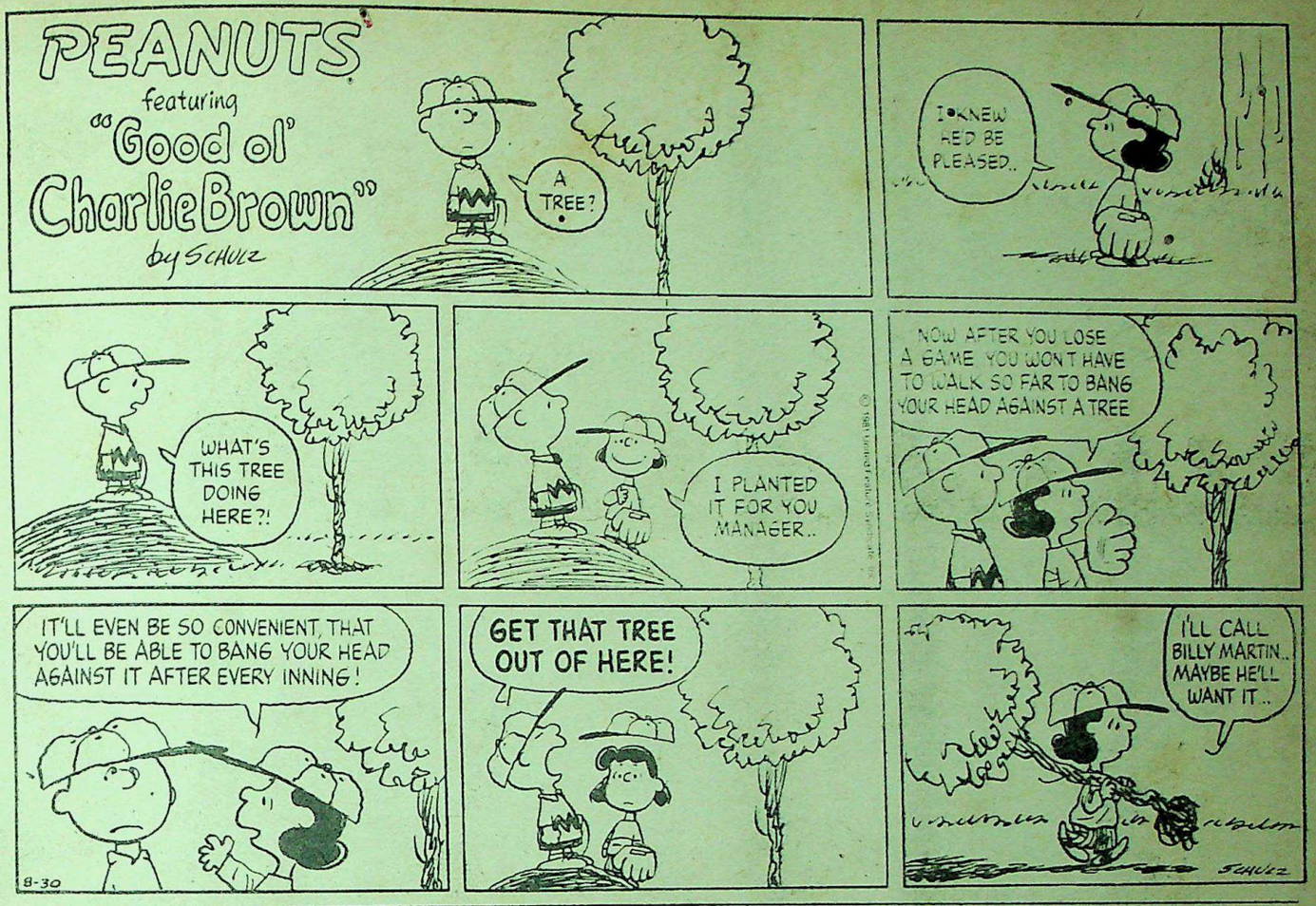

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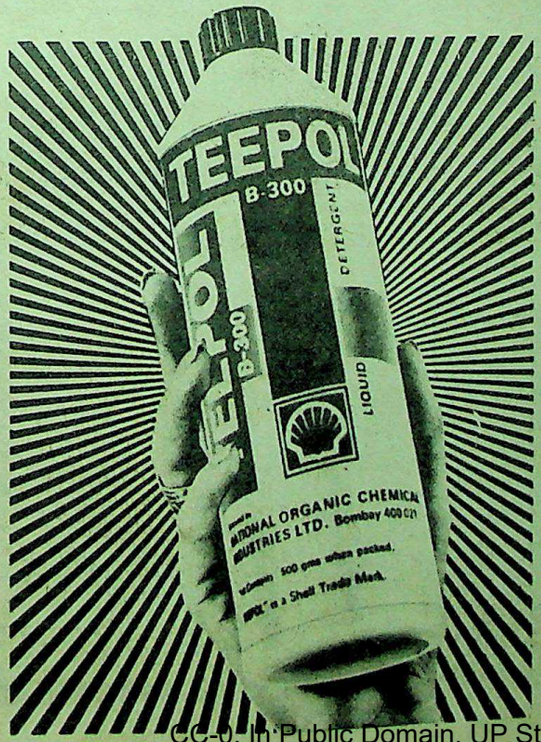

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COMICS

Asterix AND THE GREAT DIVIDE

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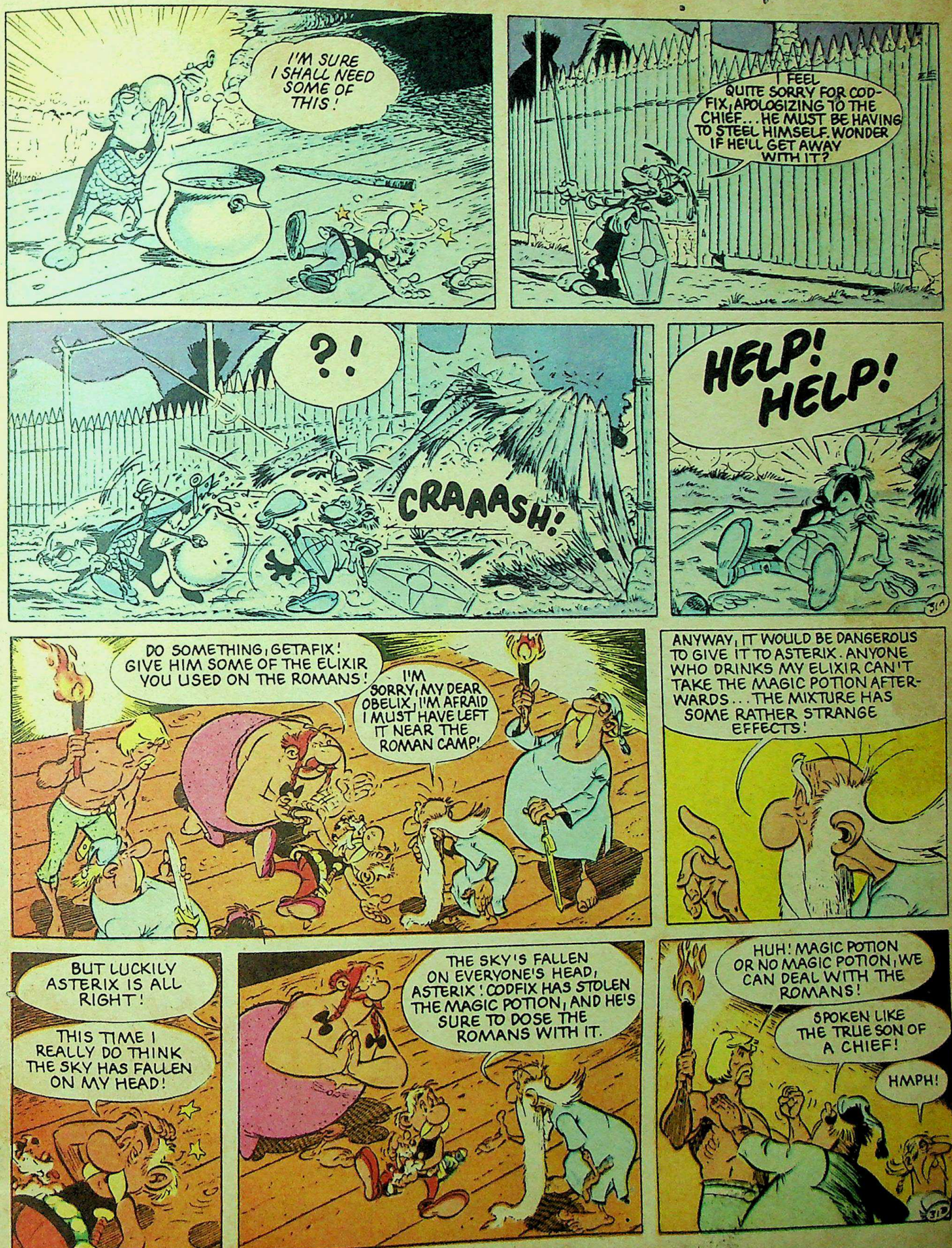

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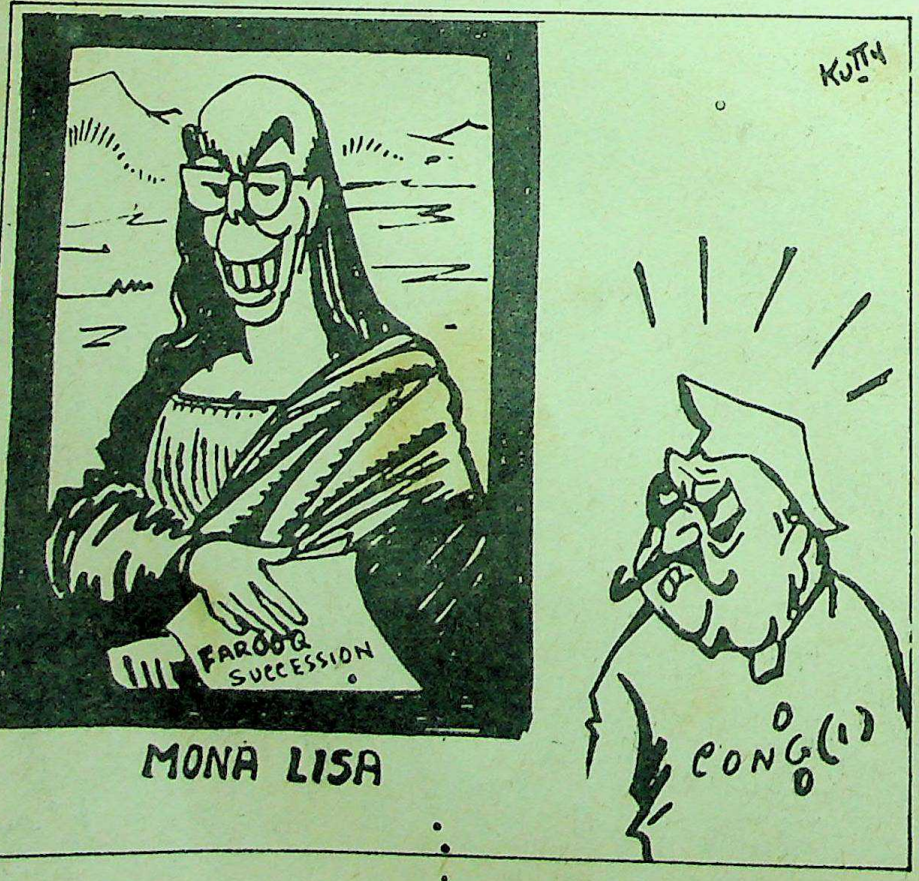
SHARAD PAWAR's 'UNITY' DREAM

SHARAD Pawar, the newly elected president of the Congress(U) had a hectic time in Delhi: he spent all of his precious time in wooing the Janata party president Mr Chandra Shekhar, pacifying the fiery George Fernandes and befriending Mr H. N. Bahuguna. Mr Pawar had apparently told Mr Chandra Shekhar that he was willing to merge his Congress(U) with the Janata party. What was the outcome of his meeting with Mr Fernandes? Mr Pawar made it clear that he was ready to merge his party with the Lok Dal but he finds it rather difficult to work with Chaudhury Charan Singh. After the discussion, however, Mr Pawar looked perfectly happy and satisfied. Not only that, he was convinced that it would not be all that difficult to get along with Chaudhury Charan Singh. Before Mr Pawar left Delhi he made it a point to see Mr Bahuguna. He had even told Mr Bahuguna that he was prepared to cooperate with him and was ready to finance him whenever the need arose. In the meantime, Mr Pawar has rechristened his party as the Congress(S). While clarifying the meaning of "S" he expressed his gratitude to Mr Raj Narain: after all it was Mr Raj Narain who declared in July 1979 that "S" stood for "secular".

CONG(I) LEARNS THE RULES FROM BJP

MR Chiman Shukla, BJP leader and former Janata party MP went on a 20-day-long fast in Rajkote with the demand that Mr Magan Sonpal, a small-time grocer who was once a BJP supporter but had defected to the Congress(I), should resign his membership and contest once again on a Congress(I) ticket. He claimed that this was in the tradition of Gandhian socialism and would establish a moral code. Mr Shukla got a tremendous response—even from the Congress(I) high command. Government circles in Delhi sent instructions to the Gujarat CM, Madhavsinh Solanki, to save Mr Shukla at any cost. Finally, the state Congress(I) and Mr Shukla reached an agreement: Mr Sonpal would be asked to resign. Incidentally, Mr Sonpal, after switching camps has cleared the debts of his sister and also purchased a piece of land. Delhi's political circle is now asking a very vital question: Why aren't the Congress(I) leaders implementing the same rule in the Parliament for members who have defected to the Congress(I)?



LOBBYING POLICEMEN

DELHI police have been operating without a deputy commissioner (traffic), since the first week of August, 1981. Mr P. S. Bawa, who was the DCP (traffic), has been elevated to the post of additional police commissioner, for the Asiads. So the post of the DCP is lying vacant. The reason for not being able to fill up the post yet seems to be the endless political manipulations and manoeuvrings. A certain DCP who has been working in the Delhi police headquarters has been trying to grab the post, immediately after Mr Bawa was promoted. In fact, he was almost certain that this prize post would go to him. But soon a rival DCP from one of the six districts of the capital appeared on the scene, equally keen to bag the post. Both of them are now lobbying in Delhi for the post. One of them is supported by the powerful Congress(I) lobby close to the police commissioner Mr P. S. Bhinder, and the other one is being backed by several bureaucrats of the home ministry. The sufferer in this power game is none other than the traffic department which is still working without a DCP.

SWAMY: A FRIEND INDEED

SUBRAMANIAM Swamy, the outspoken Janata party MP is in for good days. He secured the support of the seven Janata party members of the Lok Sabha while contesting for the post of deputy leader of the Janata Parliamentary party against Mr Ravindra Verma. Mr Swamy, however, was beaten in the final count. But Mr Verma secured only four votes from the Lok Sabha: those of Mr Madhu Dandavate, Mrs Premila Dandavate, Mr Chandra Shekhar and, of course, Mr Verma himself. The defeat, however, could not dampen Mr Swamy's spirits. Mr Swamy is going on a visit to Israel in October. He will, of course, meet Israel's Prime Minister Begin. But that is not the real coup that Swamy has achieved. On the same trip, he will go on to meet the PLO's Yasser Arafat! Which is unique. Normally, Arabs do not allow a visitor to even enter their countries if that person has been to Israel.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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PARLE Krackjack biscuit — the sweet and salty temptati

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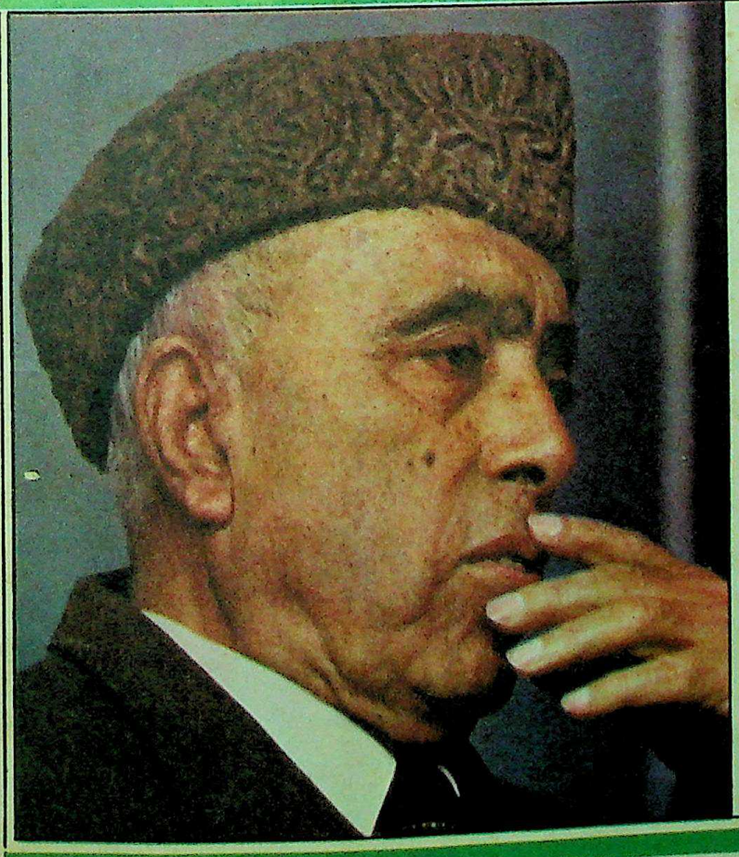
SUNDAY

Another Nuclear Blast At Pokhran?



Fresh Storms Over Kashmir

Kuldip Nayar interviews Sheikh Abdullah

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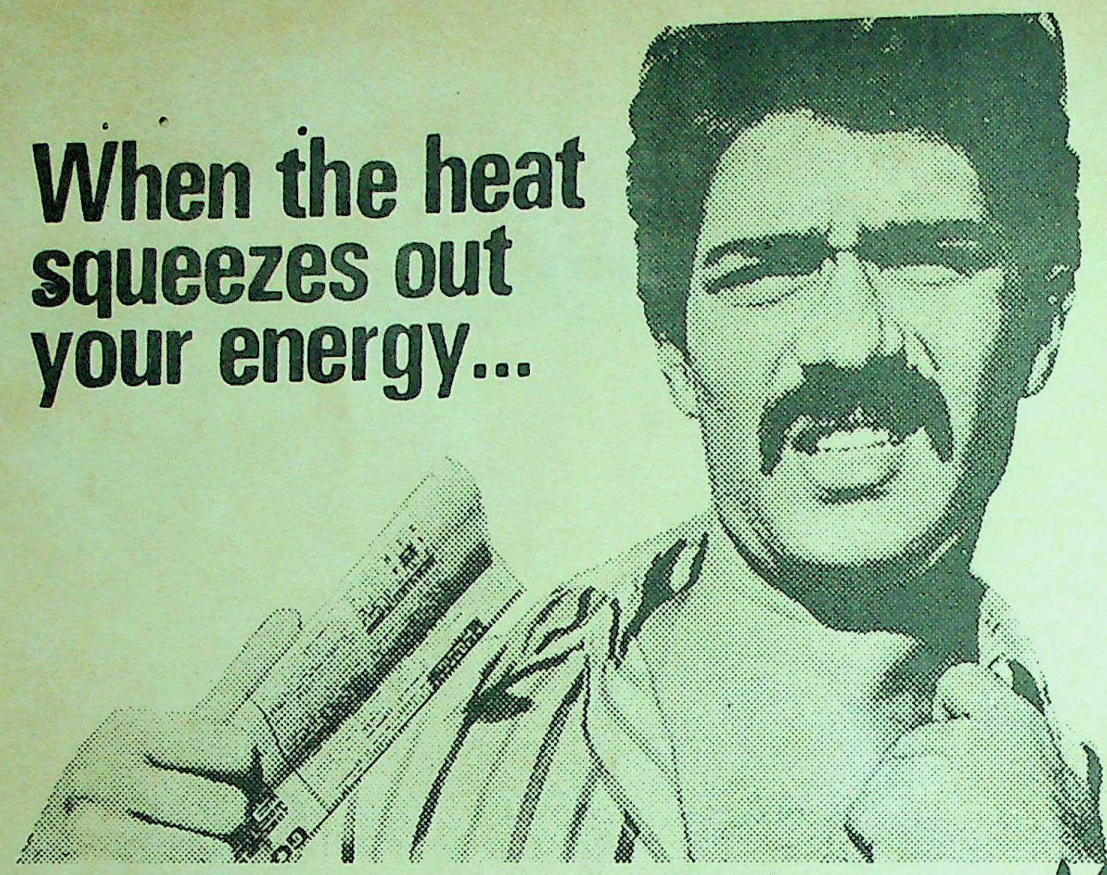

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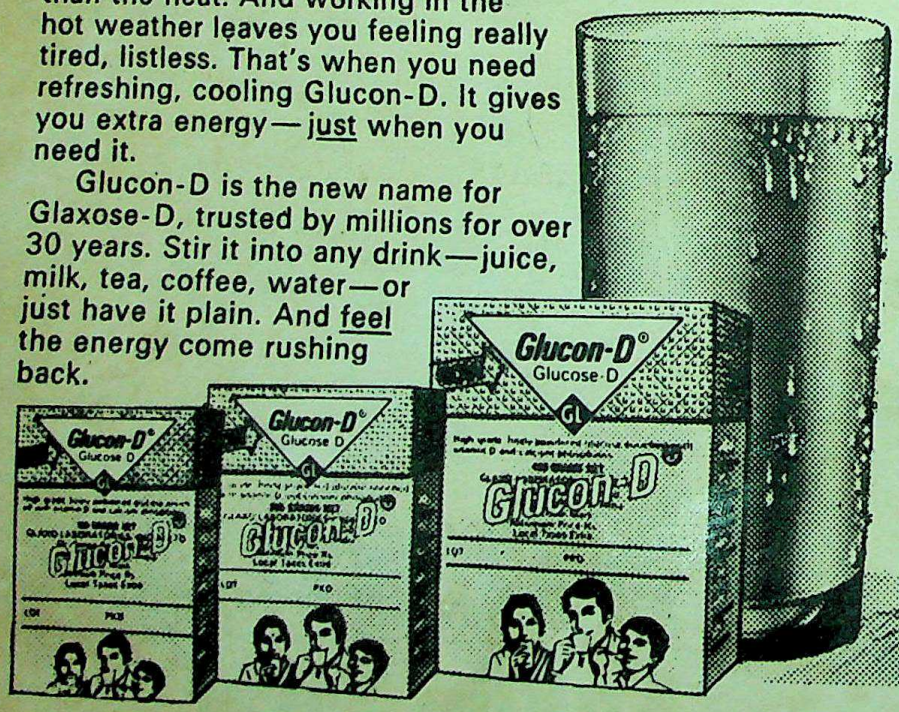

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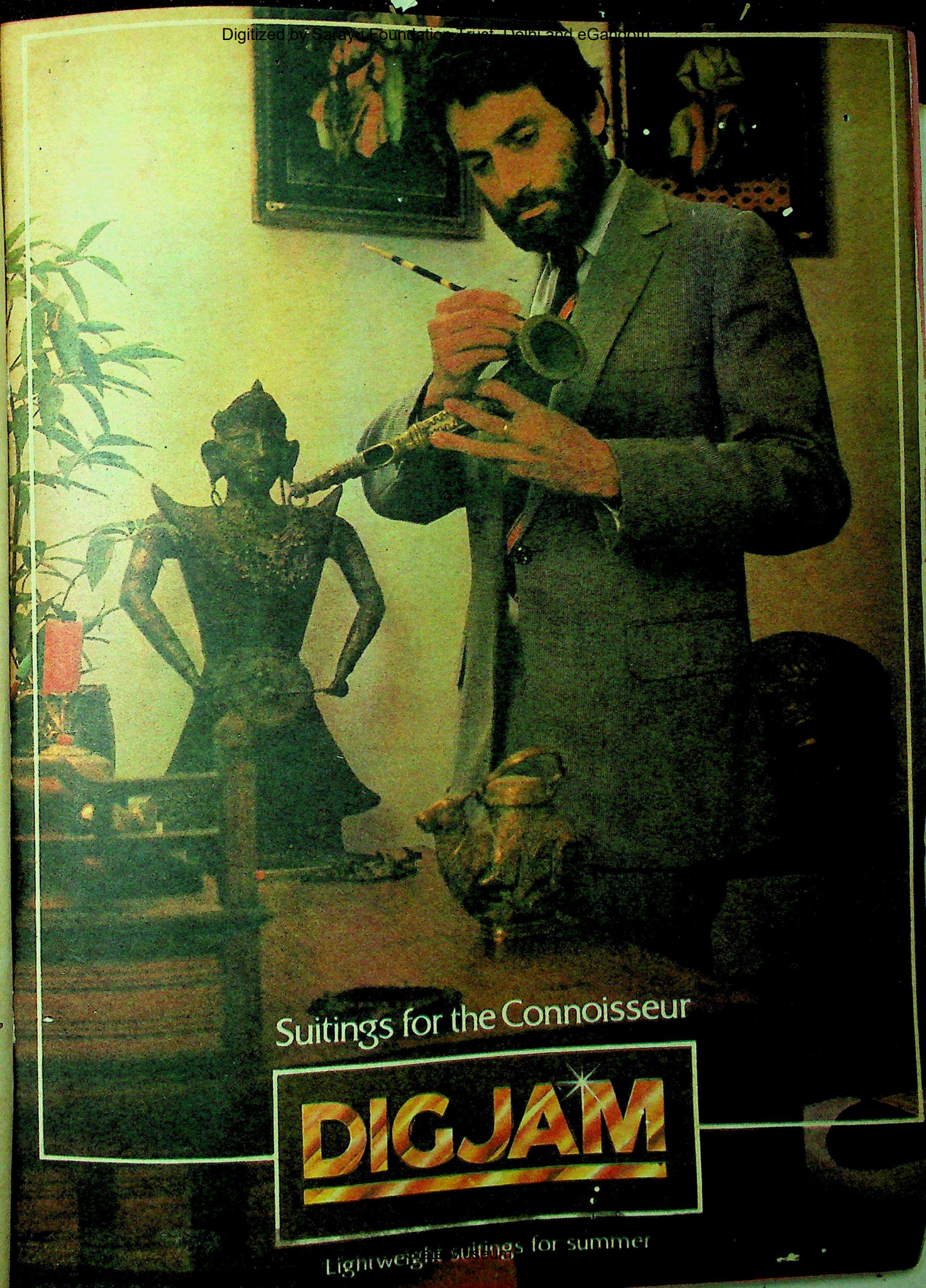

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GEM FOR THE MONTH

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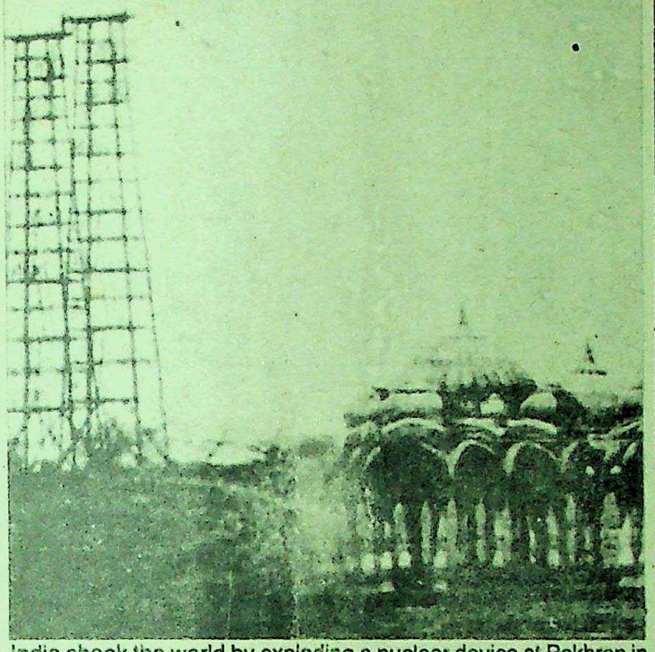
9—15 May 1982



India shook the world by exploding a nuclear device at Pokhran in the Rajasthan desert in 1974. Is the feat going to be repeated near the old site soon, this time with a vastly more powerful device? Shubhabrata Bhattacharya visited the area and found all the tell-tale signs indicating that something big is about to happen. Page 12

The new tensions in the region have inevitably rekindled the old Indo-Pak hostilities over Kashmir and brought into focus its ageing leader Sheikh Abdullah. Can the lion still roar? Kuldip nayar went to Srinagar to find an answer to this question and spoke at length to the Sheikh on the various problems facing his state. Page 16

After the arrest of N. Biseshwar Singh in June 1981, the army has made yet another breakthrough in its fight against extremists in Manipur. Th Kunj Bihari, the chairman of the outlawed Peoples Liberation Army of Manipur, was killed in an army operation on the outskirts of Imphal. An exclusive on-the-spot report. Page 28

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The Judiciary: intimidated through circulars

EXCLUSIVE

By KULDIP NAYAR

Circulars have come to acquire rather unpleasant associations among judges and lawyers. The Janata government under Mr Morarji Desai issued one saying that new appointees to the High Courts and the Supreme Court should stop drinking on joining the bench. Mrs Gandhi's government later issued another to lay down that temporary judges must accept the principle of transfer to any High Court in the country before they were considered for a permanent appointment.

Recently a letter, which may be called a circular, came from the Supreme Court proposing the elimination of oral arguments in certain preliminary—mostly miscellaneous—matters. Instead, two judges would go over the written argument circulated to them and decide whether to allow an oral argument at all. In situations where even one of them felt that it should be allowed, it would be.

The first two circulars shocked the nation because one showed the judges in a bad light and tried to interfere in their private lives and the other tried to pressurise the judiciary. But more than that was the people's suspicion that the executive was trying to subordinate the rule of law to suit its own whims. The latest circular—the Supreme Court insists on calling it a letter—would not have created the storm it did if the Supreme Court's intentions were not doubted. The feeling among lawyers is that it is only the beginning and that at a later stage oral hearings may be excluded even in regular appeals.

Not many people can take exception to the elimination of oral hearings in petitions relating to extension of time in paying court fee, fixation of an early hearing, transfer of a matter to another court, consolidation of cases on the same issue and so on. These are minor matters which now take up nearly 40 per cent of the Supreme Court's time. The practice of hand written argument is normal in Britain and America, whose legal procedures we generally follow. In fact, an oral argument is rarely allowed in those countries—it was done in the Pentagon papers case and even there arguments were restricted to half an hour for each side.

In India lawyers, even when told by the bench that the points raised are irrelevant, continue to argue as if the purpose is to impress the client. And, for a simple matter, which does not take even five minutes in a law court, a senior advocate charges Rs 1,100 over the table. It is on Mondays and Fridays that such matters are slated before the Supreme Court and senior advocates have four to five such cases each day.

Every Prime Minister, beginning with Nehru, has pointed out how prolonged hearings have defeated the purpose of justice. Among the remedial suggestions mooted has been the reduction of arguments. These days hundreds of cases are filed and one finds that the arrears of cases in the Supreme Court are about 50,000 and in the High Courts more than eight lakhs. Any step taken to scale down this accumulation should be welcome.

The common man has to go through so many layers of litigation that he is eventually physically, mentally and financially exhausted and both parties are in such dire straits so as to be unable to pay for a court decree. A Supreme Court judge said the other day that by the time a dispute was finally settled, the invariable prospect was that one of the parties might not be alive to hear the verdict. In fact on this issue, no one can be opposed to ways to quicken the pace of justice.

The reason why the Supreme Court circular became suspect was the sequence of events prior to it. Many things have taken place in the last two years which suggest relentless pressure by the executive on the judiciary. First Mrs Gandhi wanted the Chief Justice of all High Courts to be transferred. Then she approached the Chief Justice of India to give the executive blanket permission to transfer High Court judges and recently her hand-picked law commission issued a questionnaire suggesting a bifurcation of the Supreme Court. The later circular, welcome in some ways, came at a time when the public was concerned over the series of the steps Mrs Gandhi has been taking to shackle the legal system.

Even then the circular would have been discussed on its merit had it not been issued on the eve of elections to the Supreme Court Bar Association. No senior advocate, much less the leaders of the profession, Mr A. K. Sen, Mr Ram Jethmalani and Mr Govind Mukhoty, who were contesting the elections themselves, could have admitted that the points raised by the Supreme Court were worth discussing. Elections, of whatever nature, create a populistic atmosphere. The denouncement of the circular went down well with the bar hence no speaker at the meeting of the bar association dared to say anything in favour of it even though some say privately that if a judge could not appreciate the point made in a written argument he would not do so even in an oral hearing.

But one also gets the feeling that the Supreme Court was waiting for an opportunity to hit back because of the battering it has been receiving at the hands of the bar for a long time. The Supreme Court judges discussed the circular at a meeting and some reportedly mentioned how the bar looked for every opportunity to besmear the image of the judiciary. This was quite evident from some of the observations made in the reply sent to the bar.

One observation of the Supreme Court was: "If the bar has at its heart the future of the Indian judicial system and the rule of law, unrestrained criticism of the judges must at all events be avoided." Why did the judges generalise so sweepingly? The Supreme Court also regretted "the tone and language" of the bar's letter which was in no way worse than the ones it had addressed earlier to the Supreme Court.

The circular in fact underlines the growing distance between the bench and the bar and how they are hurling allegations and counter-allegations at each other. There is a tendency to win points at the expense of a good relationship. The remarks made against the judges during the discussion of the circular reflect the thinking of many lawyers. One leading advocate said that counsel "felt himself lucky if he found a judge who had read a High Court judgment in an appeal, leave aside the appeal itself." Another lawyer said that "the type of judges we have today" could not give justice on the basis of only written arguments. Surely, this is not a way to build either a healthy judiciary or, for that matter, an independent bar.

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Feuding for power

Your cover story, *Split in the family* by Shubhabrata Bhattacharya (11 April), was absolutely marvellous. It was an eye-opener to those readers who did not know much about the Gandhi household affairs. It caught the reader's attention right until the very last word. I personally used to have great admiration and affection for Dhirendra Brahmachari. It was disgusting to know that instead of sticking to teaching *yoga*, he seems to be more interested in meddling with the affairs of that family.

The treatment meted out to Maneka was extremely unfair. Certainly, the humiliating manner in which her luggage was searched and the way in which her son was attempted to be separated from her, is a downright uncouth way of treating anyone, and more so a woman. How could Mrs Gandhi forget the service Maneka had rendered her party through *Surya* magazine during the days of the Janata rule? And those were the days when neither Rajiv Gandhi's name nor face was too familiar. Therefore it is amazing that today he, more than Maneka Gandhi, is enjoying political support from the Congress(I).

All said and done, I for one, certainly admire Maneka for her guts. There is absolutely nothing wrong if she has political ambitions. And it is admirable that even after being thrown out of the house, she has still spoken of being loyal to her mother-in-law. I wish Maneka all the best and hope to see and hear a lot more from this intelligent; courageous young woman.
Suresh Kumar, Kanpur

If you asked Mrs Gandhi why Maneka left 1, Safdarjang Road, she would probably say that "there is a foreign hand behind it."
K. V. S. Prasad, Hyderabad

Tears rolled down my cheeks when I read of Maneka Gandhi's plight. I am sure even Mrs Gandhi herself must have experienced a tug or two at her heart. Does Mrs Gandhi not realise that Maneka is surely closer to most Indians than her other daughter-in-law, Sonia who is after all a foreigner? I look forward to more articles on the subject.
K. Buchi Raju, Rourkela

The Gandhis seem to have maintained the tradition of our country by following the age-old custom of the mother-in-law fighting with the daughter-in-law.
Manish Sinha Ray, Calcutta

Surely, minimum decency demanded that Mrs Gandhi should at least have searched her daughter-in-law's luggage herself rather than got Mr Dhawan or Dhirendra Brahmachari to do so.
Swadhin Sahoo, Behrampur (Orissa)

Those political opportunists should have found some other people to humiliate instead of picking on a young widow. Is this the way in which the leaders repay their debts to someone who has helped them in their time of need?
T. Shenga, Gangtok (Sikkim)

The statement of Mrs Gandhi, referring to Maneka's different background was indeed shocking. Has she forgotten that not so long ago, she herself went against her father's wishes by marrying a Parsi and thus revolted against that very "background" of which she now appears to be so proud? But at the same time, could she, as the Congress(I) leader, have acted any differently?
R. K. Koul, Kashmir

What a marvellous example Mrs Gandhi has set before the nation! Now if all the mothers-in-law start throwing their *bahus* out of the house, can she dare to raise her voice against it? Today she has sacrificed her own daughter-in-law at the altar of politics. Who knows, some day she might sacrifice her own nation too.
Pramod K. Sahoo, Rourkela

Mrs Indira Gandhi's actions ought to go down in history to illustrate the ill-treatment of the daughters-in-law at the hands of their mothers-in-law during this period. Was our Prime Minister so scared of the young Maneka that she had to literally throw her out of the house? She should have realised that this can prove fatal to her politically, with Maneka gaining all the public sympathy.
S. Harikrishna, Bangalore

Your cover story was shocking. If our Prime Minister can treat her daughter-in-law so badly, can you imagine the plight of other young women? The so-called aristocratic upbringing of our Prime Minister was very evident from her treatment of her dead son's widow. It also does not behove well of Mrs Gandhi to talk of "family background" in this scientific age.
S. Narang, New Delhi

Your cover story was a very well-presented article. The Prime Minister may know how to deal with the nation's problems but she certainly does not know how to tackle her daughter-in-law and other domestic problems.
S. P. Murugappan, Trichy

It may happen that sympathy for Maneka Gandhi will far surpass Mrs Indira Gandhi's fabled charisma, and the former will become a political force to reckon with. It is a good thing that Maneka Gandhi has got out of the fettered and confined house of the Prime Minister.
Ram Sewak Singh, Samastipur

The photographs that accompanied the cover story were excellent and very moving. They will stay ingrained in the minds of the readers for a very long time to come. Mrs Gandhi ought to have controlled her 'Nehruvian' anger and behaved more like a mother than a political being. Maybe the grandson will be instrumental in restoring peace between the two women.
K. Govind, Hyderabad

After reading the article, I have no doubts that Mrs Gandhi is a first-rate trouble-shooter. She had already established enmity with Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Nayantara Sehgal, Mrs Amteshwar Anand, and now her own daughter-in-law, Maneka. In all these, she has sacrificed everything, even her family's prestige, for the sake of power. It was high time that a ruthless person like Maneka reminded 'Queen Indira' that she is ruling a democracy and not a princely state. This ugly incident has effectively highlighted Mrs Gandhi's own intense obsession with supreme power. My sympathies are totally with Maneka and Dumpy. Good luck to them.
R. Gururaj, Madras

Maneka Gandhi who merely exercised her fundamental right to expression and speech was thrown out of the Prime Minister's house and that too at night. At the same time, the Prime Minister continues to wipe the tears of the women who throng to her 'palace' with grievances against their mothers-in-law. Also, the Prime Minister's statement about "different background" was in very poor taste and implied that Maneka has a "poor family background." Better sense should prevail on the Prime Minister and she should withdraw her words before it is too late.
S. Mazhar Husain, Secretary, All India Congress Committee, New Delhi

Mr Shubhabrata Bhattacharaya was not impartial in reporting the Maneka episode. It has been felt that he was trying to capture public sympathy for Maneka by pointing out matters not worth mentioning at all. Rajiv Gandhi is accused for keeping silent through the feud. This is not because he is afraid of Maneka but it shows how much more mature he is than Sanjay. Laxman's cartoon was superb indeed!

It is not very difficult to realise that enemies of Mrs Gandhi are working behind the scene and they desperately want to tarnish the image of the Prime Minister and the Nehru family. To some extent these elements have succeeded in their attempts by instigating Maneka to come out in the open against Mrs Gandhi.

If Maneka carries on the tussle with Mrs Gandhi, she will soon realise that the loser will not be Mrs Gandhi but herself.
A. T. Sudheer, Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)

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You are lingering far too long on the same episode of the Maneka-Mrs Gandhi quarrel. Give the readers some other news now.
H. R. Sridhara, Bangalore

Your cover story was very unbalanced and tilted too much in favour of Maneka Gandhi. When examined in the proper perspective, it is quite clear that Maneka is merely a headstrong upstart. She has tried to use the Nehru-Gandhi family as a springboard for her political ambitions. Mrs Indira Gandhi did the right thing by cutting her down to size and ousting her from the family.
H. M. Sinha, Imphal

Let us not forget that Maneka Gandhi was staying in the house of the Prime Minister of the country. It was unbecoming of her to indulge in surreptitious activity that ran against party interests. Mrs Indira Gandhi only took the one step available to her in those circumstances and that was to ask her to leave the house.
Subrat Das, Bhubaneswar

Your unending reports on the family feud are becoming progressively monotonous. There is nothing new in this drama. By reporting about it, you unnecessarily give it undue importance.
Krishnadas Karmakar, Adampur (Punjab)

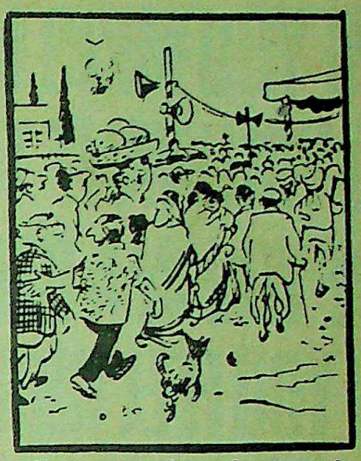
There is a limit to the readers' tolerance. We wouldn't mind if SUNDAY turns fortnightly, but please stop giving us the same story over and over again.
R. Sasidharan, Kerala

The photographs that accompanied the cover story were a little theatrical.
Abdul Haleem Khan, Bilaspur

The cover story struck me as being very lopsided and malicious. It reads more like a defamation campaign against Mrs Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. By taking up the crusade for Maneka Gandhi, the writer has exonerated her of all faults. His assessment of the split was aimed at projecting Maneka as innocent as the proverbial lamb. But in the process, he forgets that it always takes two to create a quarrel. And his portrait of Mrs Gandhi is definitely distorted. The entire episode was a shrewd political manoeuvre on Maneka's part and it should be seen for what it is. In such a situation, Mrs Gandhi could not possibly have housed a political adversary. There is no other truth to this story. Anyway, the most we can do is indulge in guesswork. Nobody can know the facts for certain; but to applaud one at the expense of the other does not speak of a level-headed, balanced judgment.
Bibhuti Mishra, Puri

You Said It

By LAXMAN



COURTESY *Times of India*

Come on, domestic quarrels and private letters are being discussed—aren't you interested in politics?

This cartoon by R. K. Laxman, I think, succinctly sums up the entire episode contained in your cover story.
Daneshwar Singh, New Delhi

Lopsided secularism

This is with reference to the letters published in the Opinion page (11 April) under the heading *Post-mortem*. I was surprised to read the lopsided reaction to M. J. Akbar's report: *The Pune riots: Revenge for Meenakshipuram* (14 March).

Firstly, having read the letters, I went back to the article and found that M. J. Akbar could not have been more honest and unbiased. I can understand that in north India there was some cause for Hindu-Muslim animosity as a result of festering reminders of the holocaust that was partition. But in the south, Hindus, Muslims and Christians have always lived in amity. I remember, when we ran out of Hindu festivals, we would join in the others' festivities. Even as a teenaged daughter of an orthodox brahmin family, I was never deterred from attending a Catholic school. Our next door neighbour, Mrs Mazharuddin, would give the first share of sweets to me. Honestly, till coming northwards in 1978, I had not come across a single case of religious bigotry. And if there was any, it was not due to the secular majority. We as a secular country, should do our bit to deny the non-secular minority from vitiating the atmosphere.

My sincere congratulations to M. J. Akbar and SUNDAY.
Lalitha Sarma, Allahabad

It was shocking to read an Opinion page full of bitter personal attacks. I missed M. J. Akbar's original sin, but I can feel how successfully he has stung the ever-so-tolerant secular Hindus!

From Jamshedpur, through Varanasi, Aligarh, etc. I am personally indebted to the writer for reminding me almost every week of the true state of the country I belong to.
S. S. Chaudhuri, Calcutta

I would like to ask Mr C. R. Ravichandran (who wrote in the Opinion page) how much longer do the Muslims need to 'prove' that they are, indeed, Indians first?
Md Jalil Ashraf, Biharsharif

Taken for a ride

In the Calcutta Book Fair of 1979 I had registered my name (No. 1291 dated 9 March 1979) for the 10 volumes of *Visvaparichaya* to be published by Nabapatra Prakashan, Calcutta. A few days before that the *Statesman* also carried an advertisement by the publisher asking for registration of subscribers. After much irksome prodding and enquiries spanning over 9 months, the publishers informed me (by a circular dated 12 December 1979) that the first volume would be brought out within 3 months and subsequent volumes would follow without delay.

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M. K. Paul, Calcutta

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The special report, *Drugs that can maim the unborn child* by Mrs Vimal Balasubrahmanian (11 April) was an excellent article. Dr B. Palaniappan, Prof. of Obs. and Gynae. at the Kilpauk Medical college, Madras, has conducted a notable research and controlled study. The conclusions he arrived at were that the hormone (HPT) drugs are unreliable and dangerous for pregnancy tests and totally useless for "secondary amenorrhoea not due to pregnancy." This conclusion was given as early as in 1978. It is high time we fought for the total ban of these oestrogen-progesterone combine drugs.
V. Anupama, Cannanore (Kerala)

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The government should make it obligatory for all manufacturers of these drugs to print all the warnings in a very bold print. Otherwise, the drugs should be banned. And why is it that the doctors recommend these drugs?
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Thanks to Vimal Balasubrahmanian for the article. These days there is a phobia among young couples to step into the chemist's shop and ask for these hormone drugs, with the hope of getting an unwanted child aborted. None of them are aware of the dangerous consequences.
Rudra Dutta Satapathi, Rourkela

Last letter

"SAD" is the word for the Saira, Asma, Dilip episode.
K. Babar Rahim, Jamshedpur

Rs 50 for the last letter

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Feuding for power

Your cover story, *Split in the family* by Shubhabrata Bhattacharya (11 April), was absolutely marvellous. It was an eye-opener to those readers who did not know much about the Gandhi household affairs. It caught the reader's attention right until the very last word. I personally used to have great admiration and affection for Dhirendra Brahmachari. It was disgusting to know that instead of sticking to teaching *yoga*, he seems to be more interested in meddling with the affairs of that family.

The treatment meted out to Maneka was extremely unfair. Certainly, the humiliating manner in which her luggage was searched and the way in which her son was attempted to be separated from her, is a downright uncouth way of treating anyone, and more so a woman. How could Mrs Gandhi forget the service Maneka had rendered her party through *Surya* magazine during the days of the Janata rule? And those were the days when neither Rajiv Gandhi's name nor face was too familiar. Therefore it is amazing that today he, more than Maneka Gandhi, is enjoying political support from the Congress(I).

All said and done, I for one, certainly admire Maneka for her guts. There is absolutely nothing wrong if she has political ambitions. And it is admirable that even after being thrown out of the house, she has still spoken of being loyal to her mother-in-law. I wish Maneka all the best and hope to see and hear a lot more from this intelligent; courageous young woman.
Suresh Kumar, Kanpur

If you asked Mrs Gandhi why Maneka left 1, Safdarjang Road, she would probably say that "there is a foreign hand behind it."
K. V. S. Prasad, Hyderabad

Tears rolled down my cheeks when I read of Maneka Gandhi's plight. I am sure even Mrs Gandhi herself must have experienced a tug or two at her heart. Does Mrs Gandhi not realise that Maneka is surely closer to most Indians than her other daughter-in-law, Sonia who is after all a foreigner? I look forward to more articles on the subject.
K. Buchi Raju, Rourkela

The Gandhis seem to have maintained the tradition of our country by following the age-old custom of the mother-in-law fighting with the daughter-in-law.
Manish Sinha Ray, Calcutta

Surely, minimum decency demanded that Mrs Gandhi should at least have searched her daughter-in-law's luggage herself rather than got Mr Dhawan or Dhirendra Brahmachari to do so.
Swadhin Sahoo, Behrampur (Orissa)

Those political opportunists should have found some other people to humiliate instead of picking on a young widow. Is this the way in which the leaders repay their debts to someone who has helped them in their time of need?
T. Shenga, Gangtok (Sikkim)

The statement of Mrs Gandhi, referring to Maneka's different background was indeed shocking. Has she forgotten that not so long ago, she herself went against her father's wishes by marrying a Parsi and thus revolted against that very "background" of which she now appears to be so proud? But at the same time, could she, as the Congress(I) leader, have acted any differently?
R. K. Koul, Kashmir

What a marvellous example Mrs Gandhi has set before the nation! Now if all the mothers-in-law start throwing their *bahus* out of the house, can she dare to raise her voice against it? Today she has sacrificed her own daughter-in-law at the altar of politics. Who knows, some day she might sacrifice her own nation too.
Pramod K. Sahoo, Rourkela

Mrs Indira Gandhi's actions ought to go down in history to illustrate the ill-treatment of the daughters-in-law at the hands of their mothers-in-law during this period. Was our Prime Minister so scared of the young Maneka that she had to literally throw her out of the house? She should have realised that this can prove fatal to her politically, with Maneka gaining all the public sympathy.
S. Harikrishna, Bangalore

Your cover story was shocking. If our Prime Minister can treat her daughter-in-law so badly, can you imagine the plight of other young women? The so-called aristocratic upbringing of our Prime Minister was very evident from her treatment of her dead son's widow. It also does not behove well of Mrs Gandhi to talk of "family background" in this scientific age.
S. Narang, New Delhi

Your cover story was a very well-presented article. The Prime Minister may know how to deal with the nation's problems but she certainly does not know how to tackle her daughter-in-law and other domestic problems.
S. P. Murugappan, Trichy

It may happen that sympathy for Maneka Gandhi will far surpass Mrs Indira Gandhi's fabled charisma, and the former will become a political force to reckon with. It is a good thing that Maneka Gandhi has got out of the fettered and confined house of the Prime Minister.
Ram Sewak Singh, Samastipur

The photographs that accompanied the cover story were excellent and very moving. They will stay ingrained in the minds of the readers for a very long time to come. Mrs Gandhi ought to have controlled her 'Nehruvian' anger and behaved more like a mother than a political being. Maybe the grandson will be instrumental in restoring peace between the two women.
K. Govind, Hyderabad

After reading the article, I have no doubts that Mrs Gandhi is a first-rate trouble-shooter. She had already established enmity with Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Nayantara Sehgal, Mrs Amteshwar Anand, and now her own daughter-in-law, Maneka. In all these, she has sacrificed everything, even her family's prestige, for the sake of power. It was high time that a ruthless person like Maneka reminded 'Queen Indira' that she is ruling a democracy and not a princely state. This ugly incident has effectively highlighted Mrs Gandhi's own intense obsession with supreme power. My sympathies are totally with Maneka and Dumpy. Good luck to them.
R. Gururaj, Madras

Maneka Gandhi who merely exercised her fundamental right to expression and speech was thrown out of the Prime Minister's house and that too at night. At the same time, the Prime Minister continues to wipe the tears of the women who throng to her 'palace' with grievances against their mothers-in-law. Also, the Prime Minister's statement about "different background" was in very poor taste and implied that Maneka has a "poor family background." Better sense should prevail on the Prime Minister and she should withdraw her words before it is too late.
S. Mazhar Husain, Secretary, All India Congress Committee, New Delhi

Mr Shubhabrata Bhattacharaya was not impartial in reporting the Maneka episode. It has been felt that he was trying to capture public sympathy for Maneka by pointing out matters not worth mentioning at all. Rajiv Gandhi is accused for keeping silent through the feud. This is not because he is afraid of Maneka but it shows how much more mature he is than Sanjay. Laxman's cartoon was superb indeed!

It is not very difficult to realise that enemies of Mrs Gandhi are working behind the scene and they desperately want to tarnish the image of the Prime Minister and the Nehru family. To some extent these elements have succeeded in their attempts by instigating Maneka to come out in the open against Mrs Gandhi.

If Maneka carries on the tussle with Mrs Gandhi, she will soon realise that the loser will not be Mrs Gandhi but herself.
A. T. Sudheer, Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)

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You are lingering far too long on the same episode of the Maneka-Mrs Gandhi quarrel. Give the readers some other news now.
H. R. Sridhara, Bangalore

Your cover story was very unbalanced and tilted too much in favour of Maneka Gandhi. When examined in the proper perspective, it is quite clear that Maneka is merely a headstrong upstart. She has tried to use the Nehru-Gandhi family as a springboard for her political ambitions. Mrs Indira Gandhi did the right thing by cutting her down to size and ousting her from the family.
H. M. Sinha, Imphal

Let us not forget that Maneka Gandhi was staying in the house of the Prime Minister of the country. It was unbecoming of her to indulge in surreptitious activity that ran against party interests. Mrs Indira Gandhi only took the one step available to her in those circumstances and that was to ask her to leave the house.
Subrat Das, Bhubaneswar

Your unending reports on the family feud are becoming progressively monotonous. There is nothing new in this drama. By reporting about it, you unnecessarily give it undue importance.
Krishnadas Karmakar, Adampur (Punjab)

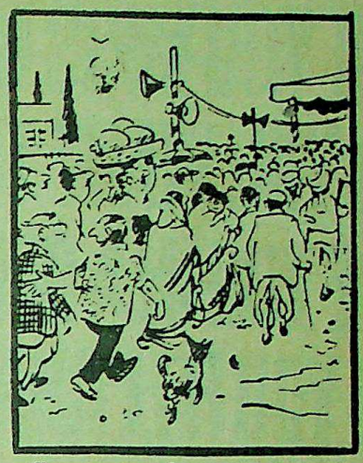
There is a limit to the readers' tolerance. We wouldn't mind if SUNDAY turns fortnightly, but please stop giving us the same story over and over again.
R. Sasidharan, Kerala

The photographs that accompanied the cover story were a little theatrical.
Abdul Haleem Khan, Bilaspur

The cover story struck me as being very lopsided and malicious. It reads more like a defamation campaign against Mrs Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. By taking up the crusade for Maneka Gandhi, the writer has exonerated her of all faults. His assessment of the split was aimed at projecting Maneka as innocent as the proverbial lamb. But in the process, he forgets that it always takes two to create a quarrel. And his portrait of Mrs Gandhi is definitely distorted. The entire episode was a shrewd political manoeuvre on Maneka's part and it should be seen for what it is. In such a situation, Mrs Gandhi could not possibly have housed a political adversary. There is no other truth to this story. Anyway, the most we can do is indulge in guesswork. Nobody can know the facts for certain; but to applaud one at the expense of the other does not speak of a level-headed, balanced judgment.
Bibhuti Mishra, Puri

You Said It

By LAXMAN



COURTESY *Times of India*

Come on, domestic quarrels and private letters are being discussed—aren't you interested in politics?

This cartoon by R. K. Laxman, I think, succinctly sums up the entire episode contained in your cover story.
Daneshwar Singh, New Delhi

Lopsided secularism

This is with reference to the letters published in the Opinion page (11 April) under the heading *Post-mortem*. I was surprised to read the lopsided reaction to M. J. Akbar's report: *The Pune riots: Revenge for Meenakshipuram* (14 March).

Firstly, having read the letters, I went back to the article and found that M. J. Akbar could not have been more honest and unbiased. I can understand that in north India there was some cause for Hindu-Muslim animosity as a result of festering reminders of the holocaust that was partition. But in the south, Hindus, Muslims and Christians have always lived in amity. I remember, when we ran out of Hindu festivals, we would join in the others' festivities. Even as a teenaged daughter of an orthodox brahmin family, I was never deterred from attending a Catholic school. Our next door neighbour, Mrs Mazharuddin, would give the first share of sweets to me. Honestly, till coming northwards in 1978, I had not come across a single case of religious bigotry. And if there was any, it was not due to the secular majority. We as a secular country, should do our bit to deny the non-secular minority from vitiating the atmosphere.

My sincere congratulations to M. J. Akbar and SUNDAY.
Lalitha Sarma, Allahabad

It was shocking to read an Opinion page full of bitter personal attacks. I missed M. J. Akbar's original sin, but I can feel how successfully he has stung the ever-so-tolerant secular Hindus!

From Jamshedpur, through Varanasi, Aligarh, etc. I am personally indebted to the writer for reminding me almost every week of the true state of the country I belong to.
S. S. Chaudhuri, Calcutta

I would like to ask Mr C. R. Ravichandran (who wrote in the Opinion page) how much longer do the Muslims need to 'prove' that they are, indeed, Indians first?
Md Jalil Ashraf, Biharsharif

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COVER STORY

Another Nuclear Blast At Pokhran ?

Villagers have been told that they may have to vacate their homes for a few days in May. Strict security has been clamped down over an area about 20 kilometres from Pokhran in Rajasthan where India's first nuclear device was tested. SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA went to the area and returned convinced that a nuclear explosion of a far more sophisticated nature than the first one could take place. Preparations have been in progress for nearly a year, and we may see the culmination of the efforts soon.

Pokhran, the sleepy subdivisional town of Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district (on the edge of the Thar desert) located 171 km northwest of Jodhpur, may soon be back in the news. It gained a special place on the map when the country's first peaceful nuclear explosion went off there on 18 May 1974. Perhaps in May this year, Pokhran may again be in the headlines for similar reasons. For the past one year, army units posted in the vicinity of Pokhran have been engaged in activities similar to the ones carried out before the 1974 blast. The villages around the proposed test site are agog with stories of how preparations are being made to blast another nuclear device.

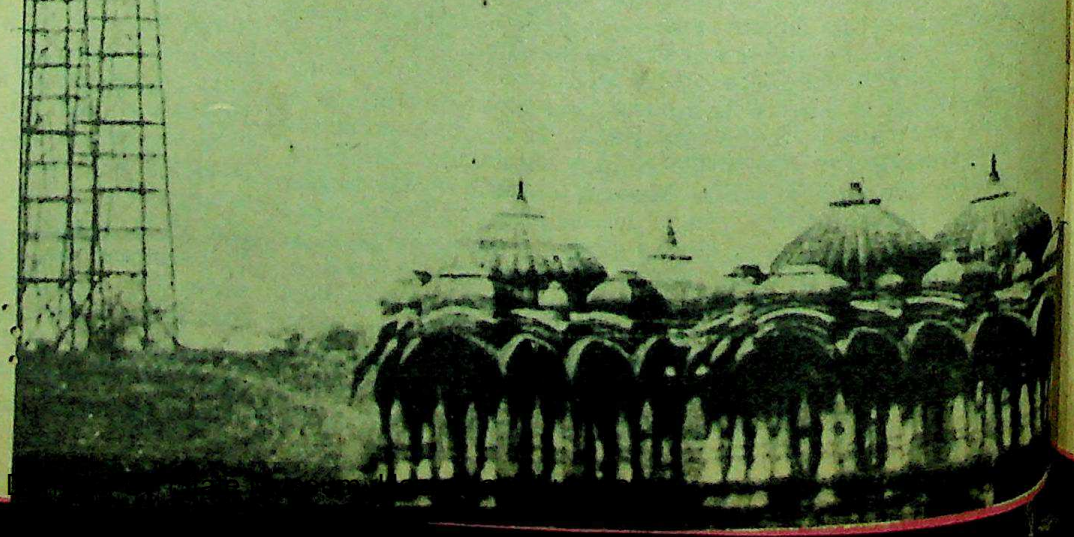
A large area in the desert near Pokhran has been turned into a field firing range of the army since 1971. Mock desert-warfare exercises and artillery firing exercises are carried out by the army units in this area. The site was chosen sometime after the 1965 Indo-Pak war and in 1969 two villages, Malka and Kala, were evacuated to make way for the field firing range. Later, four more villages—Naotala, Etah, Taorki and Sudhia—were also similarly evacuated around 1971. The residents of these six villages were paid adequate compensation and resettled in the surrounding areas. The 1974 explosion was carried out near the abandoned Malka village which is located about four km away from Loharki, a village on the Ramdeora-Nachna road.

When we reached Pokhran after reading reports that American satellites had spotted some activity similar to preparations for a nuclear blast in the area around the last test site, we learnt that it was not Pokhran but Loharki which should have rightfully hit the headlines in 1974 for being the spot nearest to the test site. Ten km from Pokhran lies Ramdeora, a place of pilgrimage for the local people, both Hindus and Muslims. It derives its name from Baba Ramdeo, a fifteenth century saint, whose *samadhi* is located there. At Ramdeora, one road branches off towards Bikaner and another goes to Nachna. Loharki is 20 km to the west of Ramdeora.

We reached Loharki after an arduous drive on the desert road which was covered at many places by sand blown onto it from the desert. There are no villages between Ramdeora and Loharki, located on the road. The first building that one sees in Loharki is a middle school (imparting education up to class eight) which has been built with funds provided by CASA (Christian Association for Social Action). We went to the school and enquired from the teachers if Loharki was the village which had been closest to the 1974 blast site. The villagers looked at us suspiciously. "Why don't

Loharki villagers

Watch towers (left) coming up near Pokhran



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you talk to the *pradhan* (headman), Gulab Singh?" So, we walked through the burning hot sands towards the *pradhan's* house, located in the centre of the village. On the way, the schoolboy accompanying us proudly pointed out the village well. Water is a scarce commodity in the Jaisalmer desert and a village which has a sweet water well is very rare. (Many villages in this area are named after the type of wells. On the road between Jodhpur and Pokhran, we came across villages with names like "Meethi Beri" and "Khari Beri," denoting sweet water and salt water wells. Beri in the local language means a well.) Had the well in Loharki been affected by radio-activity, we asked the villagers who were drawing water from the well. They said no. The atomic energy people periodically carry out radioactivity tests on the well, we were told. The schoolboy told us that no one in the village had been affected by the 1974 blast and this was the view of the village elders as well.

Gulab Singh was the *pradhan* of Loharki when the 1974 blast took place and he continues to be the *pradhan* even today. He was re-elected in the recent *panchayat* elections, held a few months back. And he displayed every sign of being a good politician by giving evasive replies to all the questions put by us. Yes, Loharki was the village nearest to the test site; he did not know anything about the present plans of the government; the army periodically visits the village, but no indication has been given by the army about any possibility of the village being evacuated for a nuclear blast. At this point, another villager, who was sitting in the *pradhan's* house, intruded. "Even in 1974 there was no prior warning," he said. Gulab Singh frowned. "You have come from Delhi. Please go and ask the government there what the plans are. Why do you bother us?" After this, Gulab Singh started giving us statistics about the famine situation. In spite of dismissing our questions on the nuclear blast, the villager-like simplicity of Gulab Singh was not lost. "You are our guest, you must have a cup of tea before you leave. Please understand our limitations. But we must not fail in our duty towards our guests." So, we sat down to drink tea with the *pradhan*. In the meantime the news of journalists from Delhi having come to the village had spread. Some more villagers had come to Gulab Singh's house. Describing the famine of the area, Gulab Singh said, "The people here are very hardy. They can face any difficult situation. Do you know that once for seven continuous years there were no rains. When the rains came in the eighth year, our children who were around ten years old were scared and surprised at the strange phenomenon they were seeing for the first time in their lives." As we were leaving Gulab Singh's house, some villagers followed us out.

One of them told us, "You were sitting at the same spot where (Drs) Ramanna and Sethna sat once." The villagers of Loharki know nuclear scientists Dr Raja Ramanna and Dr H. N. Sethna by name and face. They are said to have visited the village both before and after the 1974 blast. We goaded the villagers to tell us if they had noticed any fresh activity or if the army had told them to be prepared for the precautions which have to be taken before a test blast. They said that for the past one year the army had cordoned off an area between the earlier test site of Malka and Khetolai (a village on the Pokhran-Jaisalmer road) and it seemed as if another blast was going to take place. The army had spoken to the *pradhan* about the possibilities of the villagers being evacuated for a few days. This puzzled the villagers most because in 1974 they had not been asked to leave the village. Apparently, the proposed blast will be more powerful than the 1974 one.

The villagers of Loharki had been alerted by armymen, who landed in the village in platoon strength on the night of 17 May 1974. The villagers, who had by then got used to the army excercises in the field firing range, were told that a new kind of bomb was to be exploded in the range. They were asked to remain indoors. They were given cotton wool and advised to put it into their ears and not look out of the windows. Around 7.00 am on 18 May, there was a loud bang and the earth shook. Moments after the bang, the armymen, who had camped in the village school building at night, came out and started dancing in joy. "*Hamne atom phor diya* (We have blasted the atom)," they were shouting. From them the villagers learnt that the fervent activity which had been taking place in the abandoned Malka village for the past year or so had not been for oil or coal exploration, but an atomic blast.

An abandoned well in Malka had been used for the 1974 blast. The well had dried up years ago. When the army started digging in that area and teamloads of scientists came to the site, the villagers of Loharki thought that perhaps coal or oil had been discovered in the area. No local labour was engaged. The armymen used to say, "You people could not even find water. Let's see if we can find something else."

At one stage the army officers asked the village elders as to how the villagers could be brought together to one spot without raising alarm. The elders said that whenever there was an opium-eating session, the villagers gathered together. Apparently the army was toying with the idea of gathering the villagers together at the time of the blast. But later the plan was abandoned and the villagers were just told to remain indoors. But unlike the 1974 blast, in this proposed blast, the authorities are planning to evacuate the villages. The 1974 blast was based on nuclear fission (atomic blast). Perhaps the blast being planned now will be based on the principle of nuclear fusion (similar to a hydrogen bomb).

After talking to the villagers at Loharki we drove back to Ramdeora and then on to Pokhran, from where we started driving west on the road to Jaisalmer. Our destination was Khetolai, a village 20 km away from Pokhran, which may be the nearest spot to the site of the proposed explosion. While Loharki has a mixed population (around 1,500) comprising rajputs, Muslims, bishnois and harijans, Khetolai (population around 1,000) is a predominantly bishnoi village. The villagers of Khetolai have clashed a number of times with the local army officers for the past few years. The bishnois are opposed to killings and the army officers posted in the field firing range off Pokhran sometimes go out deer hunting. The area abounds in deer, peacocks, sheep, goats and of course, camels. Deer hunting is prohibited by law and taking advantage of this legal position, the bishnois of Khetolai have been waging a campaign against the army officers. There are, however, other reasons for the villagers of Khetolai to be annoyed with the army. Many people in Khetolai pick up the used shells from the field firing range and sell them as scrap. The army continuously lodges complaints with the local police against the villagers of Khetolai on this score. And the tussle goes on.

As per the information given to us by the villagers of Loharki, the proposed site for the nuclear explosion is located off the old site near Malka and the Khetolai village. The villagers of Khetolai confirmed that a portion of the field firing range near the village had been cordoned off with barbed wire for the past year or so and that at night lights could be seen from the site. There was also the droning sound of machine, perhaps a drill, heard in the night. In the desert, it is extremely difficult to work in the day. Apparently some activity is going on in the area cordoned off by the army. The villagers of Khetolai said that in case their cattle strayed into the notified area they are able to get them back with a lot of difficulty. If anyone loitered into the notified area by mistake, the armymen give the person a beating.

From all indications, a site near Khetolai is being prepared for an unusual event. From past experience, the villagers near the field firing range off Pokhran say that the activity taking place in the prohibited zone of the desert is similar to the activity noticed before the 1974 blast. Nuclear explosions, unlike political rallies, are not much-trumpeted events. They are undertaken under the cover of strictest security. But with the advancement of technology, the space satellites are able to "see" all activities on the face of earth through their infrared "eyes." And one American satellite has recently "seen" some such activity in the vicinity of Pokhran. A Pentagon report on this has been leaked and published in an American daily, the *Atlanta Constitution*, recently. In all likelihood, the present glory

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Unrealistic pricing hits drug production and investment

Drug prices are under Government control for the past two decades. And since the last 10 years they are fixed according to a clearly defined, rigid pricing formula. Not only the prices of all bulk drugs but also the price and profit margins of each and every finished formulation are controlled. On top of this, there is a ceiling on the overall profit a company can make. This three-tier control ensures that no company can overcharge or make exorbitant profit or increase prices without the prior approval of the Government.

No control on cost

Although prices are controlled, there is no control on the costs of inputs which have escalated sharply (see table). The price control order provides for periodic revision in drug prices on the basis of increases in cost of production but there is no adequate administrative machinery to deal expeditiously with hundreds of price revision applications. And by the time prices are revised, costs have increased further, rendering the approved prices uneconomic.

COST ESCALATION OF INPUTS

	Unit	Price in 1976 (Rs.)	Price in 1981 (Rs.)	Percentage increase (%)
Raw materials				
Lactose	kg	7.15	14.75	106.29
Gelatine	kg	31.09	55.99	80.09
Sugar D30	kg	2.15	7.49	248.37
Salicylic acid	kg	15.78	32.96	108.87
Alcohol (isopropanol)	kg	8.86	18.54	109.26
Packing materials				
Vial 5 ml white	1000	107.07	204.24	90.75
Glass bottle (amber) 50 ml	1000	233.60	378.47	62.02
PP caps	1000	140.40	185.76	32.31
Tubes 5 g	1000	326.27	656.29	101.15
Aluminium foil (printed)	kg	45.73	69.55	52.09
Utilities				
Electricity	KWPH	0.24	0.45	87.50
Furnace oil	Litre	0.96	2.57	167.71

Inordinate delay

Inordinate delay in price revision is not the only problem. What is even worse is that when prices are finally approved they are inadequate and far below what is warranted by the cost of production and even the Government's own pricing norms. This is because actual costs are not taken into account; several legitimate costs are arbitrarily disallowed.

Furthermore, the mark-up allowed is inadequate and unrealistic. Under the pricing formula the consumer price of a drug is arrived at by adding a percentage mark-up to its factory cost. Mark-up is not profit; it is to cover costs not included in factory cost, such as freight, distribution charges, trade discount, selling expenses and manufacturers' margin.

Under the old formula mark-up was a maximum of 75% of factory cost for certain drugs and 150% for others. This has now been reduced to 40% for some drugs, 55% for a second category and 60%-100% for a third, although in no area have costs gone down. The break-even mark-up for most companies is around 75%. When costs are going up and prices all round are rising, drug prices cannot remain the same without adversely affecting investment, production and availability of drugs and medicines.

Sharp decline in profitability

The drug industry like any other industry, must have a fair return to enable it to pay a reasonable dividend and to plough back for new investment and increased production. But cost escalation without timely price adjustments has sharply eroded margins to levels well below those prescribed by the Government. The position today is that very few companies are able to get even a modest return. Obviously, there is something basically wrong with the policy itself.

The impact of cost escalation on the profitability is clearly demonstrated by a study of the balance sheets of 20 leading companies by the Economic Times Research Bureau. These 20 companies, together account for a total drug sales of Rs.474 crores in 1980-81 or about 50% of the entire production of the organised sector of the industry. The study showed that although sales increased by 9.5% in 1980-81 over 1979-80, profit before tax dropped as much as 25.2%. Retained profits for the year recorded a sharp decline of 22.5%.

The financial viability of several companies has been severely hit. Some established units are already in the red; others are rapidly moving in that direction.

Shortage

Naturally, this has adversely affected investment and production. New investment has slowed down. Shortages of several essential medicines, which were occasional in the past, have now become frequent and wide-ranging. Other factors have aggravated the situation: scarcity of critical raw materials and packing materials; inadequate and irregular supply of canalised drugs; power cuts and labour unrest.

HOW DRUG PRICES COMPARE WITH OTHER PRICES

	Wholesale price index	
	All commodities	Drugs & medicines
1970-71 (base)	100.0	100.0
1975-76	172.9	118.7
1978-79	186.4	136.1
1979-80	212.3	135.2
1980-81	256.9	137.6

A policy for growth, not stagnation

The aim of the policy-makers was to encourage investment and production. But the policy has produced the opposite effect. Our Prime Minister has recently called for removal of all policy constraints and procedural handicaps that prevent optimum utilisation of the country's productive potential. But the drug policy does not encourage more production to prevent shortages.

Another look at the policy is long overdue. It is crippling a vital industry. It has caused shortages and hardships to the consumer. It has also pushed up the country's import bill.

In the year of productivity we need a drug policy that encourages growth, more production and greater availability of drugs and medicines to the consumer.

MARK-UP IS NOT PROFIT

Mark-up is meant to cover costs **not** included in factory cost: namely, freight, marketing and distribution costs, trade discount and manufacturers' margin. The mark-up which was 75% for some drugs and 150% for others in 1970 has been slashed to 40%, 55% and 60%-100% under the DPCO 1979, although in no area have costs come down.

ORGANISATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCERS' OF INDIA
Cook's Building, Dr. D.N. Road, Bombay 400 001

RADEUS/OPPI/1-82

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of Loharki may soon be shared by Khetolai as well.

But will it mean anything to the villagers of Khetolai? When we reached the village in the afternoon, our throats were parched. We had drunk sweet water at Loharki and we asked for some drinking water from the villagers at Khetolai. A bucket full of brownish, brackish water was brought. Khetolai stores rainwater for drinking round the year. There is no well in the village. As we drank the brackish water, sitting in the building of the local cooperative, our eyes fell on a tattered poster on the wall. It was a poster of Jawaharlal Nehru with the orignal Congress symbol of the twin oxen and a plough. The slogan on the poster read, "*Desh ki pragati mein sajhedar baniye, Congress ko vote dijiye* (Become partners in the nation's progress and vote for the Congress)." A villager proudly told us that the poster was a remnant of 1962 elections. The nation has certainly progressed in the past 20 years. Khetolai may soon be the village nearest to the site of a nuclear experiment. But progress seems to have bypassed Khetolai. Even today there is no proper drinking water. And Khetolai is certainly not an isolated example. Yet, the people still fondly retain the old Nehru election poster, urging them to do something which they have failed to do this far.

Fission and fusion: the difference

Each of the two atomic bombs dropped on the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 had a destructive power of at least 20,000 tons of TNT, a chemical explosive. The total atomic casualties from these were about 200,000 and would have been higher if larger targets had been hit. The atomic bomb tested by India at Pokhran in 1974 had a destructive power of 15,000 to 20,000 tons of TNT.

Compared with the atomic bomb, a thermonuclear bomb, generally called a hydrogen bomb, is far more powerful. A single hydrogen bomb can completely destroy a large city. First developed by the US physicist Edward Teller and others in 1949, hydrogen bombs have been extensively tested by the US, the Soviet Union, China, the UK and France.

The atomic bomb is based on a principle called nuclear fission, whereas the hydrogen bomb functions on nuclear fusion. In nuclear fission, an atomic nucleus (i.e., the heavy mass at the centre of an atom) splits into two pieces of almost equal mass with simultaneous liberation of a large amount of energy.

The best known nuclear fission reaction is the fission of uranium nuclei. Left to themselves, uranium nuclei rarely undergo fission, that is, they do not break apart. They split only if they are bombarded with neutrons (a particle which has no electrical charge). The neutron can be provided by a radioactive source. When a radioactive source is placed next to a piece of uranium, some of the uranium nuclei undergo fission. But a radioactive source does not provide enough neutrons to make many fission reactions take place at the same time. In a piece of uranium the additional neutrons come from the uranium fission reactions themselves.

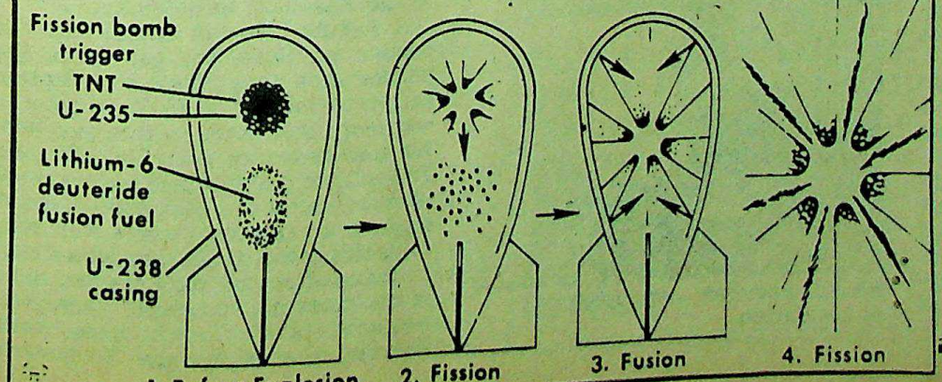
A uranium-235 nucleus contains 143 neutrons and 92 protons. When a uranium-235 nucleus is hit by an external neutron, it undergoes fission and splits into nuclei which contain more nearly equal number of neutrons and protons. The original U-235 nucleus provides more neutrons than the split-up nuclei can use up entirely. Some of the neutrons from the original nucleus are left over after the fission reaction takes place. These extra neutrons travel through the piece of uranium until they hit other uranium-235 nuclei. Then the process of fission takes place in the other nuclei. The neutrons hit the nuclei and break them apart; more neutrons are left over from the new fission reactions. These extra neutrons hit still other uranium nuclei, and the process is repeated as long as more neutrons can hit more uranium nuclei. In such a process one reaction makes other reactions take place.

The fission of just one ounce of uranium-235 releases energy equivalent to around 600,000 kilowatt-hours. The object of an atomic bomb is to create an uncontrolled chain reaction so as to make as many atoms as possible undergo fission in a short time. The tremendous energy from the fission of one nucleus is thus multiplied a large number of times, and it is this sudden surge of energy released almost instantaneously that constitutes the explosion. A fission explosion is about 400,000 times as powerful as the explosion of an equivalent weight of the chemical explosive TNT.

In 1952, the US fired a nuclear weapon of another type—called a hydrogen bomb or thermonuclear bomb. Whereas in fission the energy comes from the breakup of a heavy nucleus, in this kind of reaction it comes from the fusing together of two light nuclei to form a heavier one. If atoms are heated to very high temperatures, their nuclei can come together. If they come together with enough force, fusion takes place. The temperatures needed to produce fusion reactions are in the range of 32 million degrees Fahrenheit. These are produced by an atomic bomb explosion which can generate as much as 90 million degrees Fahrenheit, and for long enough to set off a fusion reaction.

So a fusion bomb is built around a fission bomb. When the uranium in the fission bomb explodes, the high temperatures make the light nuclei fuse almost at the same time, producing a fusion explosion. This is what takes place in a hydrogen bomb, which uses hydrogen for its fusion reactions. There are three forms of hydrogen—light hydrogen, deuterium (heavy hydrogen) and tritium. In the hydrogen bomb, deuterium is used. Each deuterium nucleus contains one neutron and one proton. When two of the nuclei fuse, they form a nucleus of helium containing two neutrons and two protons. This fusion releases a tremendous amount of energy. The fusion of hydrogen to form helium takes place in the sun, and the heat it generates warms the earth. The hydrogen fusion reaction (H-bomb) is far more destructive than the uranium fission reaction (A-bomb). Most of the cost of a hydrogen bomb is said to be the cost of the atomic bomb to set it off.

EXPLOSION OF A HYDROGEN BOMB



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SPECIAL REPORT

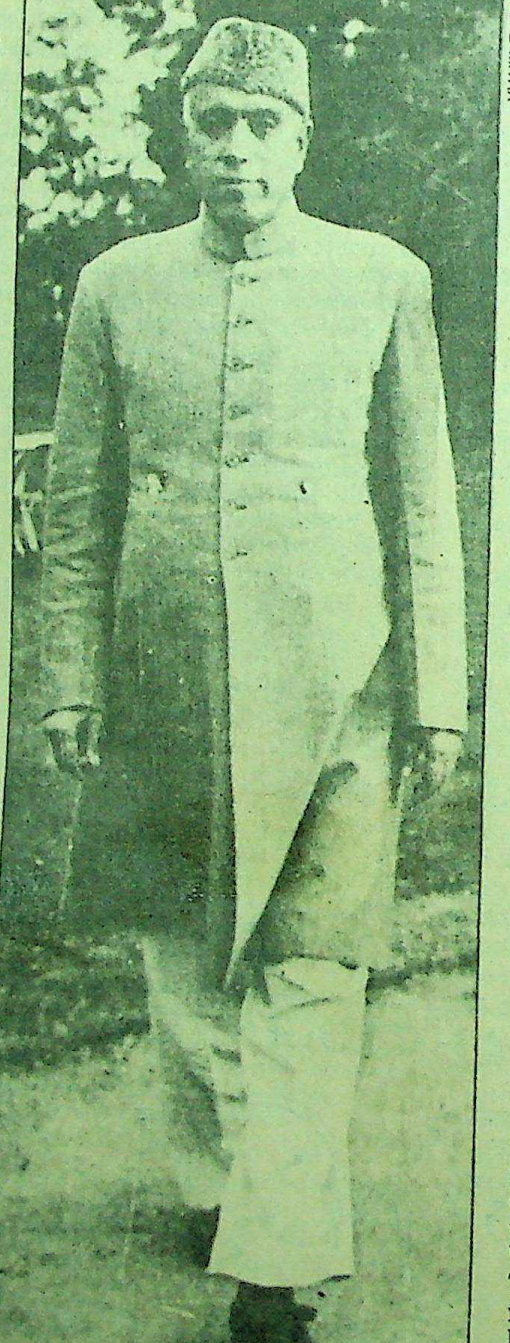
Fresh Storms Over Kashmir

The lion of Kashmir may be old, but he is still a lion, says KULDIP NAYAR who talked to Sheikh Abdullah about the new and old problems besetting Kashmir, India and Pakistan

Age has left its mark on Sheikh Abdullah. As he replied to a variety of questions for more than an hour at the chief minister's residence in Jammu, I found him rather cautious. There was a time when he would have let himself go on matters like his relations with the centre and the ruling Congress(I), and state autonomy. This time he would make only brief observations. Some of the old fire seems to have gone. He is nearing 79 and it is perhaps natural that he should be diffident to join issue with Mrs Gandhi; he does not want to go into the wilderness again. He also realises that his kith and kin have somewhat damaged his public image through their efforts to grab whatever they can while he is alive.

But the Sheikh is still committed to the basic principles of secularism and democracy which made him work for Kashmir's accession to India after the partition in 1947. And he retains his popular base, though it is a bit shrunken. He still remains much taller than any other leader in Jammu and Kashmir. He continues to be a liberal, whatever the misgivings of Mrs Gandhi, who has reportedly said that he is trying to "communalise" the atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir. The Sheikh feels that his judgment that India's democratic system is far better than Pakistan's theocratic, feudal rule has proved correct. He does feel lonely and even isolated, and you get an impression after talking to him that he bears a grudge that India, for which he suffered onslaughts from his co-religionists, has not given him the recognition he deserves.

But when he speaks of Pakistan's annexation of some Kashmir areas—Gilgit, Hunza and Sikardu—one can see the old glint in his eyes.



ALOKE MITRA

Sheikh Abdullah: committed to secularism

***Q**: Sir, I was recently in Pakistan and found "observers" from Gilgit, Hunza and Sikardu attending the Majlis-e-Shoora, the government-nominated body. Is Islamabad justified in doing this?*

A: What they have done is immoral, unconstitutional and unjustified. Gilgit, Hunza and Sikardu are parts of Kashmir. It is a forcible annexation to which we do not agree.

Q: Gen. Zia said that all the three territories acceded to Pakistan in August 1947 and they were not a part of Kashmir any longer.

A: This is not true. These areas were under the suzerainty of the Kashmir ruler. They were not parts of the "Azad" Kashmir which Pakistan occupies. But they were in Kashmir, in Balitstan. The chiefs in the three territories were vassals and paid tributes to the Maharaja of Kashmir. Sometime in the Thirties, the Maharaja gave Gilgit on lease to the British who wanted it for the purpose of defending the subcontinent from the Soviet Union. Even then the civil administration, like the one in Hunza and Sikardu, was that of the Maharaja. In 1946, the British returned Gilgit to the Maharaja, who sent there one of his relations, Ganzare Singh, as the Governor. When Pakistan attacked Kashmir in 1947, Ganzare Singh was taken prisoner and subsequently exchanged with prisoners held by Pakistan.

Q: When did you come to know of Pakistan's absorption of Gilgit, Hunza and Sikardu?

A: I read of it only in newspapers after your interview with Gen. Zia appeared. The government of India never sent any word.

Q: What do you think is the solution to the Kashmir problem?

A: I think Pakistan cannot take the portion we have, nor can India the portion they have. There is no option except to hold talks. We have gone to war more than once on this question. We had to return even Haji Pir and Takwal, the points which we regained in every war after losing many lives. A bigger war, the third world war, may solve this problem but then who would be living after that war? Maybe, some in the caves might escape. Therefore, we must talk to each other, both knowing what is at stake. No govern-

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No government on either side can stay in power if it is asked to surrender its position on Kashmir. This has been the result of wars.

ment on either side can stay in power if it is asked to surrender its position on Kashmir. This has been the result of wars. They must sit across the table. In 1964, when I went to Pakistan, I felt that we were about to have a breakthrough. Gen. Ayub was willing. But unfortunately Pandit Nehru died at that time and we were back to square one.

Q: What can be done to improve India-Pakistan relations?

A: The two sides should have more and more contacts, editors and writers should meet, businessmen and traders should meet, students and the youth should meet. There should be an exchange of delegations. I am in favour of softening borders, I did suggest at one time the opening of the Rawalpindi route but I was misunderstood.

The people on both sides have love and goodwill towards one another. I have met some of the people who have gone to Pakistan, they were overwhelmed by the affection shown to them. Both are from the same stock. Whatever their religion, they are essentially the same type of people.

Q: Looking back, do you think you did a wise thing in merging with India?

A: Events have proved that our decision was justified because we support democracy and India is a democratic country. Whatever be the other deficiencies and difficulties, we have by and large free elections, a free press and freedom of expression, unlike Pakistan where there has been no individual freedom for many years and where a military dictatorship is entrenched. I am opposed to the countries or regimes established on the basis of religion. I recall that when I met Mr Jinnah in 1944 I told him I was opposed to the creation of a country merely on the basis of religion and I warned him that the two wings of Pakistan he was envisaging would not last long even if established. I am proved right; what was East Pakistan is now the independent country of Bangladesh.

Q: How is your equation with Mrs Gandhi?

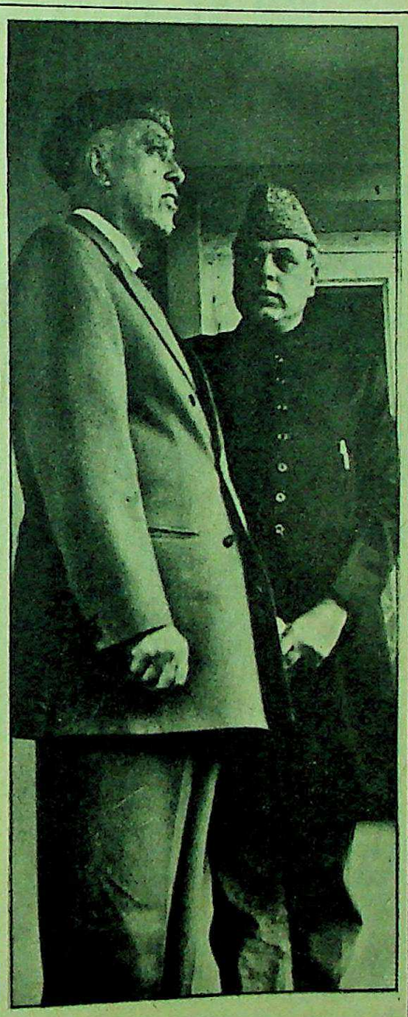
A: We have very little personal relations. I was a family member in her father's house. After Nehru's death I tried to maintain the same relations but she is a different type of person. I have no quarrel with her and I keep to myself.

Q: What has she against you?

A: She wants the state chief minister to be at her beck and call. She would like to throw me out. But I am not an Antulay or Anjaiah who sits or stands at her bidding. I am elected by my people and I am answerable to them. She thinks everyone has to play court to her. But I alone am not her target. She does not like any non-Congress(I) chief minister. She does not like the chief minister of West Bengal, nor that of Tamil Nadu. She said once that she would like the entire country to be ruled by the Congress(I). I cannot kowtow to her. And look what kind of advisers she has surrounded herself with. In any case, that is her business.

Q: Is there any attempt by Delhi to dilute Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy?

A: We have to be ever vigilant. There have been attempts which we have stalled. We are in the process of scrutinising all laws which have been extended to our state since August 1953, when our government was thrown out and Bakshi installed. Our accord of 1975 with Delhi gives us the right to reject or accept any law extended to our state after that time. Autonomy for all the states is necessary, this is the only way to keep the country together. Ours is a federal structure and the Constituent Assembly was very particular to give the states autonomy in their affairs. Today our example is being quoted by other states. There are demands in Punjab, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu for a Kashmir type status.



Ours is not a dynastic rule. He (Dr Farooq Abdullah) has an advantage. But he will have to come through a democratic process. In our state democracy has precedence, not a particular dynasty.

Religious organisations have little support in our state. There is no Hindu-Muslim problem here. We live like brothers.

Mrs Gandhi said sometime back that if the centre wanted it could make a state government fall in less than half an hour by stopping financial aid. This smacks of autocracy. The states draw funds not as a charity but as a matter of right. The Constitution has guaranteed them a share in central earnings. It does not behove a Prime Minister to hold out such threats.

Q: Recently there were instances of looting and burning of shops in Anantnag and Srinagar. Who were they and who was behind them?

A: A few students first picketed the four liquor shops in Anantnag for some days and then one day they beat up the people who were buying the liquor, ransacked the place and burnt the goods. It was spontaneous and, before the authorities could take any action, it was over. The incidents were not communal, the liquor shops happened to belong to Hindus. One liquor shop of the government was also ransacked. As regards the incidents in Srinagar, there was a call by King Khalid (of Saudi Arabia) for a hartal to protest against Israel's anti-Islamic activities. We should have ourselves given the call and held a protest meeting. But we did not get enough notice. Some students organised a procession and, as it happens in such situations, a few urchins took advantage of the opportunity and looted some shops. The administration luckily controlled the situation. One person was shot dead and 150 policemen suffered injuries. The action was swift and firm.

I do not think there was any organisation as such behind the students' doings. Some restive urchins got together and then a few spectators joined them. One should not read anything beyond that. Religious organisations have little support in our state. There is no Hindu-Muslim problem here. We live like brothers. However, one feels sad when the Prime Minister comes to the state and says that minorities are not safe in Kashmir.

Q: Would you say that in India, on the whole, communalism is increasing?

A: I do not know. My feeling is that economic considerations are coming to the fore. More and more riots are caused by economic rivalries, one community is dislodging the other and hence the clash. The administration's duty is to suppress it ruthlessly, as we

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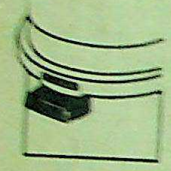
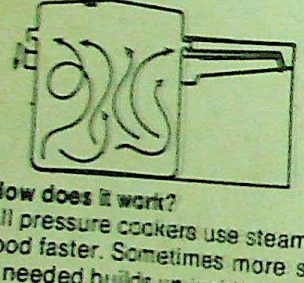
Here is how the GRS* makes the New Prestige the only totally safe pressure cooker

New **Prestige**

100% safe

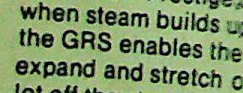


What is the GRS?
The Gasket Release System is a unique design innovation that makes pressure cooking as safe as boiling water. A slot in the lid over the rubber gasket provides a safe sure outlet for steam when it reaches dangerous levels.
The GRS makes the New Prestige the only totally safe pressure cooker.

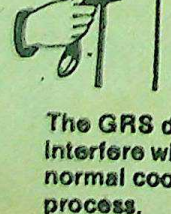


How does it work?
All pressure cookers use steam to cook food faster. Sometimes more steam than is needed builds up inside the cooker. Under normal conditions this is let off from the weight valve on the top. If this vent gets clogged with food it could lead to an eruption.

In the New Prestige on the rare occasion when steam builds up excessively, the GRS enables the rubber gasket to expand and stretch out of the slot and let off the steam downwards safely.



Why is the GRS essential?
When you replace a safety plug you may get a spurious one. This will not work in an emergency. Unfortunately you have no way of telling a genuine from a spurious safety plug. Why take a chance?
THE GRS NEVER FAILS TO WORK



The GRS does not interfere with the normal cooking process.

No, not at all. There is nothing to replace. All you do once the steam is let out is push the rubber gasket back into the slot with a spoon, clean the vent and use.

The cooker that even a child can handle — that's what the GRS makes the New Prestige.

* Gasket Release System

A tk Product

Prestige

the people who introduced pressure cooking to India

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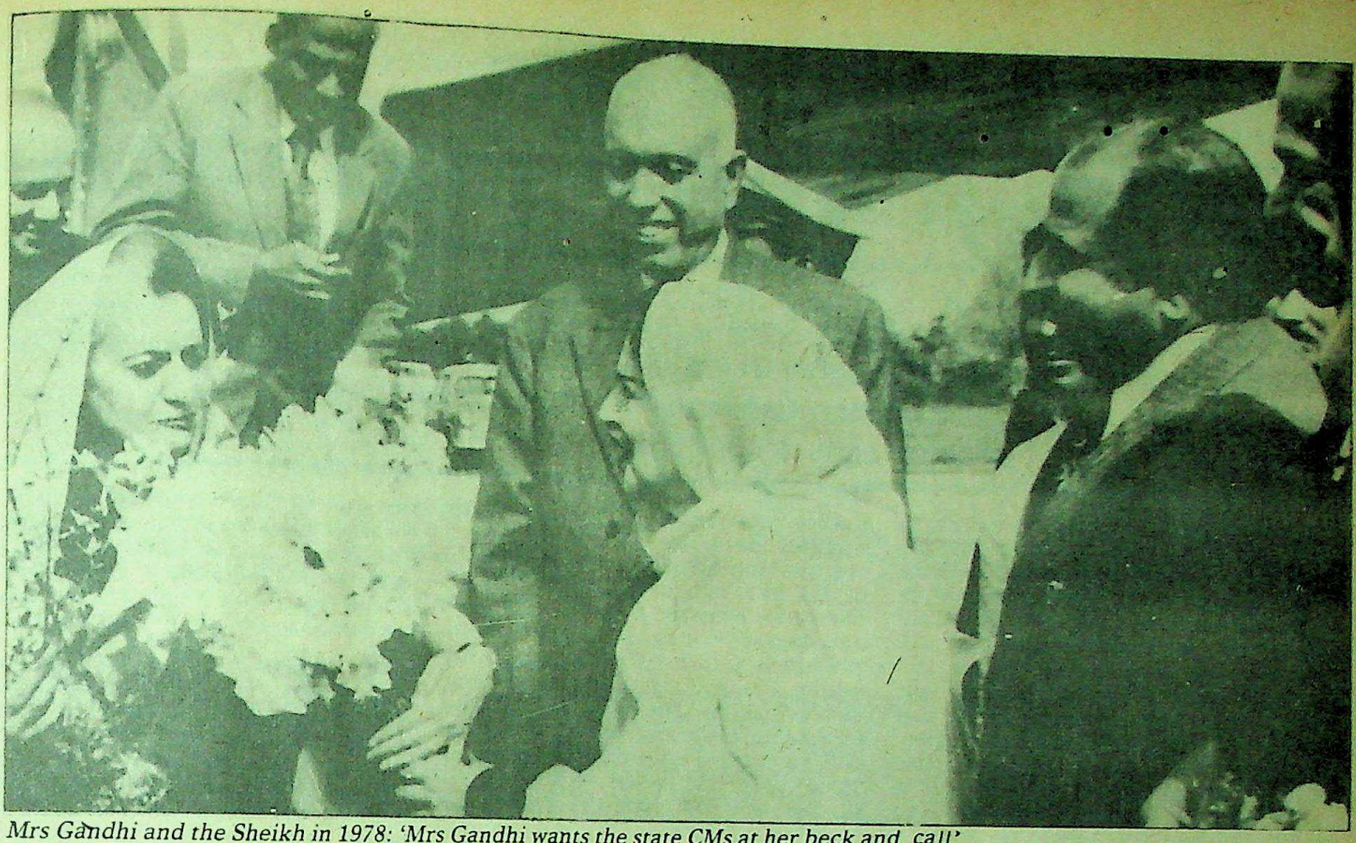

Mrs Gandhi and the Sheikh in 1978: 'Mrs Gandhi wants the state CMs at her beck and call'

do. Trouble which erupts in our state does not spread or last long because of our firmness. In many parts of our country this is not so. They allow things to deteriorate. But we must devote our attention to the basic problems of the people.

Q: What is the situation in Kishtiwar? Mr Venkatasubbaiah has submitted a report on the administration's excesses.

A: Who is Venkatasubbaiah? He did not have the courtesy to call on the Governor or me. He goes to the place and submits a report without even talking to us. I know that the centre wants to embarrass the state because we do not fall in line at their bidding. And he brings with him Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad who, I believe, got 110 votes in a Parliamentary election. Kishtiwar wants to become a district. We told the agitators that if we give their *tehsil* the status of a district, we will have to do the same to other *tehsils* because there too similar demands are being made. We have appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Justice Janki Nath to look into the matter. We shall abide by its decision if it says that Kishtiwar should be a district. But what pains me is the way the centre encourages agitations in Jammu and Kashmir just because we are a non-Congress(I) government. Take the case of our Chief Justice. He has been officiating for a few years. We have asked the centre many a time to tell us why he is not being confirmed and what is held against him. But we are not being taken into confidence.

Q: Why don't you play a bigger role in the country and join all-India politics?

A: Whom to join? The opposition is a divided house. They are all the time quarrelling among themselves as to who should be the Prime Minister. Some of them have no base but their ambition knows no bounds. The Congress(I) is no better except for the fact that they have a school master to chastise them. No, I am quite happy where I am and I have the satisfaction of serving my people in my own way.

Q: Is Dr Farooq, your son, succeeding you?

A: Ours is not a dynastic rule. He has an advantage. But he will have to come through a democratic process. In our state democracy has precedence, not a particular dynasty.

Q: One has heard that you may be going to the polls soon so that you finish the process before President Sanjiva Reddy lays down his office in July.

A: Why should I hold the elections now? We shall go to the polls in June next year when the six-year term, introduced during the Emergency, ends. What has the President's term got to do with our elections? If the centre tries to do anything, it would have to face a situation which it would regret.

Q: Why have you passed the resettlement bill which has evoked fears in the minds of non-Muslims in the state, particularly in Jammu?

A: Let me explain the bill to you. What it means is that those Kashmiris who went to Pakistan out of fear after March 1947 and partition, or could not return because of unsettled conditions, could come back after fulfilling the necessary conditions, one of which was a visa from New Delhi. We are committed to it under the Delhi agreement of 1948. These people are not from the Pakistani-occupied Kashmir but from Pakistan. The non-Hindus in the state have nothing to fear because they will not be uprooted. The houses or lands which they have been allotted are theirs, because they have been given the occupancy rights. I do not think many would come from the other side. Only 117 have returned since the partition. But under the law they continue to be Kashmiris and they can come to their country any time after fulfilling certain conditions.

"I am not a candidate"

"I am not a candidate. Let Dr Farooq Abdullah succeed Sheikh Sahib," Mr Gul Shah, minister for public works, who is number two in the Jammu and Kashmir cabinet, told me in reply to my question whether he was next in the line of succession.

Mr Gul Shah, who is considered a rival to Dr Farooq Abdullah, his brother-in-law, said that he had already written to Sheikh Sahib that no one after the age of 60 should be at the helm of affairs. "I am 62," he added. He did make an exception for three persons: Mrs Indira Gandhi, Sheikh Abdullah and Mr Morarji Desai. When I asked him "Why Morarji," Mr Gul Shah said, because "Mr Desai is personally honest and I do not care about Kanti, his son."

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SPECIAL REPORT

Birra: A brutal massacre

Armed landlords came in the dead of night to the harijan *toli* of Birra village of Gaya district, set fire to their huts and shot whoever came in their way. The toll was five dead. Reason: the harijans had dared to demand higher wages. SAUMITRA BANERJEE was at the spot within a day of the incident to piece together the story.

Photographs by KRISHNA MURARI KISHAN

It was a shrill cry that awoke Sarju Majhi. He was sleeping outside his hut in the harijan *toli* of Birra village (Mukhdhumpur police station, Gaya district). The time was around two am, the date 25 April. Rubbing his eyes he sat up on the mattress to find out what the noise was about. A short distance away he saw the hut of Bhagwan Majhi in flames. Thinking that the hut had caught fire accidentally he got up to help put it out. But even as he was proceeding towards Bhagwan's house he heard a sharp crack. The sound was unmistakable: it was gunfire. He stopped dead on his tracks. Instinctively he knew what was happening—the landlords of Birra and the surrounding villages of Bela and Bhagwanpur had attacked the helpless harijans. For the past several months the harijans of Birra had been threatened by the landlords for demanding more wages. They were told that they would be taught a lesson and Sarju now realised what that meant.

Turning around Sarju raced towards his house. He must flee, he thought, before the landlords caught up with him. But Sarju was too late. Just as he was rushing through the narrow door of his hut, four men armed with 12 bore guns emerged from the darkness and started chasing him. Sarju entered the hut to find his wife, Bhagia Devi, awake. She had seen the men chasing her husband and her first instinct was to save him. She rushed out of the hut and waving her arms wildly, screamed, "Don't kill my husband." She had barely taken a few steps when two bullets stopped her: one in the stomach and the other in the chest. She dropped to the ground dead. The men, whom Sarju later identified as Umesh Mahato, Baburam Mahato and Shambhu Mahato—all landowners from Bhagwanpur—then ran to another hut to look for another prey. Sarju Majhi took this opportunity to escape from the village to save his own life.

Sixty-five-year-old Bhatina Devi too faced the same fate as Sarju's wife. She had woken up hearing the cries of the people and had got up to find out what was happening. Not finding her son, Gariban Majhi, in the hut she had stepped out to see what the confusion was about. Seeing what was happening she ran into the hut, frightened. But by then she had been spotted and unable to run away like most of the other harijans, she silently waited for death.

But, perhaps, the most pathetic case was that of 14-year-old Rambhajan Majhi, Gariban's son. Rambhajan was sleeping in the hut adjoining his father's. Seeing the huts being set on fire and people running around with guns, he ran to warn his father of the danger. But before he could reach his father, he was cold-bloodedly shot dead. "He was one of the brightest boys in the village," Gariban told us.

The carnage lasted for about half an hour. At the end of this, three women—Bhatina Devi, Mahangi Devi, Bhagia Devi—and a young boy lay dead along with a number of injured. One of them a 12-year-old girl, Piyariya, succumbed to her injuries in the Patna Medical College Hospital two days later bringing the number of dead to five. A number of huts were burning when the killers left the vil-

A harijan woman sits amidst the ruins of her house

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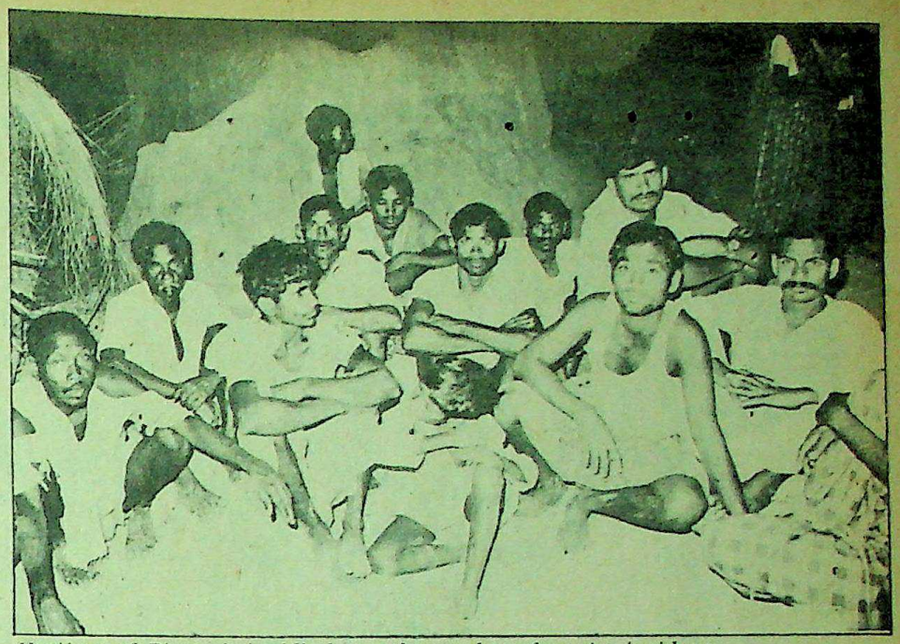
lage, having completed their brutal task. But by then the harijans had also fled, leaving a deserted and smouldering *toli* behind.

It was dusk when we reached the village, a day after the incident. (It had been a difficult ride. There is only one dirt track leading from Mukhdhumpur police station to Birra, a distance of about eight km. Our car, an Ambassador, had to stop a kilometre away from the village as it could not proceed any further.) By then most of the harijans had returned to the village but they were still terror-stricken. They were sitting silently in groups of about ten, huddled around a solitary kerosene lamp. "They may attack again," Chandradeo Das told us. "But even now there is nothing we can do to save ourselves." Obviously, the posse of CRP men posted in the village had not reassured them. In two of the huts mourning ceremonies were being held. There was a cluster of people outside each of these huts watching the rituals. The charred huts, a reminder of the carnage, were empty. Utensils had fallen to the floor among the ash. No one had bothered to pick them up.

Rajendra Mochi took us around a couple of burnt huts and told us how the attack took place: about 60 to 70 people (the police figure is around 30) silently surrounded the *toli* and started setting fire to the huts. As the harijans, like trapped animals, started rushing out the shooting began. It was indiscriminate: there were no fixed targets and there was no one in particular they wanted dead. Their only aim was to kill anyone they could train their guns on. As a result, old women, who could not make a fast getaway, became the victims. The harijans had to pay a costly price for having demanded more wages to fill their hungry stomachs.

Why had the harijans been mercilessly killed? The origins of this violence can be traced back to November 1981. In Birra, there are about 50 harijan families (kuanrs, bhuiyas, telis, dusads and mushahars). The majority of the landowners, however, are the koiris (a backward caste) and not the bhumihars, as is the case in the adjoining village of Bela. In Bhagwanpur, too, the caste and class composition is the same as in Birra. Most of the harijans of Birra worked in the fields of koiri and bhumihar landowners in Birra, Bela and Bhagwanpur, for a kg of wheat/paddy a day and the produce of five *kathas* of land at every harvest (*halwahi*). But unlike in most villages of Bihar, in Birra an attempt was being made to organise the harijans—in this case under Ishwar Mahato (a Naxalite leader according to the police) who came from the same area. He convinced the poor peasants that they should, rightfully, ask for more and finally last November the peasants of Birra refused to harvest the crops until the landlords agreed to pay them more. This, naturally, put the landlords in a fix. If the crops were not harvested on time, they would rot.

Initial parleys between the land-



Harijans of Birra sit huddled together a day after the incident

The body of Piyariya who succumbed to her injuries two days after the incident. Standing by her body are her father and sister

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The harijans of Birra

'Naxalites responsible for carnage'

Ramashray Prasad Singh, Bihar's industry minister tells SUNDAY

Q: What led to the attack on the harijans?

A: It is very enigmatic. That is what we would also like to know.

Q: Was it because the harijans had demanded more wages?

A: That would be stretching things a bit too far. The dispute took place last year and it was amicably settled. There is no reason why the harijans should be attacked for this. Besides, there is another mystery. Those who have been killed are not from the houses that have been burnt. I think this was done to create terror and tension.

Q: If it was not the landlords who indulged in the carnage, then who do you think did it?

A: It is difficult to say who did it. But I think a third force is responsible for this.

Q: Like the Naxalites?

A: Yes, I think so. Since last year tension has been simmering in that area, but the Naxalites had been unable to capitalise on it. So they took recourse to this in order to create more tension between the landlords and the peasants.

Q: Do you have any particular leader in mind when you talk of the Naxalites?

A: I would not like to comment on this.

Q: How were you received by the harijans when you visited Birra?

A: I was received very cordially. The harijans took me around their huts, showed me all the spots where they had been attacked and spoke very sincerely to me.

Q: Some of the harijans I met in Birra told me that they thought that you favoured the bhumihars because you are a bhumihar yourself.

A: That is 100 per cent baseless. I am the people's representative and I especially look to the interests of the weaker sections of the people.

Q: Could this carnage have been avoided?

A: From what I gathered from the villagers and from officials of the area I think that the incident occurred so suddenly that it took everyone by surprise; no one had foreseen it. I am not aware if the harijans had, in the past, made complaints to the police.

Q: Have any steps been taken to see that an incident of this type does not recur?

A: I think the government has taken ample measures in this regard. A number of precautionary measures have been taken.

lords and the harijans failed and finally the labour department of the government of Bihar intervened and a compromise was reached: instead of one kg of wheat/paddy, the harijans would be given one and a half kg of wheat/paddy and the produce of eight *kathas* of *halwahi* land. (This, incidentally, speaks volumes for the labour department of the Bihar government: it is surprising that labour officials should suggest this solution when the minimum wages under the Bihar Minimum Wages Act for agricultural workers in Gaya stipulates that each worker be paid two and a half kg of wheat/paddy and be given 15 *kathas* of *halwahi* land.)

The harijans were happy with even this paltry increase; but not so the landlords. They were angry that harijans had had the audacity to demand more than what they got. It was around that time that the harijans started being threatened. As Bindeshwar Ram, a harijan who belongs to Birra told us: "They kept saying *'Tum log to dekh lenge* (we will teach you a lesson,).' " But in spite of these threats, most of the landlords kept to the terms of the agreement and paid the workers their dues. However, there were exceptions: the few who refused to give the harijans their due of *halwahi*. And this is what led to the next conflict on 1 April this year and ultimately provoked the attack.

The *rabi* crops were ready for harvesting but once again a few landlords refused to give them their share of *halwahi*. The peasants then got together on 1 April and forcibly harvested some crop from Gopal Singh's fields in Bela and took it away. Said Mahadev Majhi: "We are poor and *halwahi* means a lot to us. Since the landlords were not willing to part with it we decided to take it on our own. Had the landlords not refused to give us our due we would never have done it." But this was the spark that ignited the simmering tension that had been building up since last November. The landlords felt threatened and in the early hours of 25 April they decided to teach the harijans a brutal lesson.

The government, however, has been peddling a different theory. Mr Ramashray Prasad Singh, Bihar's industry minister (his constituency is Mukhdhumpur and he reached the scene of the carnage within hours of the incident) in an obvious bid to give the entire incident a different colour has pinned the blame for this on the Naxalites *(see interview)*. According to him, the harijans had been attacked not by the landlords but by a section of Naxalites who wanted to create tension between landlords and landless peasants so that they could capitalise on the situation. This explanation does seem a bit far fetched. But the government has been prompt in announcing ex-gratia payments of Rs 5,000 to the members of the deceased families and Rs 1,000 each to the injured persons. But will this heal the scars the incidents have left behind and make the harijans feel more secure?

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SPECIAL REPORT

Carnage in Calcutta

In what must be the worst killings the city has seen since the pre-partition riots, heavily armed mobs beat up and burned members of the Ananda Marg in broad daylight on Calcutta's south-eastern fringe. The day's toll was 17; the immediate cause seemed to be the public's anger with the Margis whom they accuse of childlifting. BARUN GHOSH, who reached the spot even while the bodies were burning, reports on the gruesome tragedy.

When the residents of Calcutta woke up on Friday 30 April they could hardly imagine that it was going to be a day of shame for them. Between 6.45 am and 8 am armed mobs battered to death, mutilated and then set on fire 11 men and two women of the Ananda Marg at three spots along a one kilometre stretch of Ballygunge in south Calcutta right before hundreds of onlookers. At least ten others were injured—of whom four died later in hospital and six were battling for life till we went to press. The day's toll was 17 killed; nothing like this had ever happened before in Calcutta.

It all began at the Ballygunge station on Calcutta's south suburban railway at 6.45 am when a group of people chased and assaulted some Margis, including a woman, who were escorting a number of children along the station platform. "No sooner had two saffronclothed *sadhus* including a *sanyasini* (nun), disembarked from a local train, than the trouble started," says a bewildered 15-year-old Pagla, a street urchin who stays permanently on the Ballygunge station platform. "I saw more than ten young men, most of whom wore soiled shirts and trousers, dragging two *sanyasis* out of the platform. On the railway track they started beating them mercilessly." When a shopkeeper tried to intervene he was told to mind his own business. "If you interfere, we will kill you first," one of the assailants warned. As the shopkeeper withdrew, the assailants resumed beating their victims who cried for help till they were unconscious. But nobody went to their aid.

Leaving the Margis on the railway track, presumably thinking that they were dead (they were actually seriously injured) the youngmen—who were carrying sticks, iron rods, bamboo poles and cans of petrol—shifted to the Bijan Setu (a flyover spanning the railway tracks) some 200 yards away. At this stage a small Government Reserve Police contingent which had arrived at the spot took the bodies lying on the track to hospital. But they did not dare to proceed any further.

And on Bijan Setu, all hell broke loose. (The flyover is named after an engineer, Bijan Kumar Basu, who was killed in the late Seventies while trying to resist a gang of dacoits who had raided the coach in which he was travelling). "It was at around 7.10 am that some ten young men came running on to the bridge and intercepted two taxis," says Subhankar Das, who has a *pan*shop close to the bridge. From his account it appears that having stopped the taxis, the assailants dragged out the occupants, all of whom were Margis, and started beating them with rods and bamboo poles. When the victims fell to the ground they were showered upon with bricks and stones. Then they were doused with petrol from the cans the assailants carried and set on fire. The faces were set on fire first, presumably to make identification of the victims more difficult. By that time a small police party had reached the place and fired three rounds to scare away the murderers. But it failed to achieve any results and the police retreated seeing the menacing mood of the assailants.

Now over 3,000 people were watching the macabre drama being enacted. The police, however, managed to rescue one of the victims who was later sent to hospital. In the confusion some local residents saved another—Doyamoy Brahmachari (22). He was taken to a nearby house, helped to change into ordinary clothes from his saffron robes and taken to the Kasba police station—some 200 yards away from the scene of violence.

Doyamoy told the police at Kasba thana that he was from the Simla *ashram* of the Ananda Marg and had come to attend a convention of the Margis at the Tiljala headquarters beginning on that day. He and eleven

Ballygunge station and Bijan Setu: scenes of the carnage

NIKHIL BHATTACHARYA

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other Margis who stayed overnight at the Marg's regional centre further south at Jodhpur Park (where Anandamurtiji, their leader, has been staying for some time), were travelling in two taxis towards Tiljala. When the taxis reached Bijan Setu, the taxi drivers told the occupants that they had taken a wrong turn. But barely had the drivers changed direction, when a group of armed people surrounded the taxis. First they pelted stones at them. Then when the taxis stopped they dragged out the occupants and virtually lynched them. Doyamoy was in the second taxi.

When this correspondent reached the spot at around 8.10 am he saw eight bodies scattered all over the bridge, their eyes gouged and their skulls smashed. The bodies were badly charred with smoke still curling up. One more body, burnt and mutilated, was lying under the bridge—apparently, it had been thrown from the bridge. Ten minutes later, inspector general of police Satyabrata Basu, city police commissioner Nirupam Som, SP 24 Parganas Sadananda Chakrabarty and some two dozen senior police officials arrived. But by then the damage had been done.

Just as one armed mob was beating up the Margis on Bijan Setu another group had intercepted three taxis carrying 11 Margis at Talbagan near the Bondel railway level crossing, half a kilometre from Bijan Setu on the same railway line. The Margis had hired the taxis at Howrah station and were proceeding to Tiljala by the only other approach road. In a repetition of what was happening on Bijan Setu, the mob stopped the taxis by pelting stones, dragged out their occupants, beat them up with rods and bamboo poles, poured petrol on them and set them on fire. Four of them died, burnt beyond recognition. Others were luckier: with gaping wounds and severe burns they could be rescued by the police in the nick of time. Recalling the incident, one of the survivors, Miss Jayashree Bhattacharya, 16, a student from the Ananda Marg's school in Purulia, says: "They were all over the place chanting 'burn them, burn them'. They even ripped off the robes of the *sanyasinis* (nuns). There was blood all over the place. I thought I'd die."

Earlier, two women Margis travelling by a rickshaw with a child, were intercepted thrice in the vicinity of Bijan Setu and were threatened. But fortunately nothing serious happened to them. Says IG Satyabrata Basu: "Nothing like this has ever happened before in Calcutta."

The immediate cause of the mob fury seems to be the rumours about childlifters that had been circulating in the area since some local residents intercepted on Bijan Setu two *sanyasinis* of the Ananda Marg travelling in a rickshaw with two children two days earlier. The *sanyasinis*, later identified as Papiya Moitra and Juthika Ghosh, both from the Ananda Marg's centre in Purulia, were then taken to the Kasba police station. They claimed that the children accompanying them were the inmates of one of the Marg's 1,000 orphanages. The police, however, were not convinced and held them in custody.

Who could the killers be? Their deed cannot be explained away solely as a manifestation of mob frenzy against childlifters. The murderers were far too well organised with sticks, iron rods, bamboo poles and cans of petrol. And they struck almost simultaneously at three different places. The rumour that childlifters were on the prowl had of course gripped the area, where the massacres took place, for the last few days. But there hardly was any provocation for ordinary citizens to turn killers. The brutality clearly bore the stamp of professional hands. The killers apparently knew of the Margi convention at Tiljala and had placed themselves at both the approaches to the *ashram* to intercept the incoming Margis.

The first reaction of the Margis was to blame the CPI(M) for the murders. The reason, of course, is that relations between the Margis and the CPI(M) are very strained. Once earlier a group of Margis tried to break into the CPI(M) state headquarters in Calcutta and, according to the CPI(M) leaders, if the Margis had succeeded they would have killed some of the top men in the party. Later, Margis claimed that some CPI(M) activists tried to assassinate their *guru* Anandamurtiji now camping in Calcutta. Inspite of this bitterness, it does not sound very probable that the CPI(M) would go after the blood of the Margis, especially with the Assembly election just over a fortnight away. Indeed it was the CPI(M) which had earlier turned down a suggestion from the centre that the Ananda Marg organisation be banned.

If it is not the CPI(M), who else could have killed the Margis? One opinion holds that the massacre might be the result of internecine quarrels in the Ananda Marg itself. The head of the Margis, Anandamurtiji, jealously guards the secrets of his organisation and is very severe with those who break away from it. On the other hand those who had broken away could have decided on a pre-emptive strike.

Yet another view is that the crime is the handiwork of the Congress(I) or one of the many central intelligence agencies operating in West Bengal. These sections argue that Mrs Gandhi, having failed so far to either impose President's rule in West Bengal or postpone the Assembly elections, was taking one last chance to create chaos and finally have her way.

But whatever may be the motives or the identity of the killers, one stark fact stares the people of West Bengal in the face. They now have to share the shame of many other areas of the country which have seen brutal massacres in the last few years. And in terms of brutality the massacre of the Margis sets a new and horrifying record.

A final bow from a Margi for a victim

SUJIT GHOSH

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Is religion still the "sigh of the oppressed creature?"

Fifth Column

TARIQ ALI

We are confronted today with a great paradox: on the one hand science and technology have soared to unimagined heights in almost every field of endeavour. On the other there is a new type of religious revivalism which is gaining ground and has already assumed a political shape in three worlds: the West, eastern Europe and the Third World. Man has reached the moon. Space rockets have circled some of the planets. They have beamed back their discoveries and we have watched in silent awe on our television screens. This year is the centenary of Darwin's death. What supreme irony that it is celebrated in the United States by an almost successful attempt to ban his teachings from schools. This is spearheaded by a movement known as the creationists, who want the world's most technologically advanced country to return to the primitive Biblical absurdities of the Book of Genesis.

"Religion," wrote Marx, "is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions." This is certainly true in its essentials. We can describe the Catholicism of the El Salvadorean peasant or the Islam of the factory worker in Lahore within the old framework. There is, however, a newer and more sinister aspect. Is the "born-again Christian" in the United States with his two cars, wallet full of credit cards and his house in the country an "oppressed creature?" Clearly not. Are the hordes of Anglo-American youths searching for *nirvana* by attaching themselves to south Asian mystics the same as the Latin American toilers? I have nothing against a bunch of old rogues setting out from south Asia and using their mumbo-jumbo to make money. Why not? After all the European missionaries of old, who landed on alien shores did not merely "liberate souls." They also deprived their victims of all their worldly possessions.

The revival of religio-political intervention has taken three forms. In the United States the so-called moral majority played a very significant role in ensuring Reagan's election victory. The absence of a political party based on the working class (itself a reflection of the backwardness of the American workers) made such a response to commercially organised religion inevitable. There was no alternative pull from any direction.

In Poland, the Roman Catholic church expressed the hopes of a people deceived for three decades by the promises of a party calling itself "communist." The Polish Pope turned out to be a useful acquisition for those who wish to uphold the status quo on a global scale. His main function has been to preach restraint to the oppressed. This ideological offensive is, of course, based on strong material interests. The church has its own bank, it invests money in safe countries such as South Africa and is one of the largest owners of property in the world. The Italian Communist Party refuses even to withdraw Italy from NATO if it ever wins power. It is hardly likely to nationalise the assets accumulated over centuries by Papal oppression.

Iran offers us the horrifying picture of a primitive confessionalism in full swing. We all celebrated (and rightly so) the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty and its network of torture. Few, if any, thought that a despotic monarch would be replaced by a religious autocracy. We tended to ignore or gravely underestimate the ideological hold of religion. We used to quote from Khomeini's tract on Islamic government. Could an old cleric who dealt with such burning issues as the buggery of an old donkey by a poor Muslim really run the country? He has done so now for three years. The conditions of donkeys may well have improved but everyone else have improved but everyone else appears to be suffering. The Iranian people lost 60,000 lives in order to overthrow the Shah. Their reward so far has been a medieval religious monstrosity, 70 per cent inflation, four million unemployed. If you drink beer you can be whipped in public. If you are a woman you are not allowed to bathe at beaches reserved for men (and this in Iran), if you are addicted to drugs you can be lined up against a wall and shot dead, if you are a Kurd or a Turcoman or a Baluch and you insist on your rights you can be confronted by a bloodthirsty Ayatollah Khalkhali and a firing squad.

We know all this is happening, but many on the left remain silent and in Iran the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party supports Khomeini. They, too, will be at the receiving end of the Islamic whip despite their support. Khomeini's cadres gained control of the movement by utilising the failures of Arab nationalism and communism. Egypt and Kampuchea were the examples most frequently used by the clerics to damage and weaken the left. The battle is not yet over. The bazaar petty-bourgeoisie who once idolised Khomeini and imagined they had found a cure, are now disgusted by the irrationality of what is taking place. They wait patiently for the coup d'etat, the workers find themselves under constant surveillance by the Islamic watchdogs in their factories. The mood is one of growing bitterness accompanied by resignation. The army is strong after its successes on the Iran-Iraq front. Its generals are being actively courted by the CIA. Whatever else happens after Khomeini we would venture to predict that there will not be a return to Islamic archaism.

In an age where few political leaders are prepared to swim against the stream, it is worth ending with a quotation from that staunch secularist, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose words remain as apposite today as when he first wrote his autobiography, that in itself should provide room for thought by those who have succeeded him: "The spectacle of what is called religion, or at any rate, organised religion, in India and elsewhere has filled me with horror and I have frequently condemned it and wished to make a clear sweep of it. Almost always it seems to stand for blind belief, reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation and the preservation of vested interests, and yet I know well that there was something else in it, something which supplied a deep inner craving of human beings, how else could it have the tremendous power it has been...I realised the hold it had on such large numbers of people. It (Catholicism) offered, as Islam and Hinduism, a safe anchorage from doubt and mental conflict, an assurance of a future life which will make up for the deficiencies of this life. I am afraid it is impossible for me to seek harbours in this way. I prefer that open sea, with all its storms and tempests. Nor am I greatly interested in the after life, in what happens after death. I find the problems of this life sufficiently absorbing to fill my mind..."

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SPECIAL REPORT

Operation Kunj Bihari

The outlawed Peoples Liberation Army chairman, Th Kunj Bihari, who had taken over the PLA after the arrest of the charismatic leader, N. Biseshwar Singh, was killed in a recent army operation in Kadampokpi on the outskirts of Imphal. TIRTHANKAR GHOSH visited Imphal for this on-the-spot report

Th Kunj Bihari

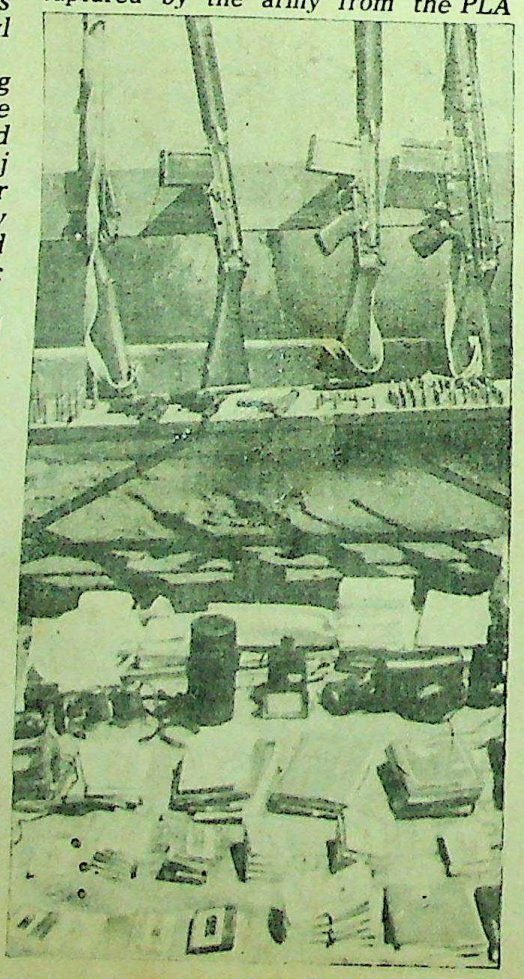
"Kunj Bihari, your time is up." Pointing his stick at the lean Manipuri youth, Brigadier Som Jhingon, commander of the Phantom Brigade in Imphal cannot help taking pleasure in the words he has just uttered. The Brigadier cannot believe his own eyes: before him stands the outlawed Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) chairman, Th Kunj Bihari, who had been eluding the army for the last ten months. Suddenly, the Brigadier awakes with a start. "I shouldn't be dreaming such nonsense," he mutters, shaking his head. His eyes fall on his bedside table clock. It is only 4.30 in the morning and the beginning of another day: 13 April 1982. It will be another day of strategy and planning; another day of war against insurgents like the PLA in an apparently peaceful Manipur.

At the security conference meeting with the state government officials the day before, the Brigadier had confided in others of his hunches about Kunj Bihari. "He is coming closer into our hands. We should be getting him any moment now," the Brigadier had promised. Did he have any specific intelligence, the others had asked. No, the Phantoms' commander could feel it in his bones. "My men and I live insurgency day in and day out. We should know..."

"Target One-zero," says the voice identifying himself on the phone at 6.55 am on the morning of 13 April. "Yes?" answers Phantoms' Brigade-Major Virender Saxena, sensing the excitement in the voice of his source reporting movements of PLA extremists around Imphal. PLA insurgents have been camping for the last two days in Kadampokpi Khunao village, says One-zero. Even before the conversation can end, the major slams the phone down and runs to his commander, Brig. Jhingon, with the news. Together they locate the oval-shaped village, 10 km south of Imphal. There should be no delay in contacting the enemy. The army unit nearest to the village, Lt Col Pinaki Basu's 14 Bihar Regiment, one of the youngest regiments in the Indian army, would be used for the operation.

Lt Col Basu had just finished his PT and was sitting in the sun outside his hut. At 7.02 his telephone jangled. It was commander Jhingon with a short, precise order: "Prepare two columns to move out immediately." Where to, asked Lt Col Basu. "We will let you know soon," said the commander. Within a minute, Major Saxena was on the line with detailed instructions:

Guns, cassettes and a camera captured by the army from the PLA



"Proceed to Kadampokpi. Cordon the village and engage the enemy. Extremists believed to be hiding there!"

Only one route was open to the short, stocky Lt Col. He had to reach his destination in double-quick time; PLA members never stay in one place for more than a couple of days. For all he knew, the extremists might just then be moving out of the village. The shortest route to the village was by the Bishenpur road. Lt Col chose his men with care: they would have to live up to the Phantom Brigade motto: "What devil dares." His men, meanwhile, said a silent prayer of thanks: the weather was good, the terrain wellknown to the regiment (the men had patrolled the area many times). All that they wanted was luck, the soldier's best friend. With that they moved out of the base—their base, an old discarded airstrip, better known as the Tulihal airfield.

Parking their vehicles in an open space on the outskirts of the village, Lt Col Basu gave instructions to his Major, O. P. Deswal, to cordon the village. By 8.00, the Biharis (as the Bihar Regiment men are known to their army colleagues) had formed a cordon and were closing in on the village. The men had to be vigilant, for all around the village, almost like a hedge surrounding a compound were clumps of bamboos, impenetrable in most places. Within were clusters of huts around *pokhries* (little ponds). This is an ideal guerrilla country for the insurgents as it is easy to give the army the slip by moving about from one cluster of houses to another—while the armymen search one group of huts, the rebels can escape from the others.

Four groups were formed to flush out the rebels from within the cordon. Young, turbaned, about-to-be-married Capt. Ajit Singh was ordered to lead his assault team from the west. Little did he realise that his group would have to bear the brunt of the PLA "suicide squad" whose members engage the enemy in battle so that the leader can make good his escape.

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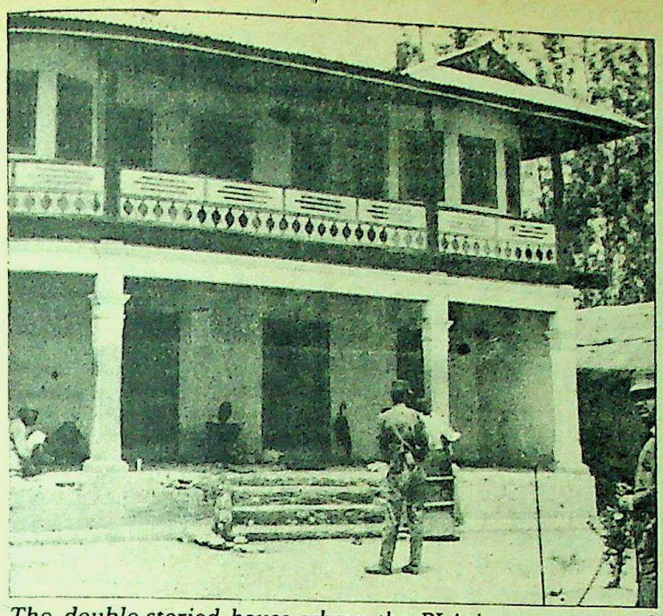


The double-storied house where the PLA insurgents were hiding and (right) Maj-Gen Nayar directing operations

Crouching low, moving forward on his knees through the watery paddy fields, Capt. Singh thought he saw a glint of a rifle barrel in the window of a double-storeyed house to his left. Before he could figure out what it was, bullets whizzed past Capt. Singh and his men. Almost from nowhere emerged a lone Manipuri in T-shirt and jeans, firing from his SLR rifle. He took a shot at the young army captain and got him in the head. But before Capt. Singh lost consciousness, the Manipuri was wounded by him—he had taken aim dazedly at the running figure, and fired a volley of bullets. The youth could not go far: he was caught by those manning the cordon. The men in the assault team, meanwhile, tried to drag Capt. Singh's body to safety but they could not do so since the PLA, from their vantage position on top of the house, kept up a steady barrage of bullets around the body.

But Subedar Ramdhari Tiwari was determined to extricate his captain's body. Rising, Tiwari rushed forward in the direction of the house. Before he could reach the house, he saw a youth in shorts coming out with his hands raised in surrender. Tiwari moved forward to arrest him. Suddenly, the sound of a bullet cracked the silence and Subedar Tiwari fell dead, shot at almost point-blank range from an extremist hiding in the house. The surrender drama was a ruse and it had achieved its purpose: an armyman had been killed.

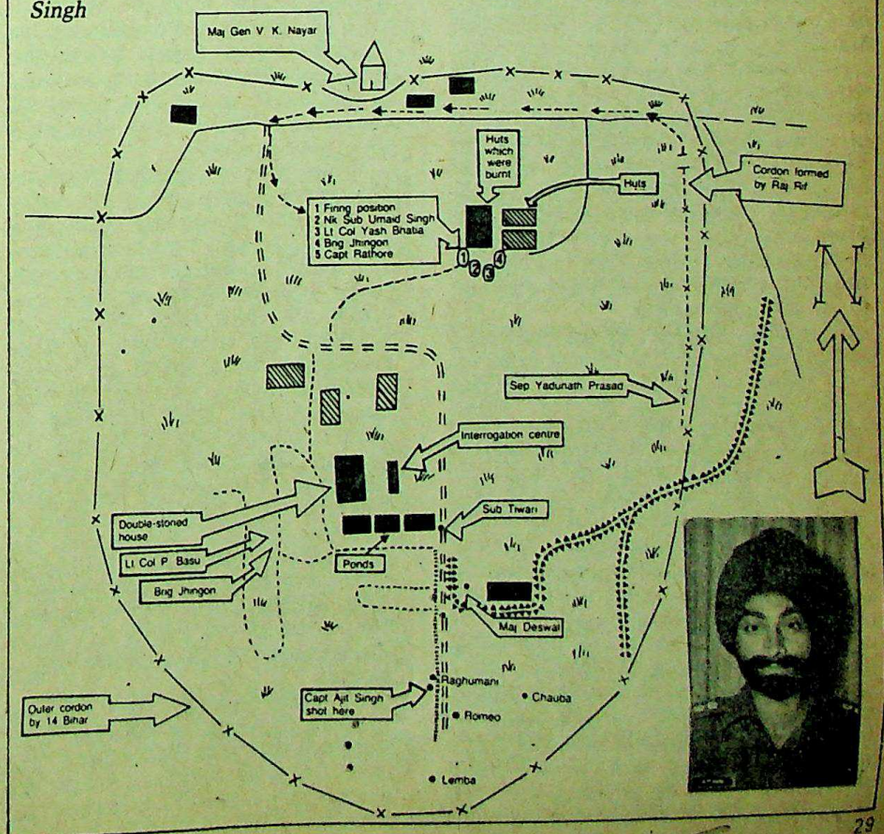
When Lt Col Basu was informed of the casualties (which he in turn relayed to his headquarters), he decided to clear the house of the extremists. He ordered his men to surround the house. Cornered now, two more rebels came out shooting their guns. But they were soon captured and taken to an interrogation centre set up in a shed opposite the double-storeyed house.

At the headquarters, Brigadier Jhingon was getting worried. He felt it his duty to be beside his men but before he moved out he ordered two columns of another regiment—the Rajputana Rifles—under Col Yash Bhatia, stationed about 10 km away from Kadampokpi village to move to the encounter site. Brig. Jhingon added that he would be on the spot to direct operations.

Soon after, the Brigadier contacted the GOC (Nagaland and Manipur), Major-General V. K. Nayar, at his headquarters in Zokhama, 40 minutes by helicopter from Imphal. Could the General send his chopper to Tulihal airstrip for ferrying a few casualties to the army hospital at Zokhama, the Brigadier asked. "Yes and I am coming myself with the chopper," said the Major-General.

The Brigadier pulled on his black driving gloves, picked up his stick and drove out of his headquarters in his Jonga with the siren blaring and red light flashing. He was in Kadampokpi by 8.30. As he got down from his Jonga he was a little troubled as he heard no firing: Had the insurgents escaped the cordon? With that disturbing thought the Brigadier was taken to the interrogation centre. Stunned, he heard that the PLA members were from the headquarters unit (a mobile unit, while the 17 others around Imphal are stationary ones). There were nine more members who had been camping

Diagram shows the army operation at Kadampokpi village and (inset) Capt Ajit Singh



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in the village for the last two days.

His men were on to something big because the PLA members would not reveal the names of their leaders. Among the armymen, the excitement was mounting. The insurgents had moved out from the double-storeyed house to somewhere in the east in the village. Accordingly, the Brigadier asked Col Bhatia to strengthen the Bihari cordon in the east. It was around 10 and the GOC himself arrived at Kadampokpi—perhaps the first ever occasion when the topmost commanding officer was present to take charge of a counter-insurgency operation himself. Seeing the Maj-Gen. in person, the *jawans* were emboldened: there was no question of giving up now.

Neither had the PLA given up hope. One even tried to escape through the dragnet, firing his way out. Once again one of the Biharis bore the brunt: Sepoy Yadunath Prasad was shot dead by a bullet from the PLA extremist's gun. Suddenly, the advance combing party with Col Bhatia and the Brigadier was stopped by bullets from a cluster of huts in the east, where the insurgents had withdrawn. Once again there were the impenetrable groves of tall bamboos. But that was overcome by the armymen. They hacked a path through the dense growth and positioned themselves at about 250 yards from the huts.

With all the resources at its command, the army could have bombarded the village houses but that would have meant loss of life and property. It would be good for both sides if the extremists surrendered. So, during a brief lull in the firing, Col Bhatia shouted in English (for most PLA extremists understand English): "You are surrounded on all sides. Romeo, Lemba and Raghumani have been arrested. Surrender and no harm will come to you. I will count up to ten. Before that you must come out. One..." The countdown started. Before he could shout five, there was a volley of bullets from the huts. So it was going to be war, thought the Brigadier. Col Bhatia, however, ignored the firing and continued to count till ten. As the counting ended there was another round of firing again.

Unable to pinpoint where the firing was coming from, Col Bhatia ordered Naik Subedar Umaid Singh to run across the PLA line of fire. When Singh did that, a PLA member took aim from a window of the hut. Captain Rathore who was among the bamboos with the colonel had been waiting for this opportunity: he took careful aim and shot the PLA man from about 100 yards. The insurgent tumbled out of the hut window and fell between the hut wall and the armymen.

Despite this casualty, the PLA were in no mood to surrender. It was a fight to the finish. The only way of flushing the extremists out of the huts would be to set the huts on fire. A piece of cloth was found, ignited and thrown onto the thatched roof. In minutes the huts were ablaze. Still, the PLA men kept up the steady barrage of bullets.

The army, on the other side, were up against a problem. Recalled an eyewitness: "On one side there was the fire and the bullets. On the other, the women and children, the inhabitants of the huts, were crying and beating their breasts telling the army officers to save their lives and cattle." The army controlled the fire, evacuated the other civilians and kept up the fire against the insurgents. After about 20 minutes the roof of one of the burning huts collapsed. With that, the stray firing from the insurgents died down. There had been nine in the huts but only seven bodies were recovered. It was only the next morning that the charred bones of the remaining two were found.

Was this the headquarters unit of the PLA, the Brigadier wanted to know. Seconds before the fire could reach the lower portion of the huts, the body of the man shot down by Captain Rathore was dragged out. The Brigadier had not paid much attention to it although the face of the corpse struck him as familiar. Army intelligence men were called. "That's Kunj Bihari," they said without hesitation. But the Brigadier still had his doubts. PLA informers, swathed in women's *burkhas* saw the body. "Is that Raghu?" asked Brig. Jhingon, mentioning Kunj Bihari's alias. "Yes. That's Raghu, the PLA leader," the informers replied in Manipuri.

It was 12.30 in the afternoon. The end of another successful operation against the PLA by the Indian army. In the evening after all the mopping operations had been completed, the Brigadier and the Major-General took a long trip to a temple to offer prayers.

The future of the PLA

The official agencies and insurgency-watchers in Manipur have taken note of two incidents that occured soon after the death of Thoudam Kunj Bihari, 35-year-old, chairman of the guerrilla outfit, the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). When Kunj Bihari's body was handed over to his carpenter father at his residence at Singjamei on the outskirts of Imphal next day in the evening, the youth of the locality spontaneously took out a mourning procession with the rebel leader's body. On 17 April, some PLA members still dazed by the Kadampokpi killings, secretly at a conclave at Thoubal, a village on the south of Imphal, named Khaidem Manikanta, a 25-year-old college dropout as Kunj Bihari's successor to lead the PLA. Manikanta is also a resident of Singjamei, said to be a nursery of the state's varied and disjointed insurgent groups.

While the first incident suggests that there is still lurking sympathy of the locals for the PLA, the second is an apparent indication of the PLA's desperate moves to recover from the recent reverses, specially the one they suffered at Kadampokpi where nine of their frontliners were wiped out in the four-hour army operation. In fact, the PLA had been suffering reverses for the past 12 months. Its founder and fabled hero, Biseshwar Singh, was captured by the army at Tekcham on 6 July 1981 and is now in Naini jail, UP. Before that, the number two man in the PLA hierarchy, Chorom Ranjit, was arrested. The Tekcham shootout accounted for seven of the PLA's top brass. Then came the Kadampokpi operations.

Do these setbacks signal the beginning of the end of the PLA? A lot depends on how Manikanta, the new *Ojha* (or teacher), trains the remnants of the PLA numbering about 250 men and steers this Maoist organisation along a proper course. Manikanta, who has read upto BA in Manipur College at Singjamei, was drafted into the PLA by Kunj Bihari in late 1978. He will have to curb the growing infighting in the setup. After Biseshwar's death, a third year dropout of Bombay IIT, Chongthom Bedamani, challenged the leadership of Kunj Bihari in August 1981. He was shot dead by unknown assailants at Imphal's Uripok area immediately after that. At present, Thanjam Subhas alias Chothe, a PLA activist within the fold is one who put up a fight against the leadership of Kunj Bihari. The guerrilla leadership is angry with Subhas as he is said to be responsible for the rape of a PLA sympathiser, Sorjubala, in March 1981. According to underground sources at Imphal, on 29 March 1982 five PLA members signed a no-confidence motion against Kunj Bihari according to an entry in a PLA diary retrieved at Kadampokpi. After the Kadampokpi shootout it is certain that the PLA is now a broken organisation. The "exploited peasants" for whom the PLA launched its Maoist liberation struggle are cool to its rhetoric. It is said that Manikanta does not have much of an ideological base and doubts are being expressed that he can hold together the PLA on the lofty ideals of Biseshwar. Said an editor of an Imphal newspaper, "Ambushes and arms-snatching are poor substitutes for mass political education." The dissidence within the PLA and its failure to politicise the peasants came as a boon to the army. The field workers of the army intelligence unit could infiltrate easily into the rebel ranks.

SANTANU GHOSH

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Central America: another Vietnam?

OF WAR AND PEACE

Lt Gen. E. A. VAS (Retd)

After decades of US paternalism, the people of Central America are struggling to come into their own. As and when they do, US hegemony, traditionally exercised through narrowly-based regimes, is inevitably challenged. The US could adopt two broad strategies to deal with this situation: support popular egalitarian movements (not all necessarily communist-led or controlled) and help them to develop democratic principles, even if this means undermining private US financial interests in the region; or, fight violence with violence, instal military governments and then help to anchor them to democratic principles. The US has chosen the second course.

Militarily, the President of USA will avoid the use of American troops, by conducting operations which will be made to look like an internal upheaval so that the US can keep up the pressure on the USSR, on Poland and Afghanistan without being accused of double standards. Therefore, in the 1982 budget, President Reagan has proposed to spend a deceptively modest 26 million dollars on military aid for El Salvador and 10 million dollars for Honduras; these are small totals compared to budgets for West Asia or Africa. To help the juntas cope with their balance of payment problems, the International American Development Bank and the World Bank are being encouraged to increase lending which US representatives had opposed during the Carter period. But the President's approval of a secret CIA plan for clandestine operations to topple the Sandinista government in Nicaragua indicates that the US is embarking on a policy of active interventionism.

The US para-military plan will probably be launched in two phases. First, the use in El Salvador of surrogates—Chilean flyers for Salvador's proposed A-37 bomber fleet, Argentine infantry and Nicaraguan exiles to back up the CIA "dirty-tricks" department. In Phase II, the administration hints at escalating military action. They propose to mine the sea-approaches to Cuba and Nicaragua and to launch para-military attacks on Nicaragua with Argentine assistance. They also propose to raise an Inter-American Peace-keeping Force. The mining of seas off Cuba and Nicaragua might create conditions for a confrontation in which Cuban ships "fire" on US vessels—an event which is guaranteed to evoke public support. Alarmed Americans are openly asking whether El Salvador is going to be another Vietnam. The question reflects a mixture of popular fears: Will US aid and possibly military involvement defeat the rebels or plunge the country into a "no-win" morass? Will this be another immoral intervention, another drain on resources and young lives with painful scars on the social fabric?

Admittedly, the US has more important strategic interest in Central America than it had in Indo-China. But despite this crucial difference, the scenarios advanced for increasing military action, tend to sound like the talk heard in the Vietnam build-up years. US officials argue that if the insurgents win in El Salvador, it will lead to the overthrow of regimes in Guatemala and Honduras, and could endanger Panama and spread insurrection throughout the hemisphere. Thus, tiny El Salvador is portrayed as a crucial bridge-head to vast US strategic interests, as Vietnam was said to be the defence-line against the peril of Communist China.

Another glaring resemblance to South Vietnam is the Salvadorean regime's failure to meet urgent social needs, thereby giving cause for desperate revolutionaries. The White House argues that reforms have been launched; their limited effectiveness is due to disruption by guerrillas who want to polarise feelings to the extreme right and left. But balanced observers doubt the junta's capacity to push peaceful reforms. When the US overthows a revolutionary government for economic consideration or out of anti-communist paranoia, the local people pay a heavy price for Washington's victory. Good men and popular leaders are forced into exile and in their stead, is imposed not a moderate government but the only possible alternative, a government of the extreme right made brutal by corrupt officers with a limited vision of nationhood.

Another similarity is the role of the church. The Salvadorean Christian hierarchy, like the leading Vietnamese Buddhist officials during their war, wants to find ways to end the killing. Therefore, it urges a compromise that would inevitably give the rebels a share of government power. The White House is convinced, as it was in Vietnam, that such a compromise would lead to total communist domination. Foreign opinion about US involvement is also developing adversely as it did during the Vietnam War, and precisely because of that precedent. The non-aligned nations are asking: What is the difference between El Salvador, Poland or Afghanistan? They conclude that the two superpowers are an equal danger to peace.

But there are also vital differences and El Salvador is not Vietnam. US supply lines to Central America are short and easy. Insurgents in El Salvador do not have a sanctuary as a base; the neighbouring governments of Honduras and Guatemala are hostile. The nearest friendly regime to the guerrillas is Nicaragua which has no land border with El Salvador. Pulling out of Vietnam was costly to the US in many ways, but it is unthinkable that the US will pull out of Central America; this is the real difference. If the two-phase para-military plan fails, the US will commit its regular troops, even though it would be dangerous for the administration to do so.

There is a rule about blood in US politics: support for the President rises when the nation goes to war, but falls as soon as Americans die on the battlefield. So, the administration's alliance with Latin American juntas, though visibly fragile, cannot be halted by Congressional or public opinion unless soldiers (not American nuns, rural experts, journalists or even CIA agents) die. The Reagan administration is, therefore, making every effort to persuade US legislators and the public that a failure to beat back communist advances in Central America will threaten America's vital interests. Survival of the White House after 1984, which is by no means a certainty, may largely depend on how things go in Central America.

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Gujral: speed at any cost

SPECIAL REPORT

Was 'Gujral factor' responsible for the Agra accident?

The enquiry report points in that direction, says MADHU JAIN

Was Mr M.S. Gujral, the controversial chairman of the railway board, responsible for the ghastly train accident at dawn in the Agra station yard on 27 January this year—an accident in which 63 people were killed and 27 were injured? Nobody is saying so openly. But the rumblings within the railways are growing louder. Even if the chairman didn't exactly have his foot on the accelerator, he was, according to some, responsible for this accident. It was not providence but the human factor which made all those people lose their lives.

The real question is, what is this "Gujral factor" which makes trains run on time, delivers more goods to more places, but in the process kills some people too? The Gujral factor is, in fact, the inordinate emphasis on speed for goods trains, an emphasis which sometimes makes people throw caution to the winds. The inquiry by the chief commissioner of railway safety reveals that the divisional operating superintendent of Jhansi had issued local instructions that the yards could start the trains without consulting the section controllers. This way the diesel locos need not be detained in the yards.

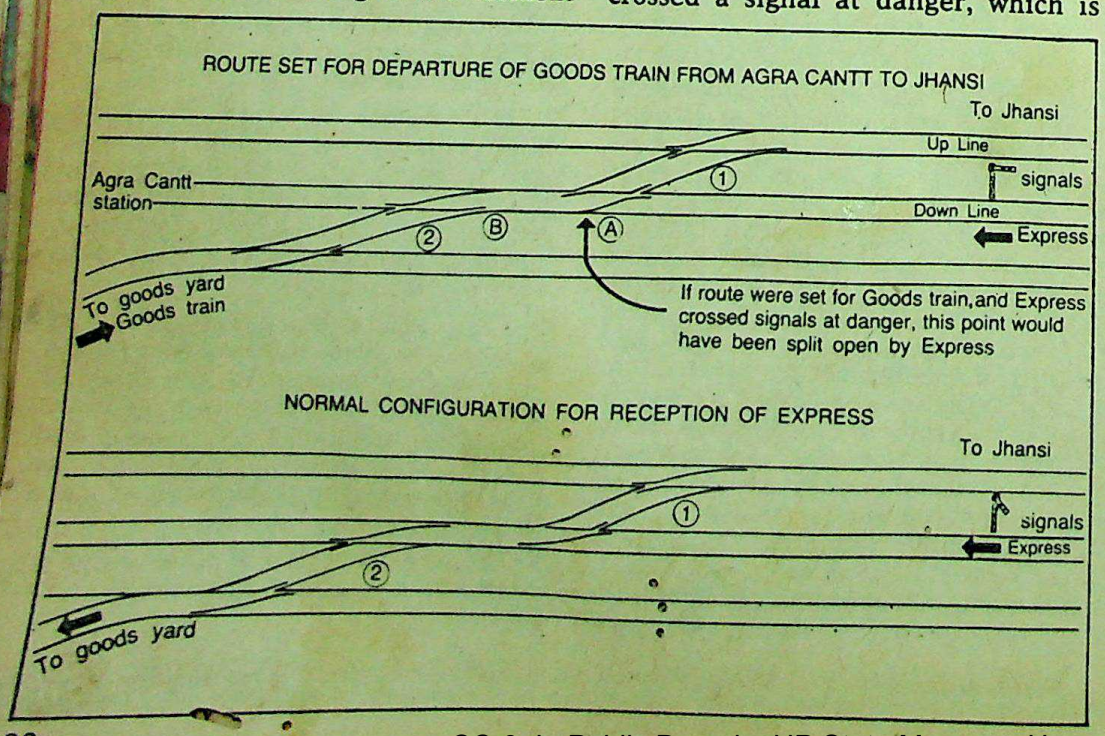
The chairman's expected arrival in Agra on the morning of the accident threw things—inadvertently one must add—out of gear. Thus, central railway officials were feverishly busy that morning getting the Agra yard cleared before all the big bosses arrived.

One of the puzzling aspects of this horrendous accident is the fact that the station master of Agra Cantt station gave the "line clear" for the express at 3.20 am—nearly 53 minutes before the expected arrival of the train. Normally, trains are cleared only ten to 15 minutes before the scheduled time. This proves the fact that until that time, there were no plans to start the goods train which would cross the path of the express train. Obviously, somebody changed his mind later— at precisely 3.43 am, it is reliably learned. (The collision took place at 4.13 am.) As the path of the goods train was to cut across that of the Dakshin Express at two points, a certain number of signalling manoeuvres needed to be carried out—moves which would entail a delay of nearly 20 minutes before the goods train could have cleared the last "trailing point." This, despite the fact that the Agra yard master had issued the "starting permit" for the goods train at 3.50 am.

The Agra disaster could also have been avoided—even if the driver had crossed a signal at danger, which is quite unlikely according to some railway officials—if the staff at the Agra station had fixed fog signals on the tracks to warn the driver of the express train about the approaching signals. Furthermore, if the cabin staff had reversed the points of the cross-over connecting the goods yard to the down line after sighting the approaching express, the express train would have just split open the points of this cross-over and proceeded to the station. It would have damaged the points but those 63 people would have been alive today. Says one railwayman "The chairman's guilty conscience prompted him to make a hasty statement to the press on his return from the accident site to Delhi (saying) that the driver was responsible for this accident and that the fog at Agra was not thick enough to justify the use of fog signals... He had no right to do this before an inquiry..." Some people even believe that the shock of such an accusation precipitated the driver Budhu Lal's death three days after the accident.

There is, however, a discrepancy regarding the exact time when the Dakshin Express passed the previous station, Bhandai. It is understood that Bhandai showed the train to have run through at 4.03 am. The cabin received the 'train approaching signal' at 4.05 am but—possibly due to the delay in relaying the information—Budhu Lal's log book appears to show an entry of 4.07 am. These figures are very vital since it is generally agreed that the engine's speedometer is not a reliable instrument for estimating the speed of a train. In this case, however, the speed chart stopped at 70 km per hour at the time of the impact.

If the entries at Bhandai station are accepted to be correct, and the distance between Bhandai station and Agra Cantt station being 11 km which the train covered in ten minutes, then the average speed works out to 66 km per hour. The maximum permissible speed is 100 km per hour. Going by Agra 'A' cabin timings it would work out to 87 km per hour. But if it is argued that the driver's log book was more accurate, the average shoots up to 110 km per hour. This is not possible because it is unlikely that the driver would suddenly pick up speed when he had a scheduled halt. It is possible that



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the driver's watch showed different timings.

Another significant discovery is the fact that the train's guard, Shri Husia, did not fill any station-to-station timings in his log book from Jhansi—this is a gross dereliction of duty since there is now no way of cross-checking either the driver's or the station master's entries.

The goods cabin incharge and the yard master now claim that when they saw the Dakshin Express approaching they tried to reset the track for the express towards the station, but it was too late. Was it their intention to let the train collide into anything standing on the passenger platform? Since the goods yard track was connected to the path of the express, the train veered towards the goods yard instead of carrying on straight towards the Agra Cantt station—resulting in the head-on collision.

There is yet another possibility which may have led to the accident. Since the signal for line clear had been given nearly 53 minutes earlier, it is suspected that the goods cabin staff might have thought that the Dakshin Express had already gone past. Consequently, they took their time to clear the goods train. The railway signals round Agra, which are still kerosene-lit, have often been criticised by the drivers, but little has been done to improve matters. When it is being claimed that visibility was poor because of the fog, why did the station master, Agra Cantt, not place fog signals before the outer signal, as per station working rules? That morning, the entire north Indian region was covered with a dense fog until noon. The detonators attached to the railway line burst whenever an engine goes over them—warning the driver that he is nearing a station signal. Mr Gujral's coverup about the fog not being thick enough to warrant fog signals does not ring true. The railway minister in fact stated in Parliament that it had to be investigated further.

If the departure of the goods train was planned by holding the Dakshin Express at signals, the two cross-overs leading from the goods yard to the down line (2) *(see diagram)* and from the down line to the up line (1) would be as shown. In such a configuration if the driver of the Dakshin Express crossed his signal at danger, his engine would have split open the points (A) of the cross-over (1) before colliding with the goods train. But this did not happen, a fact which proves that this cross-over was set for the express to proceed further towards Agra Cantt station on the down line. Normally, the next cross-over's position should have been the reverse of what is shown (B) if it had been correctly set for receiving the express on the platform. But this had been closed to set the passage for departure of the goods train—perhaps after throwing back the signal of the Dakshin Express. The yard staff's claim does not stand to reason. If they had sighted this train and had wanted to save the accident, they would have thrown open cross-over (2), which governed the movement of the express into the goods yard, rather than cross-over (1). In such an eventuality, the express would have just burst this cross-over and proceeded towards the station instead of colliding with the goods train.

Another question being asked is: was the commissioner for railway safety who conducted the inquiry into the Agra accident, pressurised? It is said that Gujral told him to tone down the report. Consequently, the commissioner did not admonish the railways for not accepting his earlier recommendation prohibiting the movement of any train across the path of a train due to be received at a station. Moreover, the commissioner proposed the theory that just at the time of passing the signals, both the driver and his assistant fell asleep momentarily and ignored the signal aspect. This is highly improbable because the statistical chance of two persons, who have both been working on such mail trains for years together, taking their 40 winks at the same time would be extremely unlikely.

Despite overwhelming evidence of the thick fog on the day of the accident, the commissioner writes that the fog was not thick enough to use fog signals—in fact, he continues, the visibility was good enough for them to have sighted the express before it approached the cabin.

Flouting rules with impunity has become the order of the day. The divisional safety officer, Jhansi, and the chief safety superintendent of central railway, P. C. Johry, have simply been transferred, the latter to Secunderabad, which he had left only a few months earlier. But, the heads of the "higher ups" have not rolled, according to a Rail Bhawan insider.

Another disturbing feature is the fact that the safety organisation is manned by non-technical personnel from the chairman-cum-member transport down to the field level. Thus, a lack of awareness of the implications of shortcut methods has increased accidents. Recommendations of the Kunjru and Wanchoo committees and lately of the Sikri committee remain unimplemented. Traffic officers, who have no technical background have always tried to get away by pegging the blame on drivers or upon technical departments.

The latest railway accident enquiry committee headed by Justice Sikri criticised the working of the present setup of the safety organisation: it was called a "refuge of rejects" from the traffic and commercial departments. It has recommended that the safety organisation should at all levels be manned by selected officers and staff from technical departments.

Mr Gujral has not yet implemented these recommendations. He has, instead, appointed two high-powered safety teams known as the "minister for railways safety teams" to carry out surprise checks on the implementation of various safety directives—which have in fact been nullified by his style of train operations and maintenance management.

Says a bitter railway official: "Unlike Jaffer Sharief (the minister of state for railways) who went to Agra to shed a few crocodile tears for those who were killed, and later picnicked at the Taj with his family, Mr P. C. Sethi should not transform himself into a 'salesman-of-death', rushing to every major scene of railway disaster and doling out money for injury or death. Gujral has made the railways a death machine..." ■

Accident committee report

The following is an extract from the report of the railway accidents enquiry committee published in May 1980:

"The general impression given was that this organisation is a refuge for unwanted persons and rejects of the departments and for accommodating employees with health or domestic problems. Both amongst officers and the staff in this organisation, the majority felt that, given the chance, they would like to go back to their parent department.

"Instances came to our notice of officers holding posts of divisional safety officers who had all along worked in the commercial department and had neither the flair nor the background for the work which they are now called upon to do. Except for a few instances, divisional safety officers were class II officers, who were on the verge of superannuation and were holding these posts on first promotion to senior scale. With their attention understandably concentrated on their impending retirement, they lacked involvement in their tasks and the drive to achieve results.

"Both at the divisional and headquarters levels on the zonal railways, our inquiry revealed that there was no system of effectively monitoring the follow-up action on recommendations made by committees of inquiry into railway accidents.

"Very little is being done by way of regular statistical studies and analyses of longterm trends of various types of accidents by the safety organisations now functioning at the divisional and headquarters levels on almost all the railways and even at the railway board level."

The tragedy is that all this will most probably go unheeded.

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MEMORIES

Shobha

Shobha, the popular Malayalee who died in mysterious circums much alive in the memory of he spent seven hours w

Two living corpses, caged in darkness and subsisting on mere memories: that is what Shobha's parents have become. Their daughter might have died two years ago but time has in no way stemmed the flow of life-blood from their deep, unhealed wounds.

Shobha was the 18-year-old Tamil actress who had shot into news when her body was discovered hanging from the ceiling of her bedroom, on 1 May 1980. She had allegedly committed suicide, only three months after having married cameraman Balu Mahendra in a much-publicised garland-exchanging ceremony in a hotel. (Balu Mahendra was already married, with a wife and a son.) Though herself a Malayalee, Shobha had catapulted to stardom in the Tamil film world. Ironically, just a week before she died, she had received the Urvashi award for best actress for her excellent performance in *Pasi* (Hungry), from President Sanjiva Reddy.

Today, the plight of Shobha's parents—Prema and K.P.P. Menon—is pathetic. They live in a make-believe world wherein Shobha still exists. A small, brilliantly lit room in their house, is where 'Sho Mol' ('Mol' is a Malayalam endearment used for daughters) still 'lives.' This room resembles a rather garish film set. In one corner 'stands' a life-size cardboard cutout of Shobha, clad in a gaudy, green sari full of *zari* (brocade). Fresh jasmine flowers adorn her black hair and there is a *kumkum bindi* on her forehead. The bright light in the room glints off her necklace, bangles and *zari*, transforming her into a shimmering, resplendent figure. You almost feel as if she is looking at each visitor who walks into that room, flashing a charming smile, the white of her perfect teeth framed enchantingly by red lips. Prema leads us into the room, and with a great deal of care, 'introduces' us to her Sho Mol.

Such bizarre scenes, one always thought, were enacted strictly within the tinsel confines of the film world. When they get transposed to real life, the effect is spine-chilling. The grief of the parents is unbearable. Unbearable because it is sickeningly tangible, a live tragedy as it were. Though the manifestations of their anguish do appear melodramatic, at no time do they seem false or put on. On the contrary, one wishes there wasn't so much intensity to their pain. There is a feeling of helplessness in the face of such undimmed agony and sorrow which has taken an extremely heavy toll—emotionally, mentally, physically.

When Shobha was alive just two years ago, her mother, Prema (judging by the photographs) was a healthy, happy woman. Today, at only 41 years of age (although she looks nearer 60), she is painfully thin, gaunt-faced and lifeless. She wears only white, cotton saris and modest, high-necked blouses. Her chiselled features are bleak, her dark mouth brooding and her vacant stare unnerving. She is tired and beaten; a pathetic shadow of her former self. When her 'Sho Mol' was alive, she had lovingly attended to her tiniest need. She continues to do so even now.

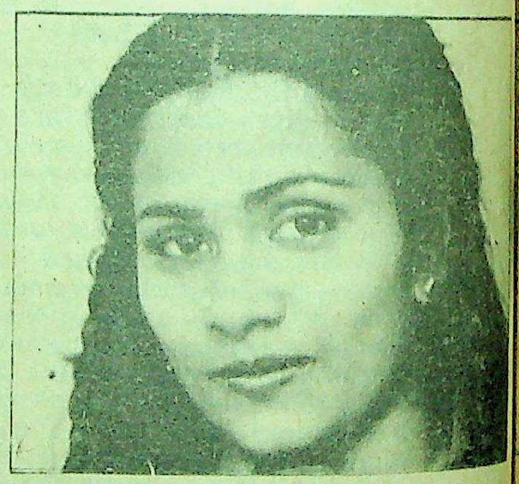
The living room has 29 photographs and paintings of Shobha depicting a gamut of this budding actress's moods— gay, sullen, happy, intense, sultry, dreamy. On top of each photo is a bunch of *kadambam malli* (fresh jasmines and Crossandru *(kanakambaram)* flowers. Great care is taken to ensure that the flowers are changed daily. In each of the photographs, on Shobha's forehead, a *bindi* and a dash of sandalwood paste is applied. "You see she loved *kumkum bindis*, you could never see her without it," her mother explains. Before Prema has her meals (ever since Shobha died she sits on the floor and eats) a water-sprinkled green banana leaf is brought. Prema deposits a handful of rice and curry on the leaf which is taken to Sho Mol's room so that Sho Mol can eat in peace and privacy. Prema's mother comes out of the room gently closing the door behind her. Only then does she eat herself.

Prema spends most of her time in Sho Mol's room, which also serves as a *pooja* room, crammed with flowers, garlands, lamps, photographs and pictures of Gods. Sitting on the floor mat, Prema stares unbelievingly at the cut-out of Shobha. Every morning she busies herself with a ritual. She rearranges the sari, smoothing out all the wrinkles—both real and imaginary—she adjusts the flowing *pallav*, applies fresh *kumkum* on the figure's forehead and puts flowers on her hair. Finding it difficult to change the sari each day, she changes her daughter's sari once every fortnight. "Sho Mol must always look neat and beautiful. Isn't she a blossoming actress with the Urvashi in her hand?"

As Prema lives out her pitiful days in this hot airless, overbright room (so

The pooja room with the cardboard cutout of Shobha in the corner in a shimmering brocade sari. Shobha's mother sits next to the pooja altar.

Shobha



Shobha, Prema and K.P.P. Menon: picture

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ohaives on

Malayalee ss and Urvashi award winner, us circums s on 1 May 1980, is still very nory of he nts. ANITA PRATAP recently n hours w m to file this report

bright that it hurts the eyes) sometimes staring, sometimes talking, precious shared experiences flood back to mind. These moments are the only flashes of light in the overwhelming darkness of her life. In the privacy of this room, in the three feet that separates the inconsolable mother from the dead daughter, memories come alive.

Prema has her idiosyncracies. So does her husband, Menon, whose flesh has wasted away leaving him emaciated. All his possessions—a couple of *lungis* and shirts, Shobha's photographs, albums, letters, etc.—are stashed away in a large, red Samsonite suitcase kept on the floor between the drawing room sofa and the dining table. Every now and then he disappears behind the sofa and examines his treasures. He even changes his clothes there. He has rice *kanji* with no curry, thrice a day. Worldly possessions and comfort do not mean anything to him. He just does not care. Nor does Prema who sleeps on the sofa while her husband curls up on the floor (both of them took a vow after their daughter's death that they will not sleep in the bedroom). The luxuries and even the basic amenities of the house lie in a state of disuse and neglect. The well-furnished independent bungalow is decaying and dying slowly.

Menon's is a reckless, pitiable aggressiveness. Like most men who hate to admit crippling emotions, Menon does not talk much about Shobha's personal life. He is obsessed with the idea that Shobha's death was a case of murder not suicide. He is constantly thinking of how to avenge his daughter's death how to find evidence for his convictions. While both parents blame Balu Mahendra for the tragic turn of events in Shobha's life, Menon's virulence spurts from his belief that Balu caused a lot of pain and unhappiness to his daughter. He will never forgive Balu for this. The most frightening aspect about Menon, otherwise a sorry figure, is his fearlessness. It is the fearlessness born out of the desperation of a man who has lost everything.

As Prema spoke to this correspondent, for seven and-a-half hours, 18 years of Shobha's life tumbled out from the mother's trembling lips. She spoke softly in Malayalam, often faltering as tears took over.

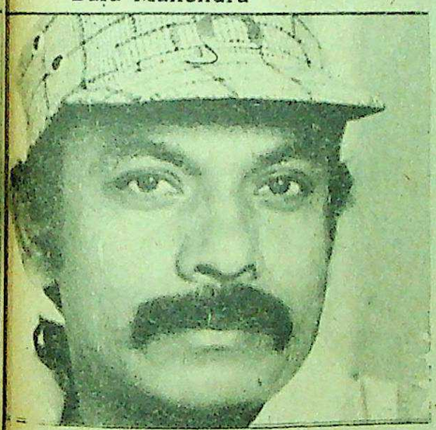
Shobha made her debut in films when she was three years old. As Prema herself was a well-established Malayalee actress (she has acted in about 100 films starring with all-time greats like Sathyan and Prem Nazir), small roles came to Shobha easily. According to Prema, her daughter first met Balu Mahendra on the sets of *Ragam* in which she made a guest appearance as a teacher. Her first impression of him was rather unfavourable because he was strutting about barebodied on the sets. "I thought it was very indecent of him to go about like that when there were so many ladies around." However, her initial dislike gradually thawed as Balu dropped in often to the Menon house, with wife Ahileshwari and son Gourishankar in tow. Shobha was only 13 then, a vivacious sprightly girl who was adept at imitations. Her mother maintains that Shobha was a good actress mainly because she was a wonderful mimic. She used to imitate Balu—his peculiar walk with his shoulders slouched on one side and light meter in one hand. "His behaviour was always impeccable. There was absolutely nothing to take amiss."

And so the Mahendras became daily visitors to the Menon household. Ahila would sit around and gossip for hours and they would eat their meals there too. Strangely, however, they never invited the Menons to their own home. "Not that I wanted their lunch, but it indicates the kind of people they actually are," says Prema. Balu naturally became very close to the family and soon he and Shobha were working together in a number of films. He started referring to Shobha as his niece. The days when Shobha was in town (in Madras), Balu breezed into the house along with the first ray of dawn. The 'niece' soon became his 'daughter'—at first in private, then in public. Prema fished out a beautiful hardcover illustrated book of "My Favourite Fairy Tales" which Balu had presented Shobha with the inscription: "To my darling daughter from Papa, B.M." Gradually emboldened he even publicly declared that Shobha was his "daughter." In an interview with *Nana* magazine, he said, "I have come with my wife and two children"—meaning his own son and Shobha.

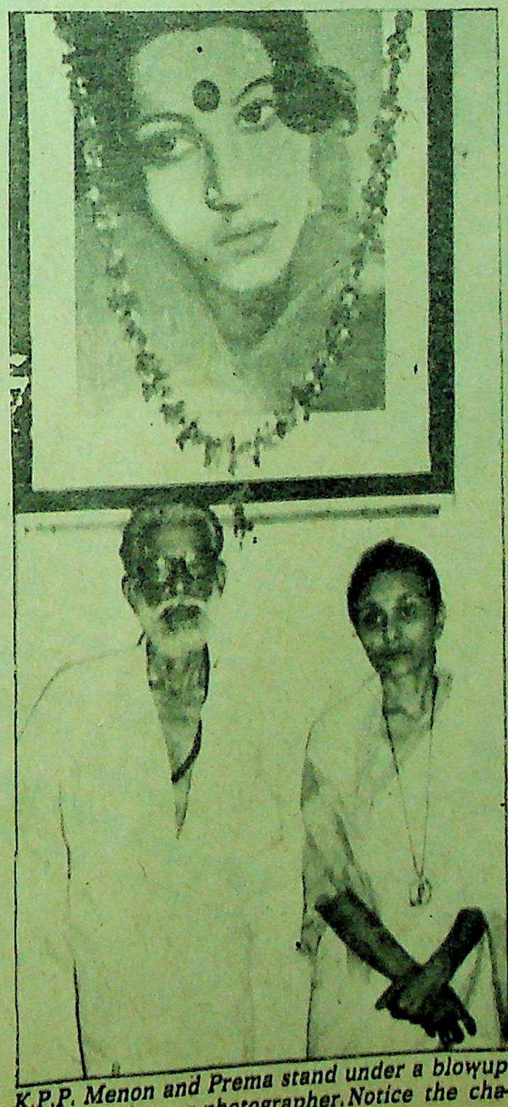
There was a time when Ahila wanted to have a daughter desperately. But whenever she broached the subject, Balu would shout her down saying, "When we have Sho, why do we need another." But the real reason, as he once confessed to Prema, was his fear that a daughter of his own might cause his love for Shobha to diminish.

Menon: pictur

Balu Mahendra



a year before Shobha's death



K.P.P. Menon and Prema stand under a blowup of Shobha for our photographer. Notice the changed physical appearance of both

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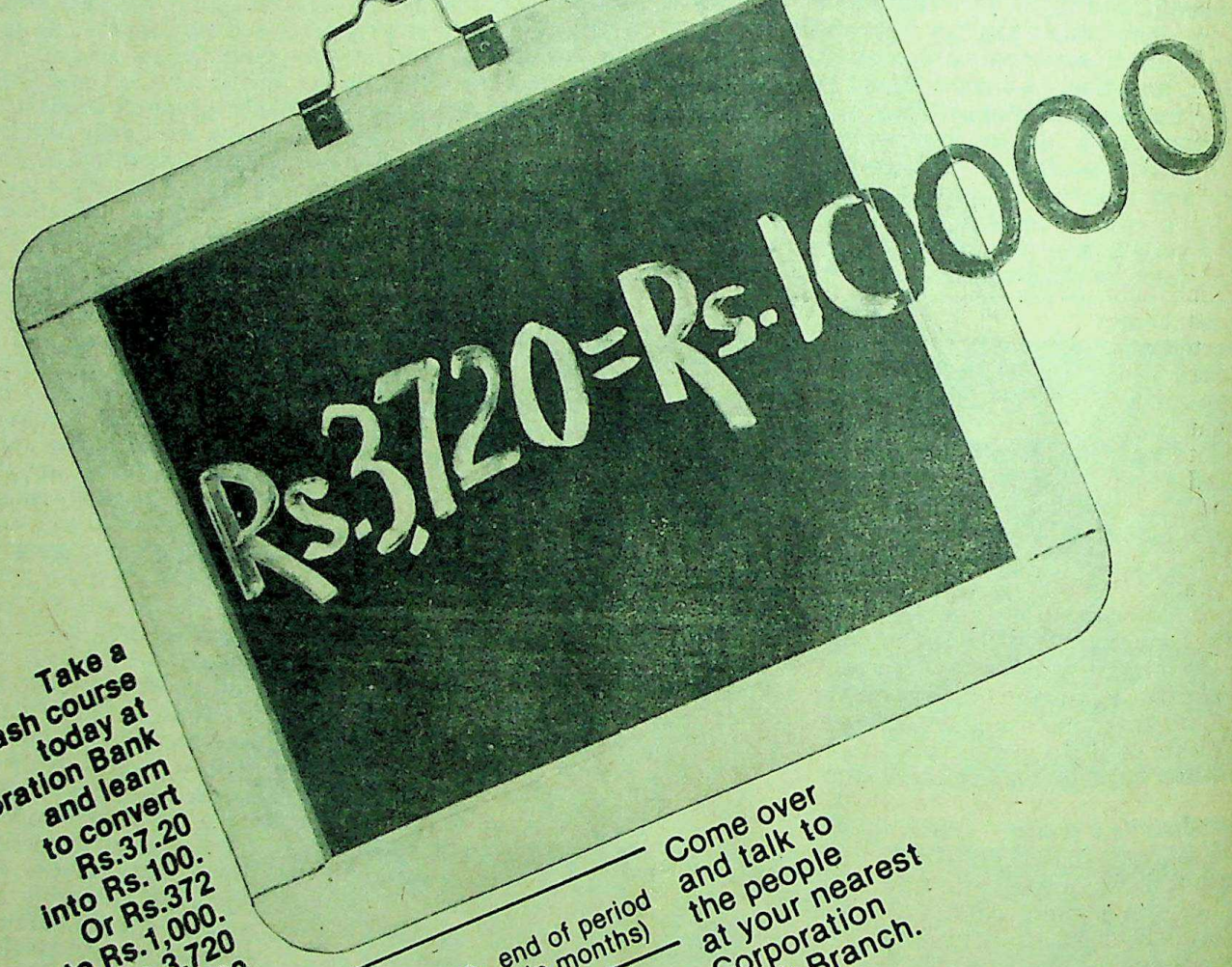

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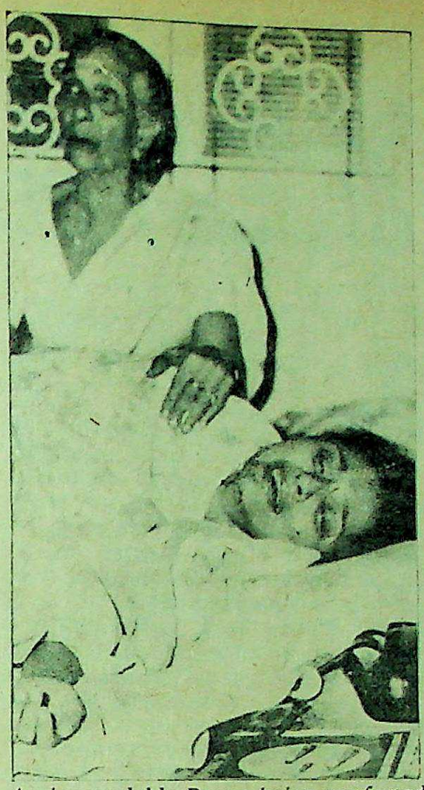
As Balu grew more and more devoted to Shobha, the Tamil film columnists had enough grist for their gossip mill and a particularly nasty item regarding the couple appeared in *Mookuthi*. Prema was very upset when she read this and she forbade Balu to follow Shobha around. But that did not make any difference. Apart from Prema's suspicions, all evidence points to the fact that the relationship between Balu and Shobha was intimate. At first, Shobha was Balu's friend's daughter, then his 'niece,' then 'daughter,' then girlfriend and finally wife. Strangely, right up to a few months before his second marriage, Balu wrote letters addressing Shobha as "My darling daughter," and signed "Papa"—letters which in their sordidness expose his actual feelings for her.

According to Prema, Balu used the cliched line of "My wife doesn't understand me. I have nothing to talk to her." And falling into the trap, Shobha used to tell her mother, "Poor Uncle has no one to talk to." And that Ahila was not interested in his work and so on. Gradually Shobha also turned against Ahila. But she stopped confiding in her mother after Prema chided her for interfering in Balu's marital affairs.

It was with Shobha's 18th birthday that Prema spotted a distinct change in her daughter's behaviour. "Soon Sho started becoming distant, particularly from me. She was innocent and gullible. All kinds of lies were fed to her—that I was repressive, that I wanted to grab all her money. And because I was quite strict with her, she believed a lot of things. Sho Mol and I were so close, we did everything together. Suddenly she became aloof and irritable. This was around her 18th birthday. It was drilled into her head that she would soon be a major and could do things on her own, without seeking permission. Whenever she set off for shooting, she'd always kiss me first. All these little gestures of affection, of our love for each other, stopped. It was Shobha's body but Balu's mind. She was very imitative—she began imitating Balu, his actions and his mannerisms. A girl who had read only fairy tales and comics started talking all kinds of intellectual things. When she spoke, it was as if Balu was speaking," said Prema.

Prema blames herself for precipitating Shobha's growing dependency on Balu. "The Malayalam film industry is like a family. We knew everybody there. Here it was different. We knew only Balu, so whenever Shobha got offers, I used to make it a point to check with Balu about the integrity of the producer, director, etc. I wanted to proceed carefully, but my caution had far graver consequences. Sho started relying completely on Balu. She lost all faith in my abilities—I, who had been handling her career since the time she was a child of three and now Balu's word became final."

On 22 January 1980, Balu got "married" to Shobha. There was first a press conference and then the garland-exchanging ceremony at a hotel. Prema is convinced that Shobha was caught unawares and forced into marriage. According to Prema, on that day, Shobha returned from Calicut after a spell of shooting. Barely had she reached home when Balu informed her of Yesudas' recording in the city, knowing that Shobha could never resist attending his recordings. Without even bothering to change, Shobha clambered back into the car, dragging her aunt, Rama, with her. They were taken not for the recording, but to Gemini studios where the press was waiting.



An inconsolable Prema being comforted by her mother who now lives with her

After the marriage, there was a great deal of bitterness between Balu and Shobha's parents. Prema could never forgive him and was very violent in her reaction to Balu. The relationship between parents and daughter soured. They grew distant. Soon after her marriage, Shobha stayed in her parents' house for some time. It was around this time that Prema came to suspect that Shobha was under the influence of drugs. "There were several nights when she used to thrash about on the bed. Her appetite was ruined and she lost weight rapidly." According to Prema, a doctor in Vijaya hospital who had treated Shobha over the years and who continued to do so after her marriage, was the one to inform Prema about the possibility of Shobha taking drugs.

Then one day, on 2 March 1980, to be precise, while Prema was combing her daughter's hair, Shobha suddenly told her mother to return all the money she had earned during the previous two years, because "Balu says now that we are husband and wife we must file our income tax together." Prema lost her temper and lashed out, saying, "He is not your husband, he is Ahila's. You are just his keep." When Shobha showed her *thali (mangalsutra)* Prema, verging on hysteria, shouted "Your *thali* is meaningless. Even prostitutes wear *thalis* in hotels to avoid suspicion. Yours has as much sanctity as that." Shobha burst into tears and hearing her cry, Balu who was in the living room came rushing in and dragged Shobha away. And that was the last time Prema saw her daughter alive.

According to Prema, Balu got a lot of leverage from this episode, claiming that she was after Shobha's money. "For God's sake, what will I do with Shobha's money? She is our only wealth. You have seen us. Do you believe we were after our own daughter's money? How can he even think like that? I lost my temper because I felt so bad that my daughter had been duped into believing that she was legitimately married."

Although Balu and Shobha had initially stayed in Atlantic hotel, they had soon taken a house in K. K. Nagar. Prema refused to step into her daughter's house, but Menon had visited his daughter there several times. "I used to hang around like a beggar outside her house, waiting to see her come and go. Sometimes I went in and talked to her. In fact, the Friday that she died, I was supposed to have lunch with her," said Menon. In fact, even when Shobha won the Urvashi award, her parents had heard the news only through a friend. When a thrilled Menon went to Shobha's house, he was told that she had already gone to Delhi to receive the award and would be back on 27 April. "That was a deliberate lie," says Menon, "because she came back on 26 April. I wanted to go to the airport and see her coming back with the Urvashi. I know I would not have been able to go near her but at least from a distance, hidden by the crowd, I could have proudly watched my own daughter coming with the prestigious award. I was deprived even of that. As nobody gave me a copy of the photograph of Shobha receiving the award from the President, I wrote to Vasant Sathe. He was kind enough to send me a copy." (It is one among the numerous photographs displayed in the living room.) Shortly after Shobha's death, Balu sent a note to K. P. P. Menon saying, "Out of human consideration, sympathy and goodwill, I am returning Shobha's things." And he made out a long list of belongings which included five bras and seven panties!

When Shobha was a little girl of five, she had to die in the arms of Prem Nazir in a Malayalam film. She portrayed the death-throes so well that at the end of the shot everybody on the sets had been reduced to tears. An overwhelmed Prem Nazir picked up the little Shobha and hugged her tightly saying, "You will definitely win the Urvashi award one day." A prophetic statement, but who could have imagined that death-throes for the beautiful, young actress would follow so soon in real life.

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'Learn Kannada or get out of Karnataka'

LOUISE FERNANDES analyses the pro-Gokak agitation that rocked Karnataka recently

It need never have happened—or, at least need never have taken on the hideous proportions that it did. But, thanks to Karnataka chief minister R. Gundu Rao, who at the best of times has been known to place his foot in his mouth, April will be remembered as a month when Karnataka threatened to slip off the rails of sanity. It was not without embarrassment. Stirring the boiling cauldron of bubbling linguistic fervour which clamoured for Kannada as the sole first language of the state, were not only average politicians, whose business they say is to rouse the rabble. Indeed no. At the helm of the agitation for Kannada at the high-school level, popularly known as the "pro-Gokak agitation," were revered Jnanpith award winners, poet laureates, internationally known academicians and nationally recognised film personalities—all those, who one would expect, to have understood the dangers of lending support to the sort of cry which at its hysterical peak screeched: "Learn Kannada or get out of Karnataka."

But if men of art and letters temporarily went haywire,why blame Gundu Rao? Examine the genesis of the problem and you see a smug chief minister who promised the world to his subjects in the first flush of victory even though he was in no position to deliver the goods. A background to the root of the "language controversy" is necessary. Till 1979, Sanskrit was included as a first language in high schools in Karnataka along with Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and other mother tongues. One consistent allegation against the Sanskrit teaching at the school level was that the standard was very low. Students generally started learning the language from the alphabets in the first year of high school—the eighth standard—and by the time they were in the tenth standard they were expected to take an examination. The students who opted for Kannada as the first language, however, would have studied the language since the first standard. Sanskrit being a difficult language it was left to students to answer questions in either English or Kannada. A small translation from Sanskrit to English or Kannada had to be done but not *vice-versa*. The result was that Sanskrit became a goldmine for marks. It was possible for students taking Sanskrit to score anywhere between 80 to 95 per cent. On the other hand, it was impossible to get those kind of marks in Kannada or any other language. The levels of teaching Kannada, for instance, involved at least one ancient text, grammar, etc. As a result, Sanskrit students had a tremendous advantage in respect of ranks and, incidentally, in respect of post-Matric scholarships based on the marks in the SSLC examination.

The movement to revamp the educational system to correct this anomaly had official recognition when the Kannada Sahitya Parishad, at its annual *sammelan* in 1976, passed a resolution demanding that the government remove Sanskrit from the list of first languages. Three years later, the Devaraj Urs government reacted by simply removing Sanskrit from the list of first languages and relegating it to a position where nobody would read it. Since the order came in the middle of the academic term, Sanskrit supporters challenged it in the High Court and got a stay order. That was the status quo when Gundu Rao took office in January 1980 and that is where Mr Rao made his mistake. That was the time when Mr Rao was accepting felicitations from all and sundry and was making a reputation for granting favours. Sanskrit scholars, taking advantage of this, feted the CM and, as

Police fire tear gas shells in an effort to quell violence

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expected, secured from him the promise that Sanskrit would remain on the first language list. There was no need for him to step in for according to the High Court stay, Sanskrit still remained the first language.

Predictably, public reaction was furious. It became uncontrollable and the legislature berated the CM who panicked and appointed a committee of seven language teaching experts to look into the problem. The committee was headed by Dr V. K. Gokak, a former vice-chancellor, a university teacher of English for most of his life, a renowned scholar of Sanskrit and a wellknown modern author in Kannada.

Although the government's terms of reference to the committee gives scope for recommendations, it was common knowledge that the basic intention of the government was only to settle the issue of Sanskrit and Kannada. Other languages had not appeared on the horizon at that time, and till then nobody had authoritatively demanded that Kannada be the sole first language of the state. Whatever the interpretation given to the terms of reference, in hindsight, the government's intention was not to reopen the issue. In fact, if any motives were given to the composition of the committee it was that with four out of seven being known to be in favour of Sanskrit, Gundu Rao was attempting to get the seal of approval of a committee of experts for his own decision to retain Sanskrit as the first language.

The committee's work was hampered as a result. As far as the agitators were concerned, the committee had no business to discuss the issue and Dr Gokak himself was gheraoed in Hubli. Those who demonstrated against him, incidentally (or at least some of them) are the very people who are now willing to go to jail demanding that the government accept Dr Gokak's report in full, without even changing a comma.

Gundu Rao's plan backfired when the report was published in January 1981. The Gokak committee had not only unseated Sanskrit but also made Kannada the sole first language. The government received the report and slept over it. Some people believe that they attempted to bury it knowing the effect it would have on the feelings of the non-Kannadigas who form around 22 per cent of the population in the state. But not for long. The government, in its lack of wisdom, did not publish the report and till recently English translations were hard to come by. As a result, discontented grumblings started and there was criticism in the press, especially the regional press, that Gundu Rao was playing for time so that he could find ways of twisting the report to suit his pro-Sanskrit friends. In a panic again, without examining the implications of the report in all its details, Mr Gundu Rao announced that the government had accepted the report in toto.

Then came the counter reaction from the minorities who had, as their prime mover, the irrespressible maverick Rajya Sabha member F. M. Khan. As the counter movement against the recommendations of the Gokak committee gathered momentum, Mr Gundu Rao dithered once again and, playing for time, said he would consult the legislators. He went on record in the Assembly saying that the government would examine the implications of the report on the minorities and minority languages and the modalities of implementation. Dr Gokak himself appears to have studied the problem of the minorities and their possible difficulties of studying Kannada as the first language and competing with students whose mother tongue is Kannada. He had, therefore, suggested a phased programme of implementation of Kannada as the sole first language over a period of five years commencing from the academic year 1981-82.

According to this phased programme, the compulsory teaching of Kannada, should start in all minority schools from the third standard. By the time students come up to the eighth standard, they would have been schooled in Kannada for five years. Dr Gokak's argument was that, whatever may be the minority language of the child concerned, he was growing up in an atmosphere and environment which was predominantly Kannada and therefore it would not be difficult for him after a schooling of five years to accept the challenge of studying Kannada as the first language. The minorities did not accept that. They continued their agitation. To counter that another agitation began—this time spearheaded by the so-called "intellectuals", the academicians, professors, art film directors, journalists, etc. The agitation started in Dharwar, the seat of the Karnataka university and centre of Kannada culture. Academicians in Bangalore, including former press secretary to the chief minister, L. S. Sheshagiri Rao, started hunger strikes demanding implementation of the report. K. V. Puttappa, poet laureate and Jnanapith award winner, came out with a very strong statement in favour of Kannada and even gave vent to his anger saying that those minorities who did not want to learn Kannada should get out of Karnataka.

H K RAJA SHEKHAR

Police watch helplessly as people demonstrate in the pro-Gokak agitation

All over the state there were *bandhs*, strikes, hunger strikes and arrests. In Bangalore, matinee idol Raj Kumar himself came out to join the agitators. Unfortunately, he added to the confusion instead of making a point. (Raj Kumar fans turned violent in Bangalore on a false rumour that he had been arrested following his speech at a public meeting. In fact, what had happened was that he had sought police protection to get out of a situation which was getting out of control since his fans were fighting among themselves to get a glimpse of their idol.) There was police firing in Chitradurga in which two persons were killed.

Gundu Rao could no longer remain silent. He announced to a tense state that his cabinet would take a decision on the matter following a round of discussions with legislators. On the evening of 19 April he announced the government's stand: a modified three language formula which, *inter alia*, said that Kannada would not be the sole first language although it would be a compulsory language. With the decision, the cabinet thought that the feelings of the Kannada agitators would be softened because Kannada had been made compulsory. In itself, it was an unique order because none of the kind does exist in any other state.

As matters stand, the minorities have been mollified with the proviso that minority languages will also be first languages. Pro-Sanskrit agitators have come out of the fray smiling because Sanskrit has been given second language status along with English and Hindi. ■

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WEST BENGAL

Congress(I) hoodlums torture Congress(I) candidate

Congress(I) youth leader takes his "revenge"

Calcutta: The one constituency in Calcutta upon which many eyes are set is Rashbehari, from where the finance minister of the West Bengal government, the outspoken economist Dr Ashok Mitra, is contesting. The Congress(I) was expected to make a special effort to humiliate the Left Front by defeating Dr Mitra even if it could not win the state. But Dr Mitra's chances improved vastly when an astonishing display of hoodlum politics laid his Congress(I) opponent low at the very beginning of the campaign.

The Rashbehari constituency has been a fiefdom of a "youth leader" of the Congress(I), Mr Lakshmi Kanta Bose, who in fact was the Indira Congress candidate for the seat in the 1977 elections. Mr Bose expected to be the candidate in this election too, but the Congress(I) high command, in an apparent effort to display a cleaner image in this election, refused to give him the nomination and instead chose a gentleman called Hoimi Basu, much to the surprise of everyone including Mr Basu himself. Mr Basu is a doctor by profession, and while he is a respected man and known Congress(I) sympathiser, he is hardly the stuff of which Congress(I) candidates are generally made. Just 24 hours after he had filed his nomination, Dr Hoimi Basu was the victim of unspeakable torture, which included stabs in the side and the back. And the assailants are widely believed to be supporters of the dejected Mr Lakshmi Kanta Bose. The Congress(I) in West Bengal is known for its civil wars and backstabbing, but this was carrying it clearly too far.

This is what recently happened to Dr Hoimi Basu, the high command nominated Congress(I) candidate. Dr Basu who filed his nomination papers to contest from the Rashbehari constituency did not know till the morning of 23 April 1982 (the day before the last day of filing nomination papers) that he was a Congress(I) candidate. At around 9.30 at night, on 23 April, Dr Basu received a telephone call from the WBPCC(I) president, Mr Anandagopal Mukherjee: "Dr Basu, why haven't you filed your nomination paper yet? All the other Congress(I) candidates have filed their papers and we are waiting for you." The phone call stunned Dr Basu. Said he: "I don't know Anandababu. I have heard of him as a leader of the Congress(I) but I don't know him personally."

The next morning, on 24 April, about 75 Congress(I) volunteers and activists visited Dr Basu at his 49 B, Hazra Road residence to escort him to the office where the nomination papers were being filed. Recalling the incident, Dr Basu said: "I did not have the money for filing the papers. All the boys who had turned up to accompany me donated the Rs 250 needed. Only then could I fill in my forms and file my papers."

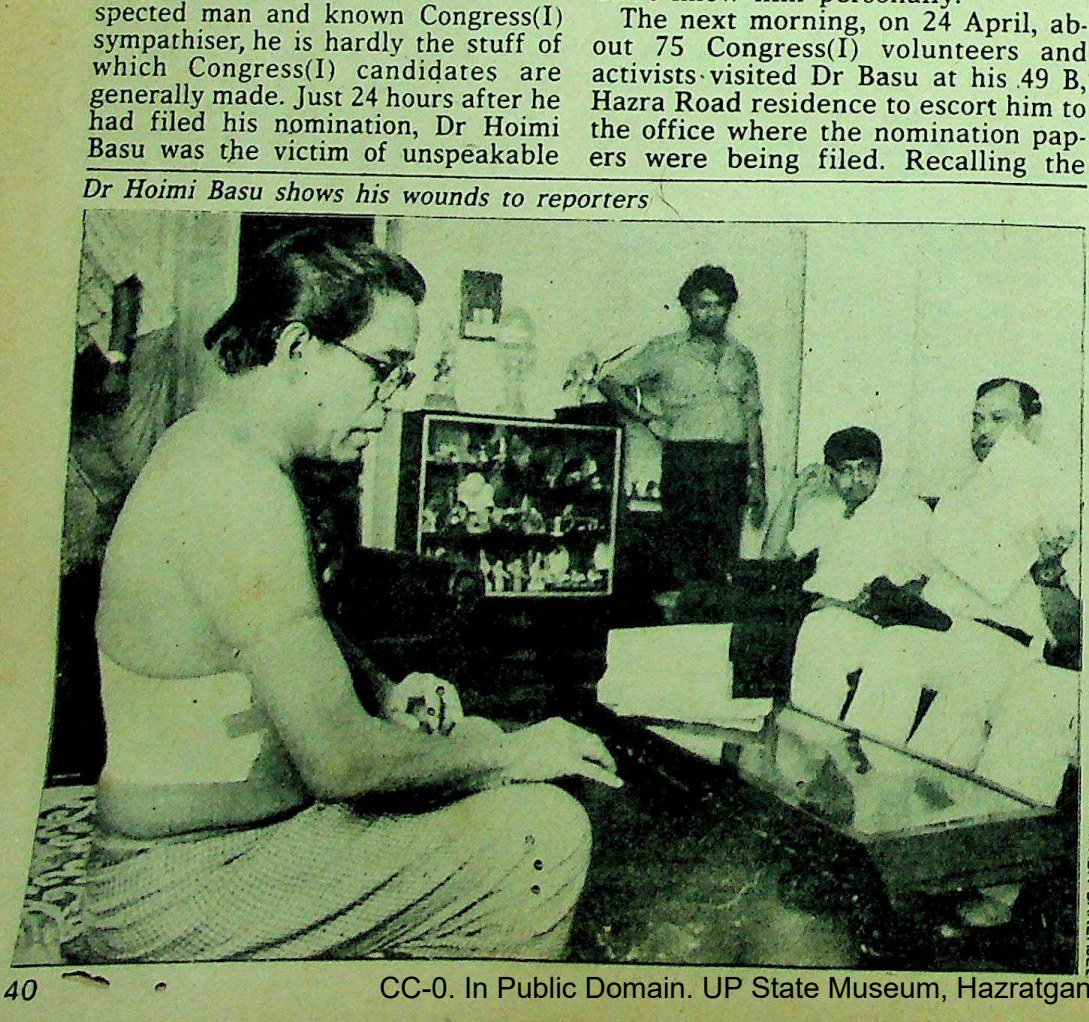
Then an incident occurred which struck Dr Basu as strange. Lakshmi Kanta Bose, a Congress(I) general secretary who has been contesting from the Rashbehari constituency was also there in the office. He spoke to Dr Basu: "Dada (Lakshmi Kanta Bose knows Dr Basu well), why have you stabbed me in the back? You know I have been contesting elections from the Rashbehari constituency for a long time. Why have you deprived me of my seat?" Dr Basu was taken aback. All he could say was that he had only been told to contest by the WBPCC(I) president on the night of 23 April. Hadn't Lakshmi Bose been informed of the decision, asked the doctor. Yes, he had been informed, said Mr Bose. Then Mr Bose himself volunteered the information that he was filing his nomination papers to contest as a candidate from the adjoining Alipore constituency—this despite the fact that he had not got the nomination even for Alipore.

Dr Basu requested Mr Bose to help him out since Rashbehari had been the latter's old constituency. Could he give him the walls for postering (building walls are usually "reserved" days in advance by political parties for use during elections). "No problem," said Mr Bose.

The next morning, on 25 April, Dr Basu went to meet the WBPCC(I) president to inform him that he had filed his papers. "Anandababu was very happy," remembers Dr Basu, "when I told him that I had filed my papers. He also told me that he would be sending me the formal letter allotting me the symbol, etc. soon." Everything seemed to be going fine for Dr Basu. Later that day, he had many visitors who assured him of all help. But it is the events of the night which were to unnerve Dr Basu. At 12.30, past midnight, the doctor received an anonymous telephone call: "Sagarmoy Ghosh (who stays nearby and is also, incidentally, the editor of *Desh*, a magazine from the Ananda Bazar group of publications) has had a heart attack. If you do not come fast, something might happen to him."

Dr Basu who does not shirk visiting patients at night, asked who was phon-

Dr Hoimi Basu shows his wounds to reporters



TARAPADA BANERJEE

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ing. "I am speaking from Sagarbabu's residence," said the caller. Dr Basu knows the Ghosh family well and has been their family physician for years. "Sagarda is more like an elder brother to me," said Dr Basu. "Naturally, I asked the caller where *Boudi* (Sagarbabu's wife) was. She was by his bedside, I was told. This was quite natural. But I told the caller that it was very late at night and I had sent my driver home. Could someone come and pick me up? The voice at the other end of the line said, 'That would take time. It might be impossible to save Sagarbabu then.' Sagarda has been suffering from heart trouble but I did not think that matters would take such a turn. So I decided to take out my car and see Sagarda."

Without even putting on his shoes Dr Basu drove out. At the crossing of Lansdowne Road and Southern Avenue, a dark-coloured car overtook the doctor's Ambassador and turned to block his passage. Before Dr Basu could realise what was happening, the car doors opened and two men stepped out. One of them opened Dr Basu's car door and hit him on the back of his head. More blows followed. The dazed doctor was pushed to the middle of the front seat. One of the men took the driver's seat and his colleague joined him, sandwiching Dr Basu. One of the two (Dr Basu does not remember which one) whipped out a piece of cloth and blindfolded the physician. They then started the car, warning Dr Basu that he should not shout; otherwise he would be shot. The doctor kept quiet because he felt a steel barrel at his temple.

"I was taken to a ground floor room," said Dr Basu, "because I did not have to negotiate any stairs." There he was forced to sit down at a small table, handed blank sheets of paper and ordered to sign them. Dr Basu refused. Immediately blows were showered on him. All through the beating, Dr Basu was abused in filthy language and often threatened: "So you want to contest the elections. We shall make sure that you do not take part in elections." The two men then lit cigarettes and any protest from the doctor was answered by applying the lighted ends of the cigarettes to Dr Basu's hands and face. Soon there were blisters all over his hands. Remembering those agonising moments, Dr Basu said, "I couldn't bear the pain. I tried resisting but what could I do? Both were very strong and I was scared they would burn me more." Then one of them suddenly lunged at and pierced Dr Basu with a dagger in the stomach and back. After that Dr Basu was only too willing to comply. "I wanted to sign or do anything the two men wanted me to do because I could not bear the torture anymore," said Dr Basu.

After Dr Basu had put his signature on a number of sheets of paper and written declarations, the text of which he does not remember, he was taken to his car. Somehow, Dr Basu drove back to his house. At the entrance to the lane of his house, he slumped unconscious on the steering wheel. His head hit the horn which began to blare. Dr Basu's brother-in-law, who lives next door at 49 C, Hazra Road, woke up, rushed down the stairs to the car and found it was Dr Basu. The doctor was then taken to the nearby Shishu Mangal hospital.

On 26 April Congress(I) leaders visited Dr Basu at his residence and expressed concern over the incident. Within a couple of days, the office of Mr Lakshmi Kanta Bose was attacked with bombs by a group of hoodlums although no one could say if the hoodlums were backed by the Congress(I). And on 28 April, Mr Pankaj Banerjee, the Congress(I) rebel candidate withdrew his nomination. If anything, the entire episode has only made the chances of the Congress(I) winning the Rashbehari seat bleaker.

Tirthankar Ghosh

BIHAR

Newsman threatened

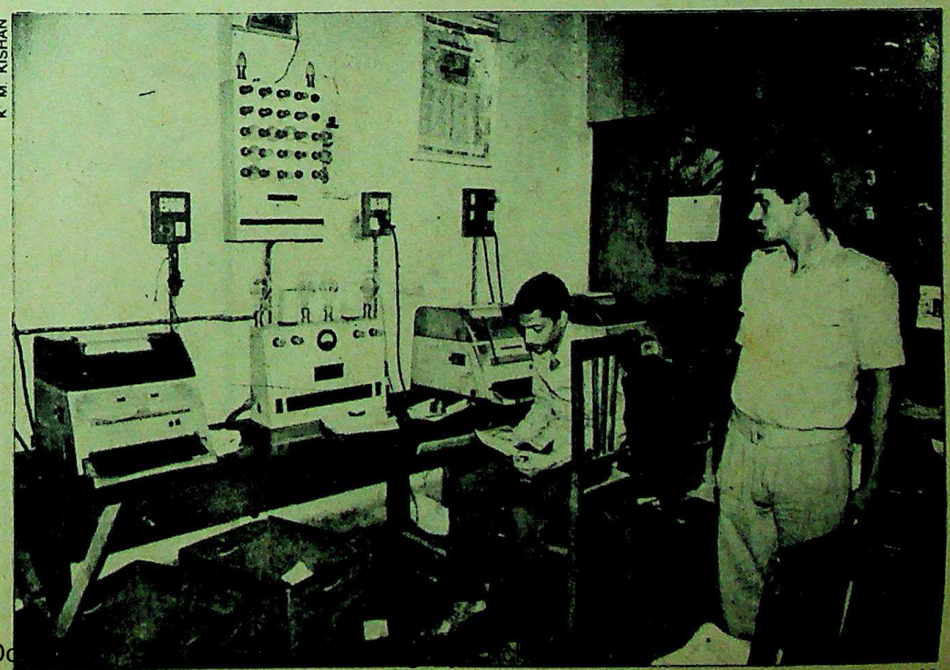
Patna: Dibyendu Banerjee, the UNI teleprinter operator at Patna, was creeding one of the last stories, when at round 11.30 pm on 24 April, three men entered the office. They did not ask any questions, ignored the operator and the peon, who were the only persons present in the office, and headed for the room of the UNI manager, Mr D. N. Jha. Finding the room empty, they returned to the operator and for the first time one of them spoke: "Where is D. N. Jha?" The operator did not find anything unusual about this. After all, he thought, these men must have come with some story which they wanted UNI to send out; often people drop in at the office at odd hours to meet Mr Jha. He simply told the men that there was no one present in office. This obviously did not satisfy them. "What is Jha's address?" one of them shouted at Banerjee. It was then that the operator realised that something was wrong. Why did these people want Mr Jha's address, he thought. Besides, why were they shouting?

It did not take him very long to find out. For, one of the men pulled out a dagger and rushed towards the operator. Fortunately for Banerjee he stopped, and this man, who described himself as belonging to the "*thakur* family of Bhagalapur, contented himself with leaving a message: if ever Mr Jha spoke against him to the chief minister, he would be killed. Then, the men who Banerjee later described as being "in a drunken state" picked up a portable typewriter which was lying on a table and left. As soon as they had gone Banerjee informed the Kotwali police station and filed an FIR.

Who were these three "dark complexioned and thin-bodied" men (as Banerjee has said in the FIR)? Why did they want to kill Mr Jha? And, which was this "*thakur* family of Bhagalpur" to which one of them was supposed to belong? "I don't know who would want to kill me and I don't have any enemies," Mr D. N. Jha told this correspondent. "As far as the *thakur* family of Bhagalpur is concerned the only such family which is also quite wellknown is that of Ram Kumar Thakur. I know his son Ashok Thakur."

Ashok Thakur was the stringer of the UNI and the *Indian Nation* in Bhagalpur before the Emergency. He was also a Youth Congress activist. He,

A policeman guards the UNI office a day after the incident



K. M. KISHAN

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however, did not continue for long with journalism and became more involved in politics. It is believed that he had even tried for the Congress(I) ticket for the Samastipur by-elections in 1978, but ultimately did not get it as the present Bihar CM, Dr Jagannath Mishra intervened against him. He has, since then, been trying to woo the Congress(I) leadership in Bihar.

Was there any reason for Ashok Thakur to attack Mr Jha? Though there is no evidence which points in this direction Mr Jha says, "I did not give him any lift in my life, even when he was with the UNI. But that is no reason why anyone should attack me. The only reason why anyone can associate his name with the incident is the fact that a few days back I was talking to a friend who knew Ashok Thakur. He told me that he was displeased with me."

But why had the intruders, whoever they were, said that Mr Jha would be killed if he spoke against the *thakur* family to the chief minister? A journalist, who knows both Mr Jha and Ashok Thakur, said that it was likely Mr Jha had criticised Mr Thakur in an informal chat with a friend. This may have been conveyed to Mr Thakur, who could have thought that Mr Jha, who is close to the chief minister, would repeat the same thing about him to the CM. This would obviously go against his interests. The police, however, have no evidence which points in this direction and are, in fact, totally in the dark about the whole incident.

Whoever the intruders are, it is clear that they actually did not want to kill Mr Jha; nor was the attack preplanned. Had it been so they would have known that Mr Jha normally does not stay in office at that hour. Besides, they would have also known Mr Jha's residential address. As one journalist said, "It was merely a threat, perhaps with the larger intent of terrorising journalists in Patna."

Saumitra Banerjee

MAHARASHTRA

Impending milk famine

Dhule : A small town about 300 kms from Bombay, Dhule is the largest milk collection centre in the state—whether from the government milk scheme or other agencies. In 1982-83, 453.20 lakh litres of milk valued at Rs 1,459.38 lakhs were collected. The average per day collection is 1.26 lakh litres. Dhule, like all the other milk collection and distribution centres in Maharashtra remains literally bonded to Bombay and a few other big cities and towns. That makes Bombay by far the most "important market for the milk procured in rural areas." Bombay has three big dairies at Aarey, Worli and Kurla and on an average 9,31,507 lakh litres of milk are procured daily. An estimated 9,86,301 lakh litres are distributed daily. The government distributes whole milk at the rate of Rs five a litre, standardised milk at Rs 3.30 a litre, cow milk at Rs 3.30 per litre and double toned milk at Rs 2.10 per litre. Milk to Bombay is subsidised by the Greater Bombay Milk Scheme. The farmers are paid for cow's milk at the rate of Rs 3.00 per litre in the lean season, Rs 2.90 in transitory season and Rs 2.50 when it is in abundance. For buffalo milk, the rates are Rs 3.40, Rs 3.10 and Rs 2.90 respectively.

Shetkari Sanghatana's Sharad Joshi (46) has demanded Rs 4.00 per litre for cow's milk and Rs 5.00 per litre for buffalo's milk. He is currently organising the Sanghatana for a milk agitation that can be started at 48 hours' notice. He told a rally of nearly one lakh farmers in Dhule in the end of April, "The milk agitation is not difficult. You can sit by the side of your *chula* and do it. It is an *utsav* (festival) for giving children milk. How many days can Bombay city last without milk?" Mr Joshi continued persuasively. In the three earlier agitations for fair prices for sugarcane, onions and beedi tobacco Mr Joshi refined the technique of *rasta roko*, to gain his ends. In the milk agitation the farmers will not be giving their milk to the collecting centres but will feed it to their children or turn it into milk products. The potential is exciting.

This is the lean season for milk in the state and as Mr Joshi says, "We will strike when the demand is the highest, (the marriage season) and supply the lowest quantity when the supply of milk powder is low and when the farmers in all the villages are ready." The Sanghatana leader is sure that in 15 days "Bombayites will be asking Mr Bhosale where the milk is. And Mr Bhosale will have to go to Delhi and ask the Prime Minister the same question." The date on which the agitation will be launched is a top secret. "We will give only 48 hours' notice because we don't want to become sitting ducks for the government and its police. In fact, the government has said that any policeman finding out the actual date of the agitation will be suitably rewarded." The news about the strike will go from village to village in 48 hours and the farmers will strike in a peaceful manner, said Mr Joshi.

Sharad Joshi lights a lamp to commemorate the martyrs of the Shetkari Sanghatana at Dhule

Mr S. V. Bhide, a dairy economist, who has his own dairy and produces 150 litres of milk daily, says the government's figures of the cost of production are a fraud. Members of the Ashok Bassack committee floated by former chief minister, Mr Antulay, last year to look into the cost of production and distribution of milk, took figures that were totally unrealistic. For instance, they reduced the price of buffaloes to Rs 2,500 when one costs around Rs 6,000 today. The price of grass was computed at Rs 0.35 a kg as against Re one. The private trade today charges Rs 6.40 per litre, and they and the middlemen are the only beneficiaries of the government's niggardly attitude towards farmers, says Mr Bhide.

The agitation is scheduled to be held anytime between April and July as this is the lean period for milk. From 10 May, in fact, the state government will be mostly distributing double-toned powder milk. To add to the short supply, there is already a 15 per cent shortage of milk collected from Miraj and other dairies because 50 per cent of the sheds have closed down due to economic hardships. Most of the sheds are not purchasing buffaloes because of the high cost. Prices of medicines have increased by 16 per cent and labour charges are Rs 15 a day. It is a collapsing industry, says Mr Bhide. In Maharashtra, high prices have played havoc with the livelihood of farmers in Sangli, Bhandara, Warnar, Gondia and elsewhere. Around 15 per cent of the rural families in Maharashtra depend on dairying. The middlemen in the private trade make a clear profit of Re one per litre and it is strange that the government's loss runs into crores of rupees.

In the last three months, Mr Joshi has addressed more than a hundred meetings in Marathwada and the entire milk belt. The response has been tremendous and support to his demands has cut across party lines. Several Congress(I) workers have joined him in the milk agitation. He has also been supported by farmers in Punjab where Balbir Singh Rajewal and Ranjeet Singh of the Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU), who were present at the Dhule meeting have already had

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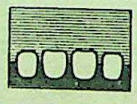

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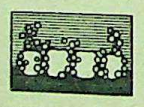

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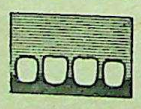

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an experience of stopping milk supply to cities in Punjab. As they told SUNDAY, "We stopped one crore litres of milk from reaching 10 milk plants between January and April last year. We succeeded in getting an increase of 50 paise to Re one a litre. Our demand is Rs 4.20 per litre for six per cent fat content." The BKU has extended its support to Mr Joshi and said they would stop the supply of milk to Punjab and nearby Delhi. This would have its own impact. Since this is also the season when there will be a greater demand for milkpowder, Delhi, Bombay and other cities will be greatly affected. Even for making milkpowder at least 35 per cent of milk is needed and where would that come from, asks Mr Bhide.

The Maharashtra government has so far refused to discuss the Sanghatana's demands. The government is stocking milkpowder and is depending on Gujarat to bale it out when the crunch comes. Joshi is scheduled to tour Gujarat in mid-May to appeal to the farmers not to send their milk to Bombay. He has already asked them "not to become tools and weapons in the hands of the government of Maharashtra to crush the farmers of Maharashtra."

Mr Joshi says the agitation may be for milk but "we will use this opportunity to fight for fair prices of all commodities from onions to jowar and cotton. When the prices of vegetables and fruits drop, the cities are overjoyed. They are like vultures sitting over the corpses because that is what the growers have been reduced to when prices of vegetables and fruits slump." Mr Joshi tells the farmers, "Try to understand where you are being throttled. Be wise. The prices of agricultural products are coming down and other things are going up. You can only release yourself from this unfair, unjust terms of trade if you overthrow the present economic system. Release yourself from the economic thinking of the city's economists."

Olga Tellis

"Telugu Desam can never be a threat to the Congress(I)"

Hyderabad: Bhavanam Venkata Reddy has been chief minister of Andhra Pradesh for only about two months, but he is already in trouble with dissidents and defectors joining the new regional party, *Telugu Desam.* That is one reason why he stoutly resisted the suggestion for a snap poll in the state. But when he talked to Syed Majeedul Hasan at his residence on 14 April he appeared quite confident and sure of himself. Excerpts:

Q: You must been very surprised at your selection as the chief minister of the state?

A: No, it did not surprise me. Although I was not aspiring for the office, I was prepared to take any responsibility.

Q: But you have never been among the top leaders of your party in the state?

A: I have been in politics for a long time. I entered the political field way back in 1946. Since then I have been with the Congress. I had gone to the jail thrice. Only thing is that I never conspired, or planned, or intrigued against any body to get a post. And yet, I have held several organisational posts.

Q: But why are you then shy of fighting Assembly elections?

A: When I had the first opportunity to go to the polls in 1955, I was below age by one year and that is why I could not contest. The next time I applied for a ticket in 1962, I was refused and in my place, my wife Jayaprada was given a ticket from a different constituency. From then onwards, she was a member of the Assembly till 1978.

Q: What do you think of the new party, Telugu Desam?

A: From the speeches of the leaders of that party right from its inception on 29 March, it is obvious that it is trying to rake up parochial and regional feelings. That will not do any good to the people of Andhra Pradesh. We have the bitter experiences of two separatist agitations and the people have suffered a lot from them. Should we suffer more?

Q: Does the party pose any threat to the Congress(I)?

A: *Telugu Desam* can never pose a challenge to the Congress(I) because our party has an ideological background, a history of sacrifices, and most important, deep roots among the masses. So deeply is the image of the Congress(I) impressed in the minds and the hearts of the people of Andhra Pradesh that it is not possible for anybody to take it out from the minds and the hearts of the Telugu people. Even when so many states had let down Mrs Gandhi, it was Andhra and Karnataka which stood by her.

Q: Mr N. T. Rama Rao accuses the Congress and the Congress(I) of promoting a culture of corruption in the state over the last three decades. Any comments?

A: About corruption, I can defenitely tell you that the Congress(I) is one party which has nothing to do with it. I can definitely say that our party cannot be accused of promoting corruption either in this state or in the country at large.

Q: How would you then explain the inclusion of one person in your cabinet against whom there are charges of unauthorised distribution of cement?

A: A commission of enquiry has been set up to probe the charges. We have also taken to task some of those officials who are corrupt so that it may have a deterrent effect upon the others.

Q: There is a feeling even among your cabinet colleagues that you are inaccessible. Are you?

A: No, that is not true. Many people want to meet me and tell me their problems. I organise my time in such a manner that neither their time is wasted nor mine. I go out of my residence and see hundreds of people gathered under the *shamiana* pitched on the lawns everyday.

Q: But some of your ministers say that even they cannot meet you without prior appointment. Isn't it rather unusual?

A: I regularly meet my cabinet colleagues. They can telephone me also to discuss important things. I am in the habit of talking to them and meeting them. Yes, I want to do all my work in an organised manner. That is all. That is the difference between me and the others.

Q: The Congress(I) in the state appears to be cracking up. Quite a few of your MLAs have joined the Telugu Desam. *Isn't it a rather disturbing trend for your party?*

A: I do not think that is going to effect the party very much.

Q: But it has. Or else, how would you explain the defeat of one of your party candidates in the Rajya Sabha polls? Apparently, many of your partymen voted for the opposition candidate who won.

A: I think our candidate lost because of cross-voting based upon considerations of money, caste, and other factors.

Q: And what are you going to do about those who had voted against the party nominee?

A: They are our partymen whom we can definitely advise to do better in a desired manner in future.

Q: What about your predecessor, T. Anjaiah? He still seems an angry man. Isn't his Panchayat Raj Forum a parallel political body?

A; I do not think so. In my view, Anjaiah wants the forum to be a non-political body and its object is to see that the *panchayats* function effectively and for the benefit of the people. We like to strengthen the *panchayats.*

CM Reddy: 'Who's afraid of NTR?'

M. A. RAHIM

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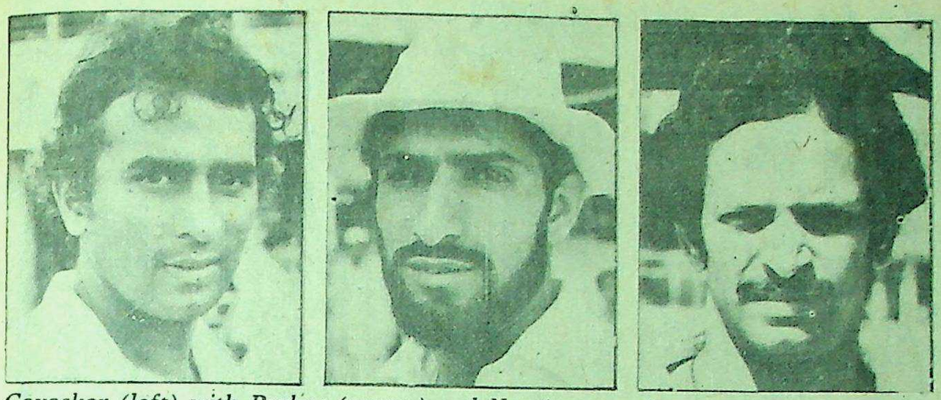
CRICKET TOUR

Choosing the favourites



Gavaskar (left) with Parkar (centre) and Nayak: two who were left out

New Delhi: The Indian cricket tour to England this summer will provide the backdrop to different kinds of fireworks within the Cricket Control Board of India (CCBI). The presiding officials of the board will be looking out for googlies from Mr I. S. Bindra, president of the Punjab Cricket Association. It is rumoured that several units of the board tacitly support Mr Bindra's belief that the time has come to carry out a coup against board president S. K. Wankhede and the selection committee headed by former cricketer Polly Umrigar.

Sunil Gavaskar's boys will be fighting for more than merely the laurels on the cricket field when they battle it out with Bob Willis and Ian Botham. This summer Sunil Gavaskar's suzerainty and his prerogative to call the shots in Indian cricket are at stake, thanks to the controversy regarding Bombay allrounder Suru Nayak, the omission of a second wicketkeeper from the touring team and the lurking shadows of Mohinder Amarnath, Roger Binny and Chetan Chauhan. On Gavaskar's go-ahead, the selectors have taken a number of calculated risks and the cricket board's ruling axis (the Bombay and the South Indian associations) finds itself confronted by usurpers. The angry officials at Delhi, Railways and Punjab are also counting on support from the Services Sports Control Board and the Saurashtra and West Bengal associations. If Gavaskar's 16 play badly in summer when India plays England, then major changes in the Cricket Control Board cannot be ruled out. Gavaskar's crown could also be in danger if India does not come out on top in the series.

Everybody knows that the selectors and the Indian skipper had made up their minds on the touring party before the last Test match was to be played against Keith Fletcher's team at Kanpur between 30 January to 4 February. This was two months prior to the formal meeting of the selection committee on 1 April when the touring party was to be announced. The eleven playing at Kanpur and Sandeep Patil were certainties for the tour. That left four places to be filled. According to rumours it was understood (quite correctly) that Suru Nayak would be in the team.

At Kanpur, Gavaskar said in an interview to a sports magazine that "we need one more opener, an extra seamer and second wicketkeeper. These are musts." When journalists told him, during the Kanpur Test, that they had heard that a second wicketkeeper would not be taken to England, Gavaskar dismissed it as a rumour. But the rumour turned out to be true: Kirmani will have three amateur understudies in Yashpal Sharma, Ghulam Parkar and Dilip Vengsarkar in case he falls ill on the morning of a Test match and there is not enough time to fly out reserve wicketkeeper Zulfiqar Parkar from Bombay. Gavaskar's critics go so far as to say that this is part of the skipper's strategy to bring his Bombay teammate into the Indian side, sidestepping rivals, Bharat Reddy and Ved Raj.

There is much in the doings of our cricket selectors that defies the layman's comprehension, adding to suspicions of intrigue and politicking. For instance, there was no reason why, having decided to sack Chetan Chauhan, the selectors did not try out Ghulam Parkar in the recent home series, before sending him off to England as the third opener. Nor is it understandable why the selectors persevered with Srikanth through four Tests before they concluded that he did not have the class to open a Test innings. As far as Chetan Chauhan's preremptory dismissal is concerned, Delhi cricket circles believe that he fell a victim to cricket politics at the DDCA. He was not supported by the selector from the North Zone, Mr Vijay Mehra, who belongs to the rival group at Delhi. Similarly, Shivlal Yadav has been in and out of the Indian side, and in and out of Gavaskar's good books. In the recent past, Gavaskar had preferred Gopal Sharma to Shivlal Yadav but Sharma has had two consecutive lean seasons and seemed unreliable for a tour. The one off-spinner who dominated the last Ranji Trophy was former Indian skipper S. Venkatraghavan. The anti-Gavaskar lobby believes that Gavaskar brought in Shivlal Yadav as the younger man to checkmate Venkatraghavan's comeback bid. Gavaskar has not given Yadav long bowling spells in the past and unless he has changed his opinion about off-spinners who flight the ball, Yadav may be relegated to the secondary matches during the English tour.

While there is general appreciation on the choice of Bihar's hardworking medium-pacer Randhir Singh, the selection of Suru Nayak seems least justified. The justification for selecting Nayak revolves around the fact that he would be the only left-handed batsman in the side. But is that enough to justify his selection over two more talented all-rounders, Mohinder Amarnath and Roger Binny? As a batsman, Nayak does not have much to hold

Canadians will see live TV coverage of Everest ascent

Kathmandu: A Canadian mountaineering expedition will try to conquer Mount Everest in September this year and their step-by-step ascent will be shown daily to breakfast TV viewers in Canada. Since this is the first Canadian expedition to Everest, the Canadian TV networks are giving it a lot of publicity. Each member of the expedition will carry, apart from their climbing gear, a super lightweight video camera to record the gruelling climb. The video tapes will be taken down every day by Sherpa runners and then ferried by helicopter to the Everest Sheraton hotel, the expedition's headquarters in Kathmandu. The tapes will then be beamed from a special TV studio at the hotel to the Indian Ocean Intelsat satellite and relayed to Canada via Britain for the daily Canadian shows. A 3.7 metre dish aerial has been placed on the roof of the hotel for sending the daily recordings to the Intelsat satellite.

The whole expedition is being sponsored by Air Canada, the country's national airline, which will fly all the equipment for the expedition including those for the special television studio in the hotel. Simultaneous live television transmissions, the first of its kind, are being discussed with the BBC, French television, Japan's Nippon television and the three leading networks of the USA.

A Special Correspondent

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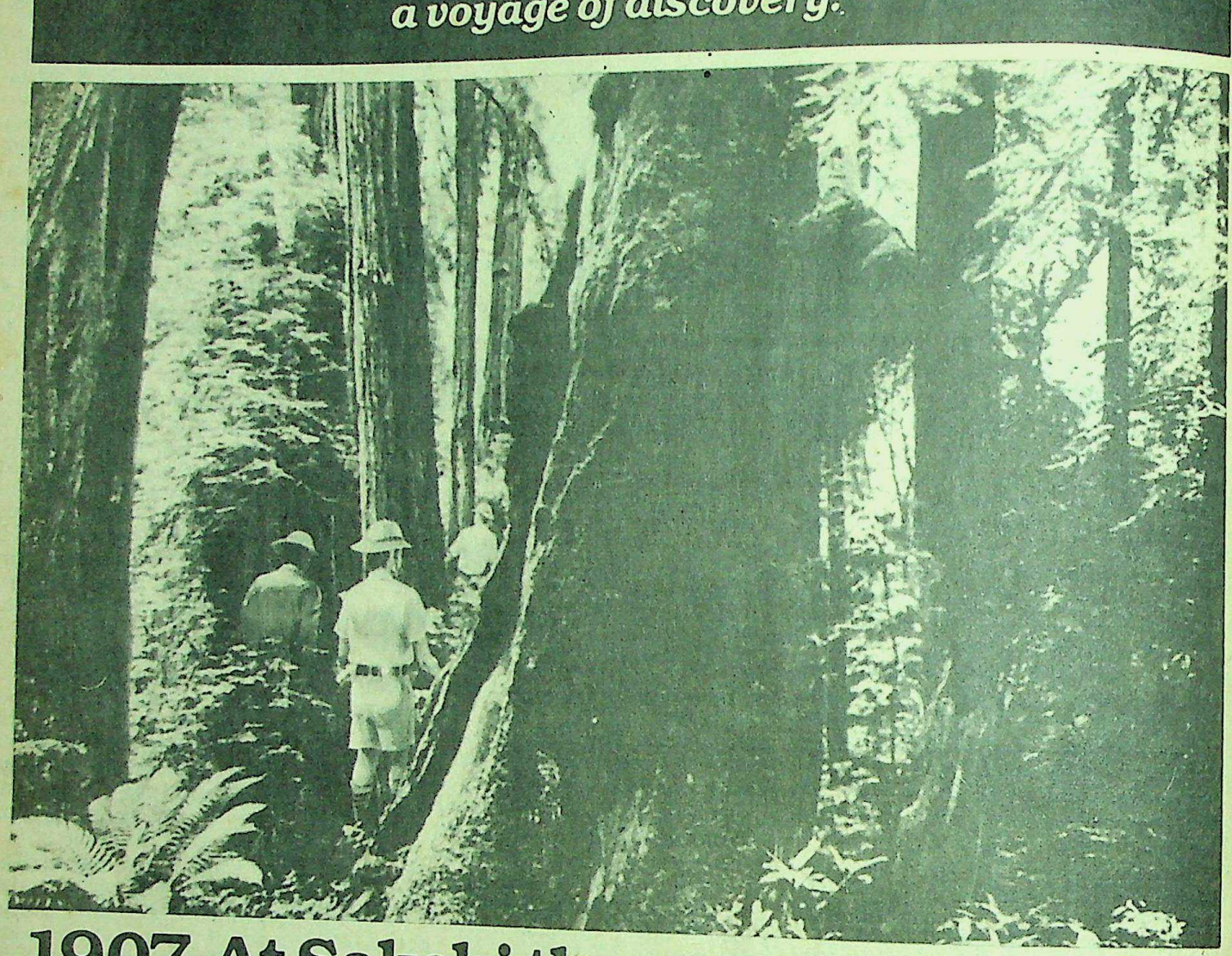
1903. Braving jungles, intense heat and untold hardship, three intrepid pioneers set out on a voyage of discovery.



1907. At Sakchi the search ends. And India's industrial renaissance begins.

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It was he who had sown the seeds; selected the technical experts, funded the project and provided inspiration and direction to his sons and associates. Now, four years after his death, the search had ended. But the early years had been rough, with disappointments and failures at every step. Still they had pressed on undaunted–Dorabji Tata, Weld and Saklatvala, the first of the intrepid pioneers, spurred on by the spirit of adventure. And in time came reward.

A chimney came up, a township started to grow. And men came from the cities, the towns, the villages—the first of the Tata Steel men. Soon the first ingot was rolled.

That was how Tata Steel was born—and, Jamshedpur. By the endeavour of a fraternity of people aspiring, struggling and achieving. Today, Tata Steel is one of the country's largest and most progressive industrial enterprises—and Jamshedpur a city of opportunity. This is as Jamsetji Tata would have wanted it. For he firmly believed that the wealth which industry generates should benefit the people, enrich the nation.

75 TATA STEEL

1907-1982

TATA STEEL

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What benefits the people, benefits the nation.

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against Mohinder Amarnath's guts and technique. As a bowler, he has still to prove that he can produce the unplayable ball from time to time, as Binny often does. Unless he enjoys a very special spell of luck in England, Suru Nayak will be one more passenger in the party. His selection has also become the centre of the controversy within the Cricket Control Board, for Bombay has six players in the touring side, whereas Ranji Trophy winners Delhi has only one (Madan Lal, who was kept out of the Test side for four years) and runners-up Karnataka has only two, Vishwanath and Kirmani.

The selection of the side reflects the skipper's preference Sunil Gavaskar is merely following the footsteps of Bishen Bedi. Under Bedi the Indian eleven often had five players from Delhi alone. Obviously, things will never change.

Anil Saari

CHOLERA RESEARCH

Medical panel's partisan stand

Calcutta: The partisan attitude recently displayed by the Penal and Ethical Cases Committee of the West Bengal Medical Council raises serious questions about how Calcutta's slum dwellers can be protected when they are used as subjects for medical research. On 20 April after a ten-month delay, the nine-member panel conducted a preliminary hearing of the complaint by Dr S. Bhattacharya (secretary, Scientists' Association) against the director and deputy director of the National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases for violating medical ethics in their 1975-76 cholera vaccine experiment on two lakh slum dwellers (SUNDAY, 7 March). In an interview to this correspondent after the 45-minute hearing at the council's Lyons Range premises, the complainant said he had been heckled by a hostile panel out to defend the accused. The accused doctors, incidentally, were not called for the hearing.

The council is yet to arrive at a decision but the gist of its observations at the hearing, as described by the complainant, gives an idea of its general stand that conducting an experiment on human subjects without informed consent is *not unethical.* One doctor on the panel equated the mass vaccine *experiment* with mass vaccination *drives* and seemed to see no difference between the two. Then came the corollary that it was not feasible to apply the norms of the Helsinki Declaration in this country. The doctor who said this also declared that the Drug Controller's permission was not needed for conducting human trials. Finally, non-medical persons (teachers at the Beliaghata schools whose students were given the experimental vaccine) should not be cited as witnesses in a "purely medical matter"?

Each of the above points gives rise to corresponding questions. First, how does the council's ethical committee openly contradict the ethical guidelines relating to informed consent issued by the Indian Council of Medical Research? Second, what authority does the council have to say that the Helsinki norms are not feasible and was it aware that India was a signatory to the declaration? Third, how can a panel with no legal experts pronounce on the legality of an experiment? Fourth, if non-medical persons who are at the receiving end of medical experiments should not give evidence on their own behalf, wasn't the council quite literally reducing them to the level of mute guinea pigs?

The panel's responses are, perhaps, partly explained by the fact that this is the first time that the council is handling a complaint against biomedical experiments by a research institute. The usual complaints to the council relate to unethical acts by individual private practitioners some of whom have been struck off the register. The panel's remarks suggest that while the council takes a serious view of malpractices on private patients, when these happen on a mass public scale they are not reprehensible.

Vimal Balasubrahmanyan

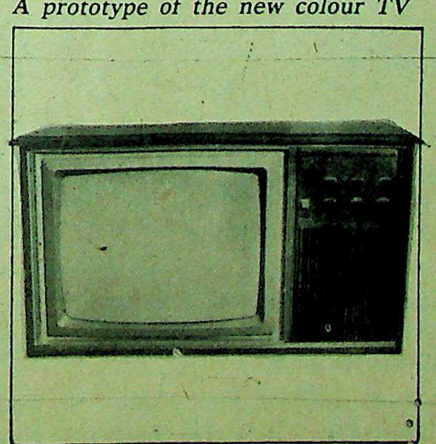
Colour TV coming soon

Calcutta: Colour TV sets costing around Rs 11,000 may be on the market by the end of the year. Telerama, a Calcutta based company, have manufactured an Indian model and the best thing about it is that 97 per cent of the components are indigenously produced. Nor does this mar the quality of the colour on the screen, which is as good as any foreign colour TV set's.

The company, a small scale joint sector unit, claims that the set is the result of a one-and-a-half year effort by a three man team of Indian engineers—all in their early thirties. While colour TV sets have been sold in India under Indian brand names before, at prices ranging from Rs 19,000 to Rs 21,000, they were largely of the knockdown and semi-knockdown variety where most parts were imported and simply assembled in the country. Their great disadvantage lay in that any repairs involving replacement of parts proved both difficult and expensive. The makers of the new colour TV set claim that their model is not only tropicalised to suit Indian weather conditions, but they have also ensured that the foreign components are available from more than one international source to avoid problems arising from changes in the government's import policy.

The Telerama set's imported parts include integrated circuits for the vertical section, the chroma section and the delay lines. The picture tube, as in all Indian TV sets, is procured through the Electronic Trade and Technology Dev. Corp , the canalising agency for the item. Altogether 15 of the 510 odd components in the TV are imported. According to a company spokesman the sets have also been tested against actual colour transmission relayed by Delhi Doordarshan.

A prototype of the new colour TV



Mr A. N. Chaudhuri, Telerama's director in charge, told SUNDAY that the production target for their colour TV sets was 1,100 sets in 1982-'83 and 2,400-4,200 sets in '83-'84, depending on when colour transmission starts in the Calcutta/Asansol area. Initially colour TVs will, it seems, have only a marginal effect on the black and white TV market—where prices range from Rs 3,000 to Rs 5,000. The projectious are that the first two years will account for the maximum number of colour TV sales, and their major sales are likely to be in Bombay, Delhi and the surrounding regions. They expect that many of their buyers will be owners of VCRs who have not bought colour TV sets because of the difficulties in getting replacements.

A demonstration of the production prototype of the colour TV set was held in Calcutta recently, where two sets, one Japanese and other Telerama, were demonstrated simultaneously. The colour reproduction in the two sets was equally good.

Ranjana Sen Gupta

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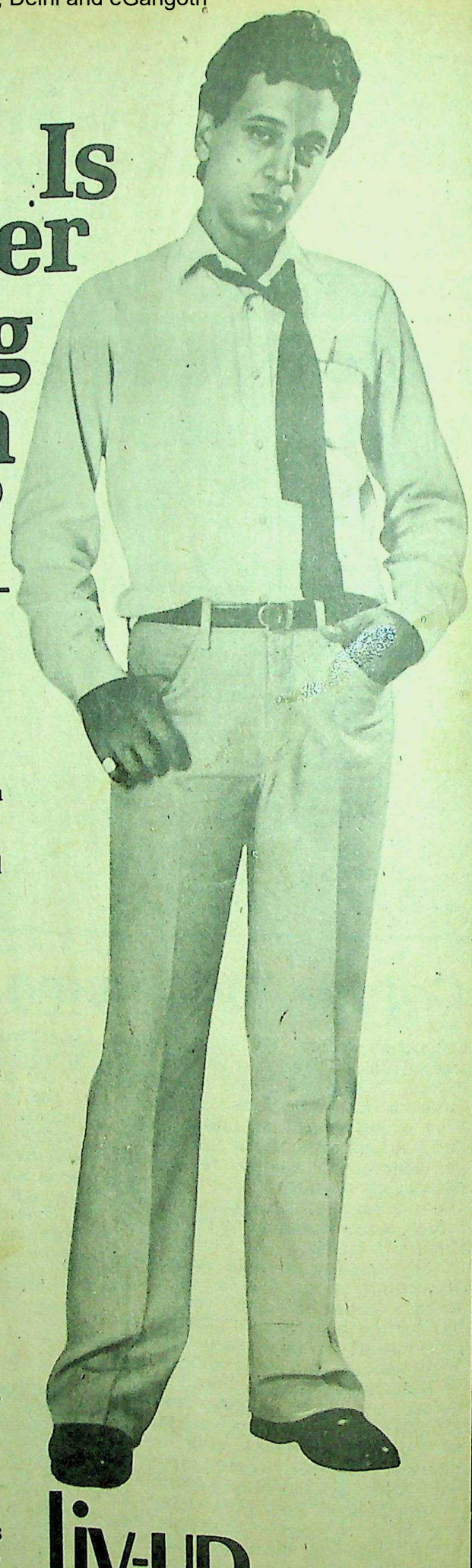
Is your liver keeping pace with you?



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- *Do you notice a loss of appetite?*
- *Do you fall ill often?*

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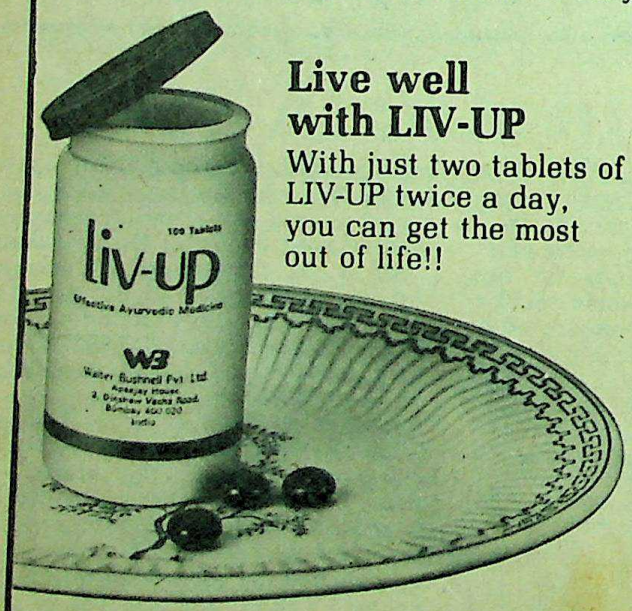

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Probe ordered into school books purchase

Bhopal: Chief Minister Arjun Singh has announced an enquiry by the Lokayukt into what has come to be known as the "Book purchase scandal" in Madhya Pradesh, involving a senior IAS officer.

Replying to a two-hour special debate on the scandal, the chief minister told the state Assembly on 13 April that all charges regarding misconduct and corruption in the purchase of books for school libraries by the education department would be referred to the Lokayukt for an enquiry. Incidentally, this will be the first case to be officially entrusted to the newly-appointed Lokayukt.

The chief minister said that the chief secretary would also simultaneously enquire into how "some books were selected for school libraries which should not have been selected." He denied the opposition allegation that he was trying to shield the "guilty" IAS officer, Mr Ashok Vajpeyi, because of their personal friendship. Members from both sides were unanimous in launching a scathing attack on Mr Vajpeyi, the secretary of education, culture and publicity departments.

Both the ruling Congress(I) and opposition members alleged "favouriticism, irregularities and corruption" in the purchase of books worth Rs 15 lakhs by the education department this year. Many members gave instances and tabled documentary evidence which proved that publishers had supplied old editions of a number of books after changing their jackets and title pages and claimed that these were the latest editions. The government was, members alleged, cheated and charged double the original price.

Mr Vithalbhai Patel tabled instances when not a single word was changed in the books—even the errata slip was the same—which were passed off as later and costlier editions. He said that even now old editions of those books were available in the market at the old rates.

Almost all the dozen members who spoke on the subject demanded that Mr Vajpeyi should be immediately suspended and a house committee should enquire into the alleged bunglings and "misuse of public money." Mr Radharaman Bhargava (BJP), said that one-fourth of the total purchases were made from a Delhi-based and a Hapud-based publishing firm and both the proprietors were closely related to the education secretary. He alleged that two members of the selection committee "selected" their own books and 500 copies of each were purchased. While on the one hand, authors and poets belonging to the education secretary's group—Mr Vajpeyi is a poet himself—were favoured, the selection committee headed by Mr Vajpeyi summarily relected 3,873 titles in one night without even going through them, MLAs alleged.

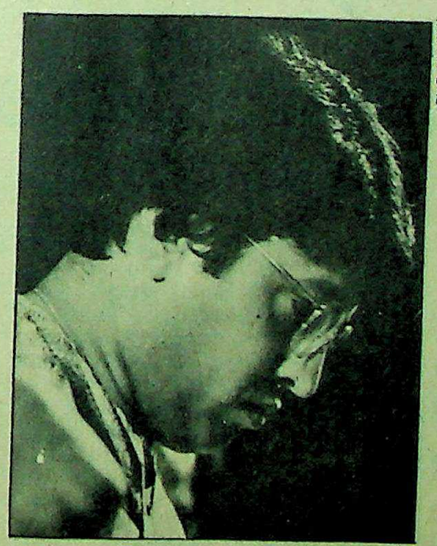
Mr Chitrakant Jaiswal (Congress-I) regretted that while the books were purchased in the name of "acquainting school children with the works of authors and poets of Madhya Pradesh," the government purchased books of only 90 poets and writers belonging to MP. As against this, works of 190 poets and writers from outside were purchased. Many members complained that some of the books were "not fit for school children." Members read out extracts from at least one dozen books and claimed that these were obscene. When the speaker expunged one of the "obscene" extracts read out by a CPI member, one legislator quipped: "You can expunge these from the Assembly records, but what about the school libraries where children would read these?"

A Special Correspondent

Sarod maestro protests against discrimination

Calcutta: "When I came to know that the artistes performing at the inaugural concert of the festival (of India in Britain) were paid a sum far exceeding the usual amount given by any cultural organisation in India, I was quite amazed. Whereas it gives me great pleasure and pride that the British government has honoured Indian musicians (by paying them for performing at the festival), it is also upsetting to know that the Indian government, despite adequate funds to promote culture, did not offer to pay even the regular fees which I am paid by Indian sponsors... In view of this discrimination I would like to state that I no longer wish to participate in the India Festival," wrote wellknown, handsome sarod player Ustad Amjad Ali Khan in a letter to the secretary of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) on 25 March 1982. The letter caused a furore and the young sarod player became the champion of the Indian artistes and musicians. He had every reason to protest: while a couple of internationally reputed Indian musicians were being paid enormous amounts for the inaugural concert the others who had been invited were being paid little for the performance.

Till the date of going to press, Ustad Amjad Ali has not received a letter from the ICCR authorities although he was told over the telephone that he would be paid for his performance in Britain. Being assured of the remuneration, Ustadji (as he is referred to by classical music lovers in India) has decided to go, after all, to play in Britain. He made sure that the others would be getting the amounts they asked for and only then would he go.



TAPAN DAS

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan: a protest

In spite of such discrimination, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan continues to propagate Indian classical music among the masses. He has established the Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan Memorial Society in 1977 which organises concerts by reputed artistes and dancers. The society is now busy setting up the Music Hall of India (a research institute of music based in Delhi, whose foundation stone was laid on 29 January 1982) which will "preserve, promote and propagate the great classical music traditions of India." Scholars at the institute will do research on the origin of the *ragas*. Scientists and medical specialists will study the effect of certain *ragas* on the human mind and body.

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan has himself started collecting the funds required for setting up the research institute by performing at different places in India for money. Even in those concerts, the tickets are moderately priced for Ustadji has two considerations in mind: popularising music and raising the prestige of the artistes in India who he considers are the "weakest sections of the society." Classical artistes must be paid for their performances because *"bhukey paet par kaisey heritage rakh preserve kar saktey hain* (how can one preserve one's heritage on an empty stomach)?"

Tirthankar Ghosh

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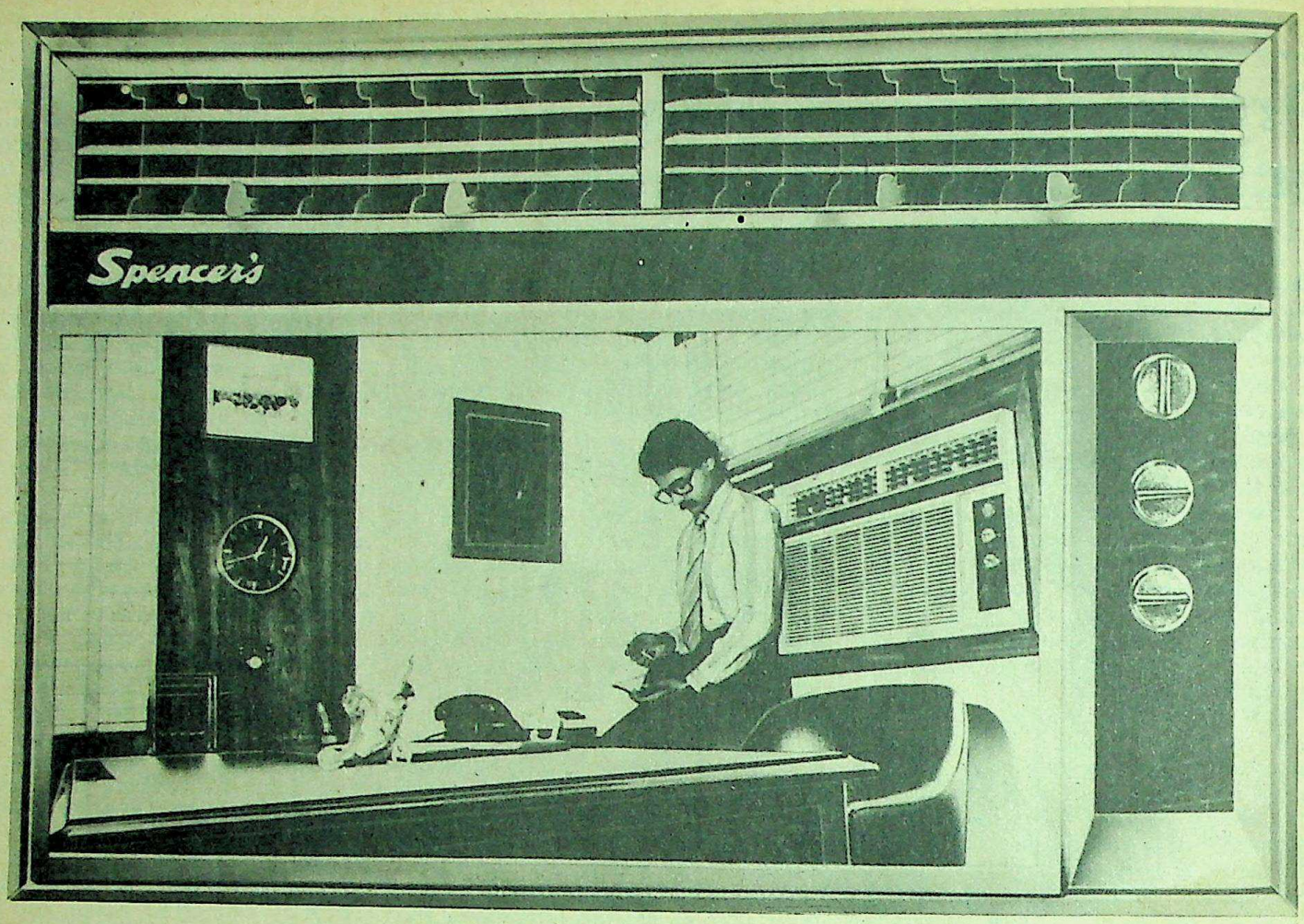

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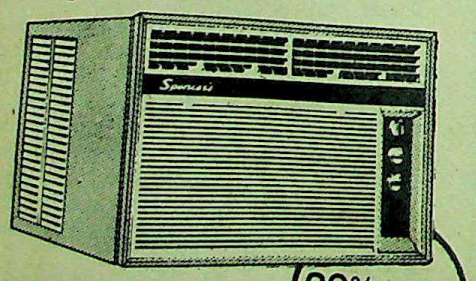

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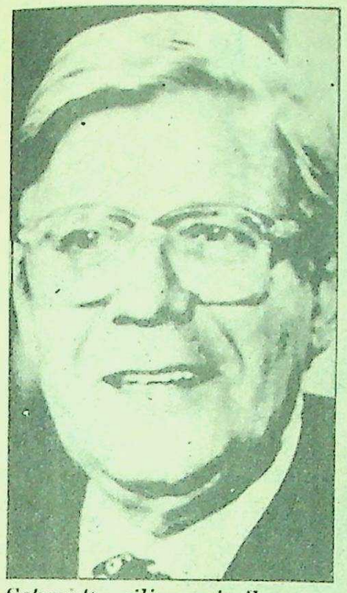
THE WORLD

Schmidt will keep missiles in Germany



Schmidt: piling missiles

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany has asked his Social Democratic Party to ignore the pleas for a moratorium on the deployment of new nuclear missiles in Europe. Left wingers of his party have repeatedly questioned the NATO decision on deployment of nuclear missiles. Mr Schmidt told a party conference recently: "Whoever wants to replace agreed mutual disarmament by unilateral reductions has to be told that history shows that one-sided weakness does not prevent aggression by a superior power." He also made it clear that there is no question of preventing the stationing in Europe of Pershing 2 and Cruise missiles unless the Soviet Union withdraws its "incredible armada of SS-20 rockets."

Major overhaul in KGB

In a major overhaul of the top ranks of the KGB, Soviet authorities have appointed two senior deputies to the KGB chief, General Yuri Andropov. *Pravda* recently listed General Georgy Isinev, 74, as the new first deputy chairman. The Red Army newspaper had on 4 April listed General Viktor Chebrikov as another deputy chairman. Kremlin watchers said they knew of no precedent for naming two people to the post and that "we are just not sure what they (the Soviets) are up to." General Andropov has held the KGB leadership since 1967 and is one of 13 members of the Soviet politburo.

US embargo on Cuba tightened

The US government has announced severe currency restrictions against Cuba." This surprising move is aimed at tightening the current trade embargo. The new rules issued by the treasury department forbid currency and credit transactions by United States citizens. These restrictions were all the more unexpected because a Cuban official had recently stated that his government was preparing for "wide ranging negotiations and agreements on mutual restraint," with the United States, especially with relation to Nicaragua.

Cypriot President turns left

President Kyprianou of Cyprus, in a political volte face, has formed an unexpected alliance with the pro-Soviet Communist Party, AKEL. Mr Kyprianou, who leads a small centre-right party had to purge his cabinet as the price for communist electoral support. The future of the British bases on the strategically important island is in peril as a result of this alignment. The AKEL is also expected to ask the President to renew his claim for more than £200 million from the British government as compensation.

Will Begin call for early elections?

Aaron Abuhatzeira, minister of labour and welfare in the Menachem Begin cabinet who was convicted of stealing government money, fraud and breach of public trust, said that he would resign. This announcement makes things easier for Mr Begin who was rather reluctant to dismiss Mr Abuhatzeira as he belonged to the Tami party on which the cabinet depended for survival. Mr Abuhatzeira, however, said he was not resigning from the Knesset (Parliament) from which he may be expelled by a majority vote only if he is sentenced to one year's imprisonment. The Tami party meanwhile set at rest all speculations by announcing that it would continue to support the government but would not refrain from early elections if Mr Begin's Likud coalition looses its majority. Observers feel that Mr Begin might call for early elections around October. Opinion polls show that his popularity is increasing.

Briefly

Carlos strikes again

The international terrorist Carlos is believed to have been behind the recent murder of two employees of the French embassy in Beirut. Guy Cavillo and his wife Caroline were shot in their flat but the motive of the killing is unknown.

Army help for World Cup

To curb mounting terrorism, launched by the terrorist group ETA, Spain has decided to seek the help of the army. This should make life safer during the coming World Cup soccer matches. Recently four explosions rocked the Madrid communication centre causing damage of more than £5 million. Earlier, ETA terrorists had attacked military barracks.

Training for Ugandan army

Less than a week after Amnesty International condemned the Ugandan army for indiscriminate killing of civilians, a 36-man Commonwealth military force has started a rigorous training programme for the army. The Commonwealth force consists mainly of officers from the British, Canadian and Australian armies.

Harara for Salisbury

Mugabe: changing names

The Zimbabwe Prime Minister, Mr Robert Mugabe, recently announced new Africanised names for 32 cities and towns in the country. Salisbury will henceforth be known as Harara. Said Mr Mugabe: "Names that are reminders of the colonial past are being changed to new names befitting the culture of the people..."

Lagos costliest city

According to a survey conducted by the *Business International* of New York, the capital of Nigeria, Lagos, is the costliest city in the world. Tokyo comes second and Oslo third. London, which was second only to Tokyo just a few years ago, has fallen back to the 20th place. The cities were ranked in comparison to the cost of living in New York.

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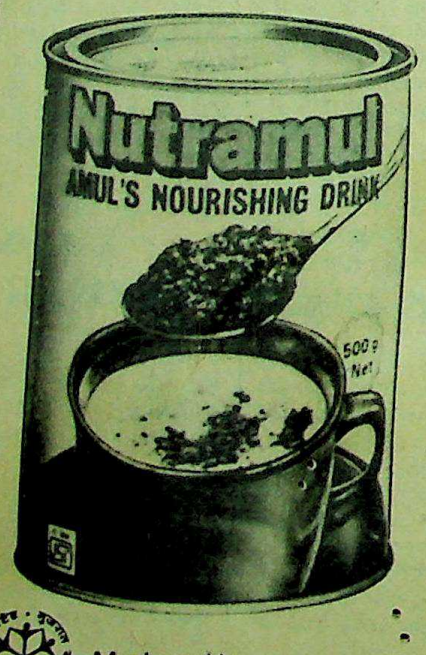

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GOOD NEWS

Sanctuary for Nilgiri mountain goat

The Tamil Nadu government has sanctioned Rs 6.42 lakhs for establishing a sanctuary for the Nilgiri tahr, a unique mountain goat now threatened with extinction. The sanctuary will be in a 78.46 sq km area in Coonoor taluk of Nilgiri district. The Nilgiri tahr, which inhabits the boulder strewn terrain of the Nilgiris, has been classified as an endangered animal under the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and is included in the Red Book of the International Union for Conservaion of Nature (IUCN). According to the chief conservator of forests, Tamil Nadu, forest squads will henceforth patrol the area to prevent poaching and research on the behaviour of the mountain goat will be initiated.

Search for rare herbs

The Akhil Bharatiya Vanoshadhi Abhyas Mandal (All India Forest Medicines Study Board), led by their 85-year-old president Vaidya Raj Bapal, recently conducted a study-cum-research camp in the Abujhmarh forests in Bastar, Madhya Pradesh. The area is a storehouse of rare ayurvedic herbs and medicines. The team, consisting of leading botanists and *vaidyas*, identified 200 ayurvedic herbs, 20 of them, rare species.

Gall stone removal without surgery

For the first time in the country, a stone has been removed from the bile duct without surgery. This was achieved by Dr J. B. Dilawari of the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh. The method followed was the insertion of an endoscope through the mouth into the stomach of the patient. This new endoscopic procedure takes only 20 minutes and requires no anaesthesia. The patient can even start eating merely six hours after the removal of the stone and can leave the hospital in two days.

New mini mobike

Karnataka Scooters, a joint sector venture, recently released the first batch of mini motorcycles manufactured in collaboration with BSA Ltd., UK. Named BSA Falcon GT 50, it is a "new generation" vehicle with a high performance engine and four gears. After the designs, drawing and specifications were received from the collaborating company, it took Karnataka Scooters only nine months to manufacture the first batch of motorcycles. The company's production target is 5000 vehicles in 1982, 10,000 in 1983 and 24,000 in 1984.

Award for Hindi writer

Renowned Hindi writer Mahadevi Verma has been awarded a cash prize of Rs one lakh for her invaluable contribution to Hindi literature. The award has been presented by the Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan.

School for slum kids

The Bustee Welfare Centre, (BWC) of Calcutta, a voluntary social welfare organisation, has decided to construct a school for slum children and a vocational training centre. The Calcutta Corporation has promised all help.

MP bill for corneal grafting

As part of its efforts to help the blind, the Madhya Pradesh government recently passed the corneal grafting bill authorising the extraction of the cornea from unclaimed bodies, for purposes of surgical grafting. After the bill was passed, the chief minister, Arjun Singh, the deputy chief minister, Sheo Bhanu Solanki, the opposition leader, Sunderlal Patwa and some other ministers were inspired enough to announce the donation of their eyes.

Compiling knowledge

When it comes to tenacity, determination and perseverance there will be few who can match 70-year-old Binod Kanungo. For almost three decades now, he has been working on a 75 volume Oriya encyclopaedia project, covering 15,000 subjects. Literally trudging through mountains of reference material, he has singlehandedly published 30 volumes at a cost of Rs 10 lakhs with no assistance whatsoever from the government. His encyclopaedia has 3000 registered subscribers who form the main source of finance for the project. The Oriya encyclopaedia titled *Jnanmandal* is modelled on the lines of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Mr Kanungo has classified and indexed reference files numbering 20,000 on every conceivable topic of human activity and endeavour. Says Mr Kanungo, "My problem is to make simple and concise notes out of the huge material." His eldest daughter Deepti (35) and three sons—Pabak (31), Deepak (26) and Alok (25)—are helping him in filing and indexing the material mostly gleaned from newspapers. Mr Kanungo feels that he has enough material to finish the remaining 45 volumes. Undaunted by this gargantuan task he has undertaken, Mr Kanungo is already on to yet another project—a four-volume encyclopaedia on the ancient culture and history of Orissa.

Women honoured

Smt. Kannan Devi

Mrs Swapna Chowdhury

Mrs Brit Hodne

The Calcutta based Ladies Study Group, a unit of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, recently honoured three women who have distinguished themselves in various fields by awarding them cash prizes of Rs 11,000 each. The three were Mrs Brit Hodne who teaches the disabled and handicapped, Mrs Swapna Choudhury, a mountaineer and Mrs Kannan Devi, the matinee idol of yesteryear. The award presentation ceremony was followed by a seminar on "Progressive Concepts" in which personalities like the former Supreme Court judge, Mr V. R. Krishna Iyer, Mr Mark Tully of the BBC, Mrs Madhuri Shah of the University Grants Commission, former cabinet minister and Janata party leader, Mr Ravindra Varma, and the economist, Dr Freddie Mehta, participated.

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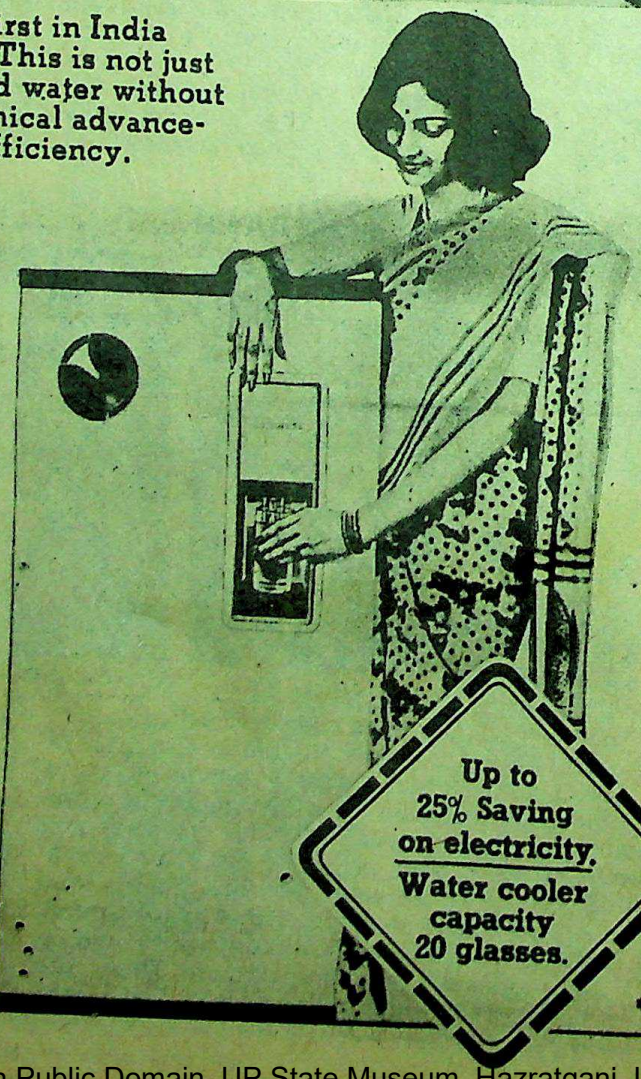

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Khaas Baat

Amitabh Bachchan has made a final decision: he will take it easy and not work on more than five films in a year. Eventually he wants to cut down the number. Health is one of the major factors, apart from the fact that he wants quality to be the hall-mark of his films. He is now looking for "Total satisfaction as an actor, the kind of satisfaction I have yet to find."

DURGAPRASAD

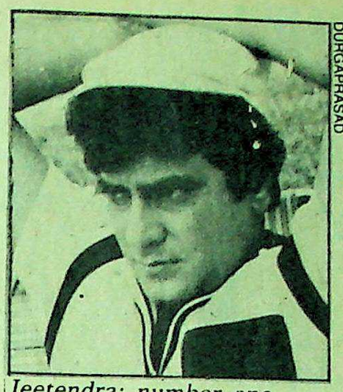
Amitabh: looking for satisfaction

What's happened to *Farroque Shaikh*? Recently, a young filmmaker went up to him and asked him to play a role in a film he was planning. Farooque heard him out and then quoted a price which sent the young filmmaker home. He couldn't believe what he heard. He has now decided to make the film with another actor.

DURGAPRASAD

Tina: capable of much more

If *Tina Munim* continues to show the indifference she is showing to her career as an actress, she will soon have to tell a sad story. Her performance in two films released recently, *Yeh Vaada Raha* and *Rajpur* have come in for a lot of criticism from people close to her. Tina still has youth on her side. She must improve if she has to last and she must improve fast. If not, she will only be there in all those gossip magazines and the roles will stop coming in.



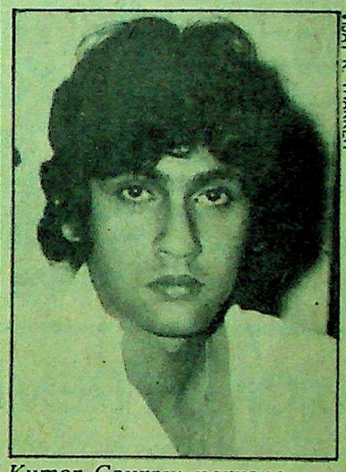
DURGAPRASAD

Jeetendra: number one

According to reliable sources the real number one is *Jeetendra*, not *Amitabh Bachchan*. There are times when there are three Jeetendra-starrers released the same day all over the country, and most of them are good runners. Jeetendra has not had a flop in a very long time. His success story has gained importance after he conquered the south. In Madras they don't start a film in Hindi without consulting Jeetendra. It is only when Jeetendra rejects an offer that it goes to someone else.

Sarika continues to slip. The last three films in which Sarika starred proved to be great disasters at the box-office and Sarika herself had very insignificant roles in all of them. Apparently, Sarika is after the money and the big banners and is not very concerned about her career as an actress. Ask Sarika why she is slipping and she says, "I am not slipping. Who told you that? In fact, I am getting better roles now. Next year is going to be a very crucial year for me. So, I am keeping my fingers crossed." That's what Sarika has been saying for the last three years!

May is going to be a very important month for the career of *Kumar Gaurav*. His second film, in which he is playing a role which is "serious and different, a great deal different from my first film," is to be released. The film, *Teri Kasam*, directed by *A. C. Tirlogchander*. Kumar Gaurav (also known as *Bunty*) has some thirty films on hand and all those thirty films depend on what happens to this one film. "I was never as nervous then, as I am now. The release of *Love Story* didn't really frighten me. But the release of *Teri Kasam*, is really giving me sleepless nights," Gaurav says.



VIJAY K. THAKKER

Kumar Gaurav: nervous

There is a cold war going on between *Shabana Azmi* and *Smita Patil* and they were the best of friends once. The war started some time in 1980 and it is only becoming worse with time. Smita specially blames Shabana for loosing some very good roles. It will, therefore, be more interesting to see them act together in *Artha*.

Shabana and Smita: worst of enemies

RAJU UPADHYAY

DURGAPRASAD

Dr Balumathi is getting busy with the production of her third film. This talented Telugu actress has tried her hand at writing, directing and producing and is currently engaged in making a mythological film for children. We only hope that this film will not meet with the fate of her earlier ventures: *Rachaitri* and *Okanati Ratri*. Both the films were completed two years ago and are yet to be released.

So what if *Saritha* prefers *Rajnikant* as a person? She still thinks there is no one to beat *Kamalahasan*, when it comes to acting. Coming from Saritha, herself a wonderful actress, this is indeed a compliment to Kamal. According to the actress, Rajni needs to improve his diction, which at the moment, is quite indistinct.

South Indian film producers are angry with the film censors. About 25 films have been held up because the censors have sent them to the revising committee in Bombay. The producers are mad because the "censors are objecting to simple fights and sex scenes." What irks them is that even scenes which show a character's belief in superstition are being censored.

Jayamalini seems to be the bane of the censors. In the Telugu version of the film *Jayamalini*, in which she plays the lead role, there are over 70 cuts. The film has not yet been released because it is still in the clutches of the censors.

'I don't have much faith in marriage,' said *Pratap Pothen* when asked if he was going to be a confirmed bachelor. The question was justified, coming at a time when almost all the other actors have jumped the broom.

Seema is back in action after the birth of her baby. The first film after the delivery is in Malayalam and Seema is planning to leave for the United States around the middle of May for the shooting. The film will be directed by *I. V. Sasi*, her husband, and probably the most ardent fan the actress has.

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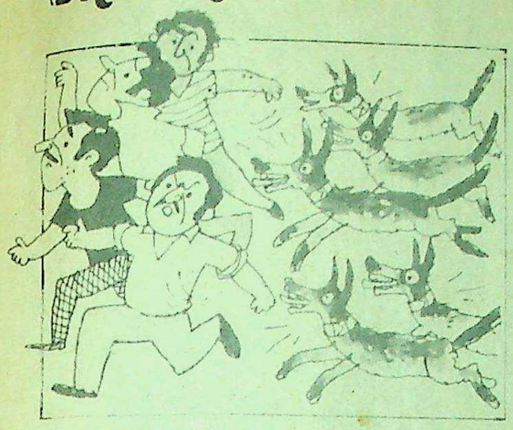
This India



MEERUT: About a dozen army dogs were used by a colonel to foil the house-grabbing move by a Congress(I) legislator here yesterday (14 April). The annexe of the local Patiala House, in which the aged mother of the colonel used to live had been allotted to the legislator who accompanied by about two dozen supporters occupied the house. The colonel, who is living in his official residence in the cantonment area, rushed to the scene and tried in vain to persuade the legislator. The colonel then brought a dozen trained dogs and let them loose in the house. Within no time, the legislator and his men were on their heels. Later the legislator alleged that the colonel was occupying the annexe illegally. However, this morning the colonel took army men and trained dogs in mufti to throw away the household goods of the legislator who accused the colonel of misusing armymen and dogs—*Hindustan Times* (B. B. Seth, Alwar)

TRIVANDRUM: The relay *satyagraha* going on here for the last four years—1484 days to be exact—by the Kerala Nadar Mahajana Sangham "ended" today, with the sipping of lemon juice offered to a *satyagrahi* by the Congress(I) leader, Mr K. Karunakaran. However, the relay *satyagraha* is "still continuing" with a member of the *sangham*'s youth wing taking it up saying that the demands for which the agitation had been started four years ago had not been met. The *satyagraha* was started on 14 March 1978 demanding reservation of jobs for nadars commensurate with the percentage of the community's strength in the state's population and other such demands—*Hindu* (Letha Nair, Trivandrum)

SIDDIPET: The Siddipet College lecturers unanimously decided to withdraw the invigilation by the staff members. They alleged that the students appearing for the examinations have been abusing, intimidating and threatening the staff members. Student leaders say that the syllabus has not been completed due to inadequate staff. They also demanded the withdrawal of police from the college campus—*Indian Express* (P. Janardhana Rao, Hyderabad)

MALDA (West Bengal): Three women, suspected of practising witchcraft, were beaten to death by villagers at Mushidhap village, the superintendent of police, Mr Asit Choudhury said yesterday (11 April). Four villagers had taken ill and the people there believed that they would not recover unless the three women, all aged over 50 were done away with, the SP said—*Times of India* (O. P. Bajaj, Varanasi)

SIMLA: A student who received his degree at the seventh convocation of the Himachal University yesterday (14 April) turned to the audience, held up the degree and said the certificate had no value. He then displayed a paper hung around his neck which read, "university authorities, we hate you. You are playing with our lives." The vice-chancellor, Dr L. P. Singh who had presented the degree told the student that within a year, he would know the value of the degree. Among those who witnessed the incident were the union finance minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee and the Himachal Pradesh Governor, Mr A. N. Banerji—*Hindu* (B. Suryanarayanan, Madras)

GADAG (Karnataka): Due to non-availability of tickets the city bus service has been stopped since 12 April. There is no possibility of resuming the service unless they get tickets from Hubli or Bangalore, it is learnt.—*Deccan Herald* (D. V. Srinivas, Bagalkot)

NAWADA (Bihar): A 10-year-old boy of village Sagma in Warsaliganj district and son of a college teacher was allegedly kidnapped on 16 April by a wealthy man of village Sakra and married to a 22-year-old girl, according to the police. A case has been registered and a vigorous search for the boy is on—*Indian Nation* (S. M. Fakhrullah, Gomoh, Bihar)

NEW DELHI: An inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation has been ordered into the reported presence of human hair in a lunch packet and dead insects in the pudding container of a passenger on board a domestic Indian Airlines flight last December and serving of rotten omlette on a Calcutta-Delhi flight in January this year. This was announced in the Lok Sabha today (16 April) by Mr A. P. Sharma, minister for tourism and civil aviation—*Statesman* (R. Sekar, Calcutta)

PHAGWARA: Beware, before you open doors to a woman at night. One Jeeta of Beer Dhandoli village let a seemingly helpless woman in, who said she wanted to stay for a night. And along came a gang of armed men. They robbed the kind hostess of gold and cash worth Rs 20,000. *Panchayat*'s have asked villagers through public announcements not to open doors at night to any unknown woman—*Indian Express* (Shandil Prabhu, Solan)

Without Comment

In politics you have to be shock proof...particularly these days—R. K. Hegde, Janata Party general secretary

Our intent is not to split the party, we just want the implementation of the five-point programme—Akbar Ahmed

I notice you always do things contrary to what we say and then make excuses—Indira Gandhi to Darbara Singh, Punjab chief minister

If MPs and MLAs from other states consider it their duty to come and make a report on the communal clashes in the state, MPs and MLAs of Tamil Nadu should have the right to visit other states where such communal clashes take place—M. G. Ramachandran

I hope sincerely that we do not go to war, but who knows—Margaret Thatcher

Here is the Argentine flag and, with all due respect to Great Britain and its people, they will have to understand that the world has changed and certain things of the past cannot return—Leopoldo Galtieri, President of Argentina

We have no drugs, we have no gambling, we have no prostitution, we have no beggars, we have no unemployment—Fidel Castro, Cuban President

A politician keeps his mouth open and mind shut while a judge keeps his mind open and mouth shut—M. Hidayatullah

If I come once in a fortnight on television and leave an impact on the viewers, why should anybody grudge it?—Kamleshwar who resigned as director-general of Doordarshan

I guess I was lucky to come out with my life—Vijay Amritraj after being defeated by Ivan Lendl

Show me one other garment (than the saree) that can compare with its mystique and grace—Shobha Kilachand in *Times of India, Sunday Review*

Illustration: Debashis Deb

prize Rs 30 for the entry given first

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Crushes: Grape, Pineapple, Orange.

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Squash

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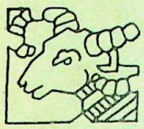
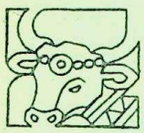
Sunday week

Beginning 9 May

By AMRITLAL

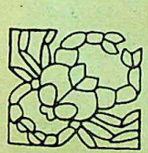


ARIES (15 April—14 May) This should prove to be a successful week for you, on the whole. The domestic front will remain calm and be a source of joy and inspiration for you. A lucky week for those in service: chances are that you will be promoted this week. A special word of suggestion to businessmen: this week your prospects are good, so do not hesitate to enter into new deals. A letter will bring good news. This is not a good week for romance. **Good dates:** 11, 12 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 2 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South.



TAURUS (15 May—14 June) Except for the cloud looming over your domestic front, this will prove to be, by and large, a favourable week for you. Prospects are bright for businessmen. However, a word of advice: do not take unnecessary risks. For those in service, this is a week of opportunities. Make every effort to push forth your plans and you will be crowned with success. Keep a watch on your health. Romance is not well signified. Check extravagance. **Good dates:** 9, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 4 and 8. **Favourable direction:** East.

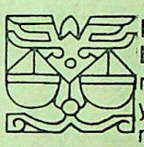
GEMINI (15 June—14 July) This is a week of mixed fortunes. You will have good reasons to feel nervous and anxious. The attitude of friends and members of your family may worry you. You are likely to feel lonely in the course of the week. Friends and relatives will shun you. However, do not get depressed. This is a very good week for romance. So seek the love and happiness you have been missing, from your beloved. Watch your health closely this week. **Good dates:** 12, 13 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 6. **Favourable directions:** Southeast and Northwest.



CANCER (15 July—14 August) Financially, this is a pretty favourable week for you. You will be in a position to repay most of your debts. This is not a good week for making drastic changes. However, in case it is absolutely necessary for you to make changes, make sure that you consult your elders before making any moves. Do not get upset if you are opposed by members of your family. Look forward to a letter that will bring good news. **Good dates:** 9, 12 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

LEO (15 August—14 September) An excellent opportunity lies in store for you towards the end of the week. Take full advantage of it and you will have luck smiling on you. This will be a very lucky week for you. Your plans are likely to be praised by those in authority. If you are in business, lucrative deals are coming your way. Friends and relatives will rally around and keep you busy during the evenings. Watch your health. Check extravagance. **Good dates:** 9, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North

VIRGO (15 September—14 October) This is a week of bright prospects for those involved in matters of the heart. Your partner will be extremely understanding, so do not lose time in making the proposal you have in mind. The professional front looks bright. Luckier ones among you may get a promotion. Businessmen, too will make rapid progress. However, a word of warning: do not enter into controversies or disputes. Watch you health and check extravagance. **Good dates:** 10, 12 and 14, **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.



LIBRA (15 October—14 November) This may turn out to be a rather disappointing week for you. Your current assignment may fall through. A new undertaking may not yield the results you have been expecting. Do not feel unduly worried if you have to depend on your friends to a very large extent. Relatives, may not be very dependable this week. A word of advice: try not to depend too much on others, but be determined and brave the crisis with fortitude. **Good dates:** 11, 13 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 4 and 8. **Favourable direction:** East.

SCORPIO (15 November—14 December) A week of excellent opportunities awaits you if you are involved in creative pursuits. Do not hesitate to launch a new venture: it will turn out to be successful. Young ones among you are advised to take initiative and plunge forth. Financially, this is a lucky period for you: you will be in a position to repay your debts. A letter towards the end of the week will bring you good news. Check extravagance. **Good dates:** 9, 12 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** Northeast.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December—14 January) This week you will be bothered by innumerable problems. A journey may help solve some of your problems. Others are advised to let your intuition be your guide this week. This is a good week for creative artists. A new assignment will keep you busy and help you win the praise of those in authority. The domestic front will remain peaceful. However, do not take too many liberties with your sweetheart. **Good dates:** 9, 10 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** Southeast.

CAPRICORN (15 January—14 February) Most of your pressing problems are likely to be solved this week. Moreover, your efforts will be crowned with success. However, a word of warning: your enemies will be very active this week, so be on your guard. The financial front does not look particularly bright. You may have to make fresh loans. However, the domestic front will remain calm and be a source of joy and inspiration for you. Romance is well signified this week. **Good dates:** 10, 13 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 5 and 6. **Favourable direction:** West.

AQUARIUS (15 February—14 March) A week of mixed fortune is in store for you. Unwise investment may lead to financial losses. On the other hand, those involved in matters of the heart are likely to have a very pleasant time this week. Your partner will be complying and make this a happy week for you. Elders and those in authority are going to treat you with respect. Children will turn out to be very demanding. Caution: do not lose your temper. Check extravagance. **Good dates:** 12, 13 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 7 and 8. **Favourable directions:** South and Northeast.

PISCES (15 March—14 April) Pisceans, keep a sharp watch on your health this week. The domestic front is going to pose severe problems for you. You are going to have some very serious misunderstanding with your spouse. Do not lose your temper, but deal with the situation tactfully, the storm will pass. Those on the lookout for work may find a job. Others will be praised for your efforts. Check extravagance. **Good dates:** 9, 11 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** East.

For those born between 15 April and 14 May: Most of you are born with a strong sense of independence. Consequently, you are attracted towards business rather than the services. You make successful businessmen especially when your business deals with paper, publishing houses, jute, cotton, silk or items of luxury. Success comes to you easily, but you have a tendency of taking undue risks. As a result; you frequently suffer from financial losses. It is not surprising if you run into enormous debts. However, debts are not a permanent feature and you repay them with an uncanny regularity.

You have famous brothers; but the strongest influence in your life comes from your mother. Your versatility takes you far in life. Although few of you have a smooth beginning to your career.

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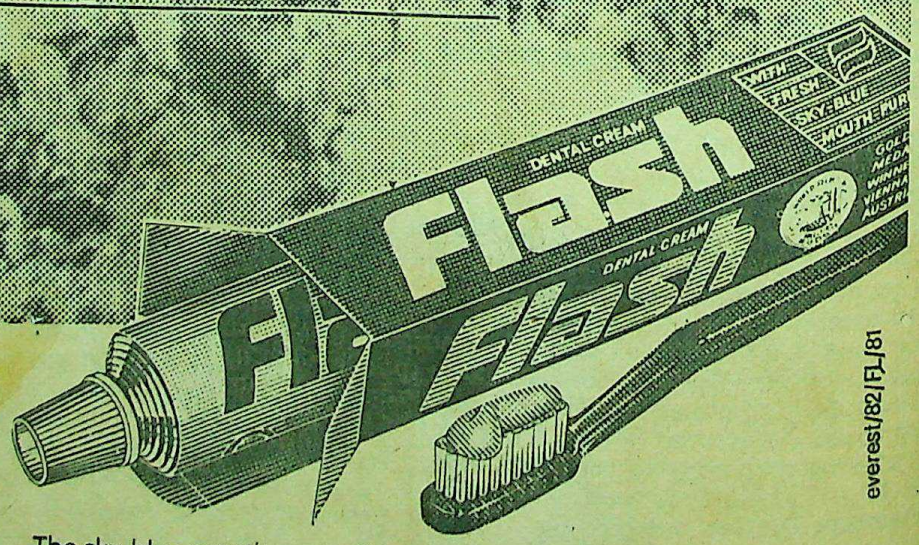

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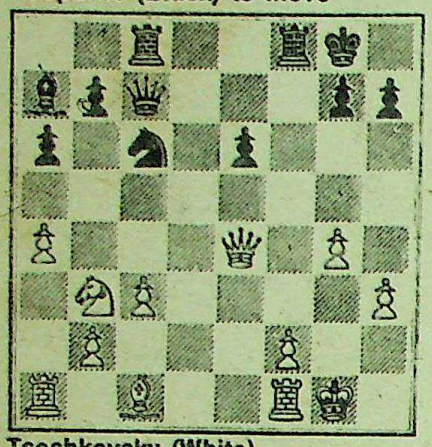
Chess

Kasparov (Black) to move



Tseshkovsky (White)

Having written last week about Kasparov's joint victory in the Soviet championship, I began to think it a little unfair to have published one of his losses, so today justice will be done.

Kasparov's dynamic style of play is particularly impressive when he adopts the Sicilian Defence. His marvellous feel for the initiative tells him exactly when he can switch to the counter-offensive and the sharp tactical nature of the positions suits him. In the following game he demonstrates the power of the freeing move P–Q4, which as anyone who has read the good books will know is the classic counter-thrust in the Sicilian. The trouble is that in practice you tend to get lumbered with an isolated queen's pawn for nothing and a sudden revulsion for chess books. The point to be grasped is that P–Q4 is only a legitimate move when White's position has in some way been weakened or overextended. Kasparov shows good timing and devastating accuracy in the ensuing counter-attack.

White: Tseshkovsky Black: Kasparov
Sicilian Defence

1 P–K4	P–QB4	4 NxP	N–QB3
2 N–KB3	P–K3	5 N–QB3	P–Q3
3 P–Q4	PxP	6 P–KN3	

A solid if conservative system. The only trouble is that Tseshkovsky's intentions are neither solid nor conservative.

6 . . .	N–B3	9 P–QR4	O–O
7 B–N2	B–Q2	10 QN–K2	
8 O–O	B–K2		

Embarking on a plan which smacks of artificiality. Normal would be R–K1, B–K3 or even P–QN3.

10 . . .	R–B1	12 P–R3	Q–B2
11 P–QB3	P–QR3	13 P–KN4	P–Q4!

Justified by the weakening effect of White's last move

14 PxP	NxP	15 BxN	

If White is not going to admit that his 13th move was stupid he must play this.

15 . . .	PxB	16 N–B4	B–QB4

Black cannot protect his QP, nor does he want to. Its disappearance will give his pieces the scope they are looking for.

17 N–N3	B–R2	18 QxP	B–K3!

A beautiful move, forcing White to open the KB file against his own king. With the peeling away of White's kingside defences, pawns become irrelevant.

19 NxB	PxN	20 Q–K4	

After 20 QxP+ K–R1 White would have no good way to parry the threat of Q–N6+. Now he plans to meet the check with Q–N2, but he is in for a surprise. **(DIAGRAM)**

20 . . .	RxP!	22 Q–N2	BxR+
21 RxR	Q–N6+	23 K–B1	

A last desperate attempt to exchange the queens. If 23 K–R1, then 21 . . . Q–Q6 22 QxB R–B1 23 Q–N2 R–B8+ 24 K–R2 Q–Q3+ 25 Q–N3 R–R8+ winning the queen.

23 . . .	Q–K4!		

Decisive. If 24 QxB R–B1 or 24 KxB R–B1+ 25 K–N1 Q–K8+ 26 K–R2 R–B7.

24 B–B4	QxB	26 Resigns.	
25 QxB	Q–B5+		

Queenside Majority

White: Dorman. Black: Trois
QP Opening

1 P–Q4	N–KB3	16 N–K5	RxR+
2 N–KB3	P–K3	17 RxR	R–QB1
3 P–KN3	P–QN4	18 RxR+	BxR
4 B–N2	B–N2	19 P–N5	B–N2
5 O–O	P–Q4	20 BxN	PxB
6 P–B3	QN–Q2	21 QxQ	PxQ
7 P–QR4	P–N5	22 P–R5	N–Q4
8 PxP	BxP	23 N–B4	N–B6
9 B–Q2	BxB	24 PxP	NxP+
10 QNxB	P–B4	25 K–B1	N–B6
11 PxP	NxP	26 N(N3)–R5	B–Q4
12 P–QN4	QN–K5	27 N–Q5	K–B1
13 N–N3	R–QB1	28 N–B6	NxP
14 Q–Q4	Q–N3	29 P–N7	Resigns.
15 KR–B1	O–O		

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

So many unexpected things happened on this deal from the final of the world championship that I think of it as the 'however' hand.

Dealer, South Game all

	♠ A 4 ♥ A 10 8 7 6 2 ♦ Q ♣ J 10 9 7	
♠ Q J 7 3 ♥ 4 ♦ 6 5 4 3 ♣ 8 6 5 4	N W E S	♠ K 10 9 8 2 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ A J 8 2 ♣ 2
	♠ 6 5 ♥ K Q 9 ♦ K 10 9 7 ♣ A K Q 3	

Most players would be happy to open One Club on the South hand. However, in the match between America and Pakistan Levin preferred 1NT and the bidding continued:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Levin	Nisar	Solodar	Nishat
1NT	No	2 ♦	No
2NT	No	3 ♥	No
4 ♣	No	4 ♠	No
5 ♣	No	6 ♣	No
No	No		

North's Two Diamonds was forcing Stayman. The players did well to finish in clubs, for if the trumps are 3-2 Six Clubs is a better spot than Six Hearts, which always fails against a spade lead.

Instead of leading a spade, West chose a heart. This sort of lead has a habit of killing partner's Q x x or similar. Now it presented South with 12 tricks: he has only to draw trumps and lead a diamond. However, Levin miscounted his tricks and after two rounds of clubs he played a diamond and sustained a ruff. According to Phillip Alder's report in the Bulletin, Levin left the table at the end of the session still unaware of his error.

At the other table South again declined to open One Club and the bidding went:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Zia	Rodwell	Masood	Meckstroth
1 ♦	No	1 ♥	1 ♠
3 ♥	3 ♠	4NT	No
5 ♦	No	6 ♥	No
No	No		

North's 4NT was, I would say, amateurish: the contract will not depend on Aces. East did lead a spade, so it was a 'flat board'.

TERENCE REESE

Quiz

QUESTION

1. Apart from being thickened milk, what is curd?
2. Other than the cocktail made of vermouth, gin etc., what is a martini?
3. What is the Quai d' orsay?
4. In English literature what is the Satanic school?
5. What is a Yu?
6. Tuxedo jackets are very much in fashion. How did it get the name?
7. What is Mother Carey's chicken?
8. Huge sea waves caused by earth quakes on the ocean floor are wrongly referred to as tidal waves. What is the correct name?
9. What is a sleet?
10. A Samson's post is something you would find on a ship. What is it?
11. In Greek mythology, who is the god of corn?
12. What is a sky ray?
13. Who first ascended into the stratosphere in a ballon?
14. In Hindu mythology, what is Patala?

ANSWERS

1. Curd is also the granular soap that rises in the lye upon slating.
2. It is also a rifle designed in the 19th century by Frederic Martini.
3. The French foreign office.
4. It is the name given by Southey to Byron, Shelley and other unorthodox revolutionaries.
5. A precious jade.
6. The jacket originated from a fashionable club at Tuxedo Park, New York.
7. A sea bird which rarely lands except to lay its eggs. Also known as stormy petrel.
8. Tsunami.
9. A mixture of snow and rain caused by the partial melting of snow while falling down.
10. It is a strong post on a ship. Samson's post is also a kind of mousetrap.
11. Demeter.
12. Radio waves going out into space and not following the ground.
13. August Piccard, a Swiss physicist in 1931.
14. It is the lowest region of the underworld the dwelling place of the Asuras and guarded by the Nagas.

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GIAN PARKASH

President and Mrs Reddy: enjoying the last few days in office

PRESIDENT GOES SIGHTSEEING

PRESIDENT Neelam Sanjiva Reddy is finally reconciled to the inevitable: he will not serve a second term in office. So as the search for his successor is on (various names from R. Venkataraman to B. D. Jatti are being mentioned), he is making the best of his remaining few days in office sightseeing. He came to Calcutta on 28 April without any official engagement. He spent the day visiting the traditional pilgrimage spots like Dakshineswar and Belur and even took a look at the Botanical gardens!

BIJU WILL QUIT LOK DAL

ALTHOUGH Mr Biju Patnaik has been readmitted to the Lok Dal, can there be any real reconciliation between him and Chaudhury Charan Singh? The answer is a definite no but both of them are maintaining a tactful silence on the issue for the time being. Mr Patnaik is quite certain that the Chaudhury will expel him from the Lok Dal soon after the forthcoming Assembly elections. Mr Charan Singh, on his part, is equally certain that Mr Patnaik will not give in to him and will definitely not ditch Mr Chandra Shekhar. It is evident that Mr Biju Patnaik will join the Janata Party soon after 19 May. In such an eventuality, the Orissa unit of the Janata Party will be the most embarrassed, for its leaders had declared with great fervour at the Ahmedabad session of the unity talks that they would be ready to join hands with anybody except Patnaik. Mr Samarendra Kundu (former union minister and Janata leader in Orissa) had, at that time, also threatened to quit the party if Mr Biju Patnaik was taken in.

KESRI'S BLUFF CALLED

MR Sitaram Kesri, AICC(I) treasurer and union minister, has been particularly vocal in his criticism of Maneka Gandhi since the *saas-bahu* conflict came out in the open. He has been consistently maintaining that Maneka played no part in Sanjay's political life and that the opposition is using her for their own ends. Last month, while he was holding forth at his vitriolic best in the central hall of Parliament, someone at last managed to put him in his place. It was Janata Party president Chandra Shekhar who

SONDEEP SHANKAR

Kesri: vendetta against Maneka

cut him short with these words: "Why do you talk such nonsense? What use does the opposition have for a fight between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law? If you don't keep quiet now, I will have to reveal all those things that you used to tell me against Indira Gandhi and Sanjay during the days of the Janata government. Shall I repeat those very words with which you used to abuse Sanjay and his mother?" Mr Sitaram Kesri was dumbstruck and quietly left the place without uttering another word.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

FREE FOR ALL AT CONG(I) MEETING

ON the eve of the Lok Sabha byelection in Bayana constituency of Rajasthan, the state government has gone all out to win over the people of Dholpur which forms an Assembly segment of the constituency. It has decided to make Dholpur into a full-fledged district. For this announcement which was to be made by chief minister Shiv Charan Mathur, a meeting was organised on 15 April, at which former chief minister Jagannath Pahadia was also present. He could not be left out of the meeting as the byelection was necessitated by his resignation as MP on becoming chief minister. But just as he got up to speak, the supporters of Mr Mathur and Congress(I) MP Rajesh Pilot started heckling him. Mr Pahadia could not finish his speech. The meeting ended in a free for all between the pro-Mathur and pro-Pahadia groups. If this is the state of affairs in the ruling party then will the creation of any number of new districts help?

REWARDED FOR MISCONDUCT

WHAT happens to Youth Congress(I) functionaries who fall foul of the law but still remain in the good books of the party leadership? They get kicked upstairs. Mr Jagdish Sehgal was recently removed from the presidentship of the East Delhi Youth Congress(I) district committee after he had been arrested for trying to occupy a piece of land at Shahadra at gun point. At the Delhi Youth Congress(I) meeting on 24 April addressed by Mr Rajiv Gandhi, president Ghulam Nabi Azad announced that Mr Sehgal was being appointed to a higher post: he was being made general secretary of the Delhi Youth Congress(I)! The meeting was also marked by very vocal display of disaffection with party affairs. Mr Rajiv Gandhi had to sit and listen to party workers saying that they were being "treated like bonded labour." The president of the Sadar district committee added, "We have been betrayed. Please save us from being sold."

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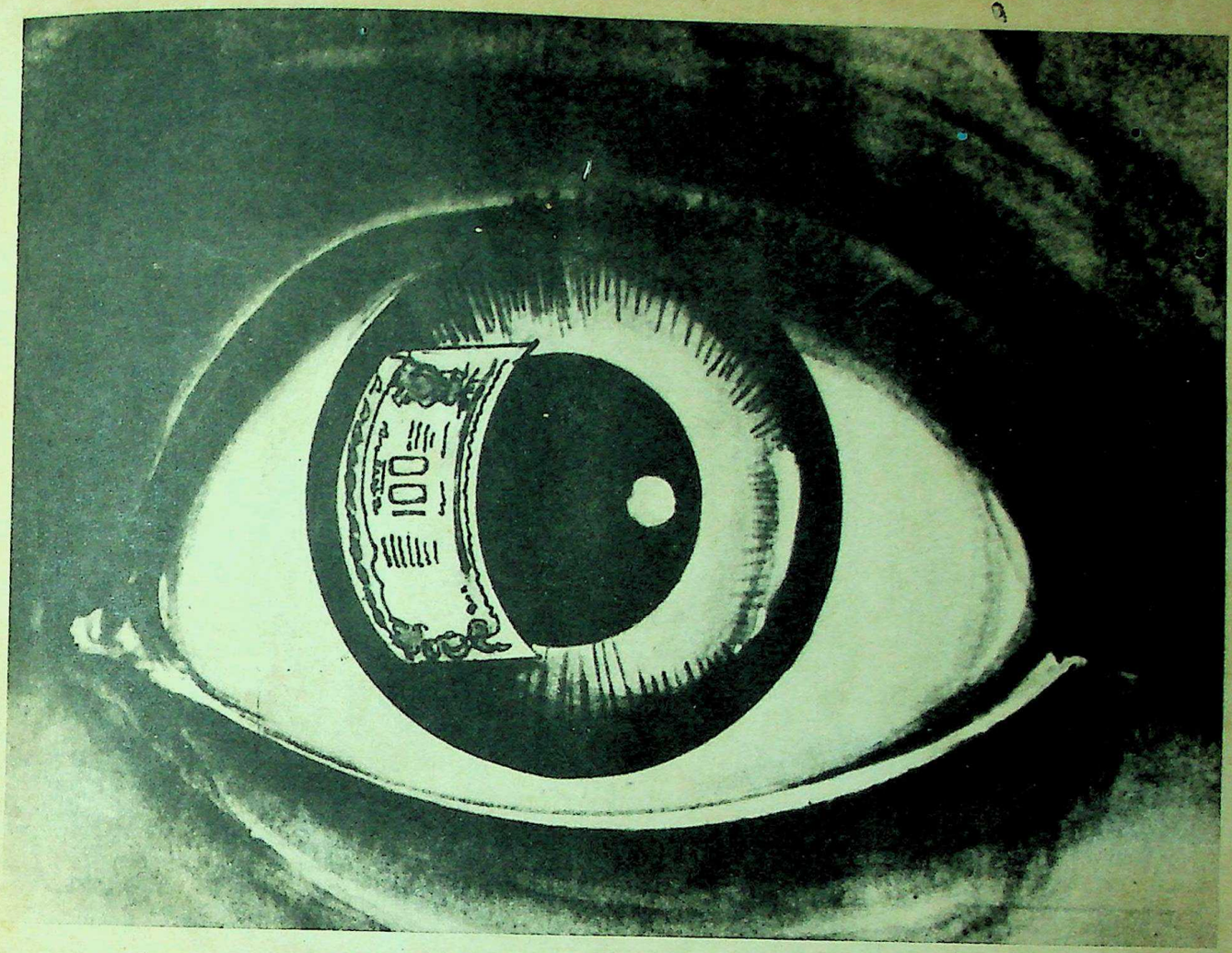

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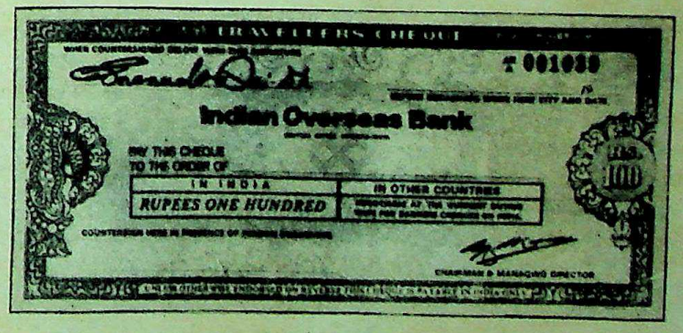

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Bird watching was my scene, until I learnt to Tingle with them.

Mugpot.

When a poor guy slogs harder than the rest for the Eco paper, the guys at college call him "Mugpot".

The girls never smiled at me or gave me 'The Look'. They'd turn their backs on me...and sniff.

The only girl who ever spoke to me was my sister.

But her friends wanted my notes. Oh, yes, they wanted my notes alright. Her friends never asked me, they'd ask **her.** I was so fed up.

I took up the next best thing. Birdwatching.

Kingfishers and humming birds.

One day, while watching Bul Buls, my life changed.

My eyes were glued to the binoculars, when something entirely different came into focus.

Two neat numbers were strolling down the road towards my house. One of them was my pesky sister. The other...whew! The other was a Number 12. (If you've seen Bo Derek, you know what I mean.)

I ran inside, drenched myself with after shave (Brut!). And my arms being terribly under-nourished, I rolled my sleeves down.

A cry of 'Mugseee' shrilled out. My voice quavered out an answer. Then the girls were in the doorway. "Mugsy, my friend wants to borrow..."

"Hi!" said The Vision.

My hands were wet and my heart was on its worst behaviour. "You look ill," said The Vision, and the notes slipped out of my hands and scattered over the floor.

"Why, I'm fine," I said, trying to growl from the pit of my stomach.

"But you do look feverish," The Dream insisted. Just then my sister left the room. The 'Dream' leaned towards me and whispered, "Say, I know something that will really perk you up...

"Have you ever Tingled?"

I almost choked. Was I hearing things. "Ting...Tingle...heh...heh ...well. I'd love to." My throat felt like sand-paper.

My sister returned and they whispered among themselves. I saw my sister nodding vigorously. She went to the fridge and returned with three chilled bottles of Tingler.

"Hey!" I said, "that stuff is strictly for the birds and the weight-watchers."

"It's for everybody," the girls purred. "And you're going to Tingle."

"Now, take a sip, and concentrate on your tongue." I took a longish sip, and felt the delicious flavour of chilled, tangy lemons... mmm...lovely.

"Don't swallow. Swirl your tongue around. Right! Can you feel it? Huh? Can you feel the Tingle?"

I rolled my tongue around...and a million bubbles popped against my palate...and then I felt it. A Tingling sensation spreading slowly all over. It was Wow! In sheer excitement, I burst out:

"I'm Tingling!"

"Keep going," she said. "Take small sips and concentrate on the flavour." I felt a gradual flow of confidence in my veins. My voice lost its quaver, and my knees didn't dance.

When we finished, Sis ran off to get another three bottles of T.

I sat there like a puppy looking deep into the eyes of "12".

And then, (Heaven must look kindly on me), the lights blew out.

Thank God for power failures.

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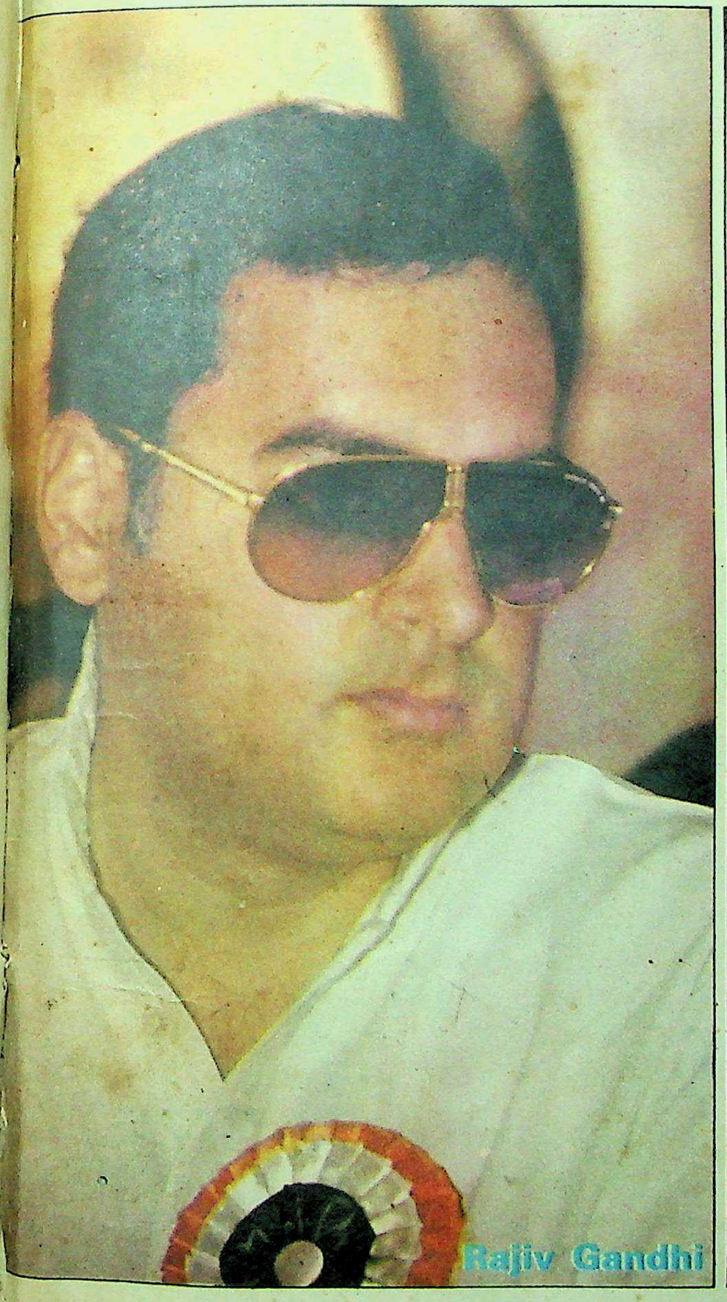
SUNDAY

The triumph and despair of Aslam Sher Khan



Rajiv Gandhi

Maneka Gandhi

WAR AND PEACE

Chapter Two

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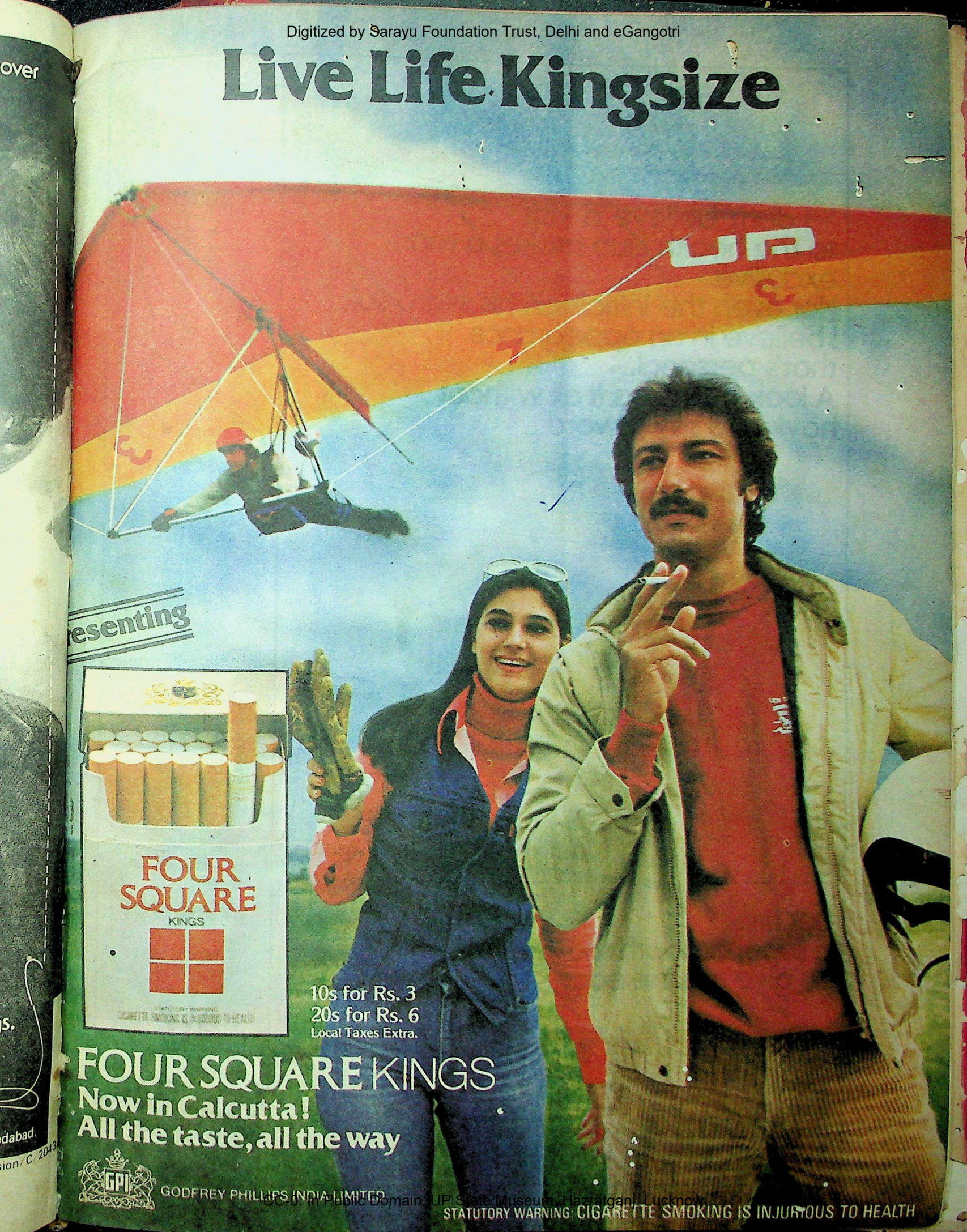
Live Life Kingsize



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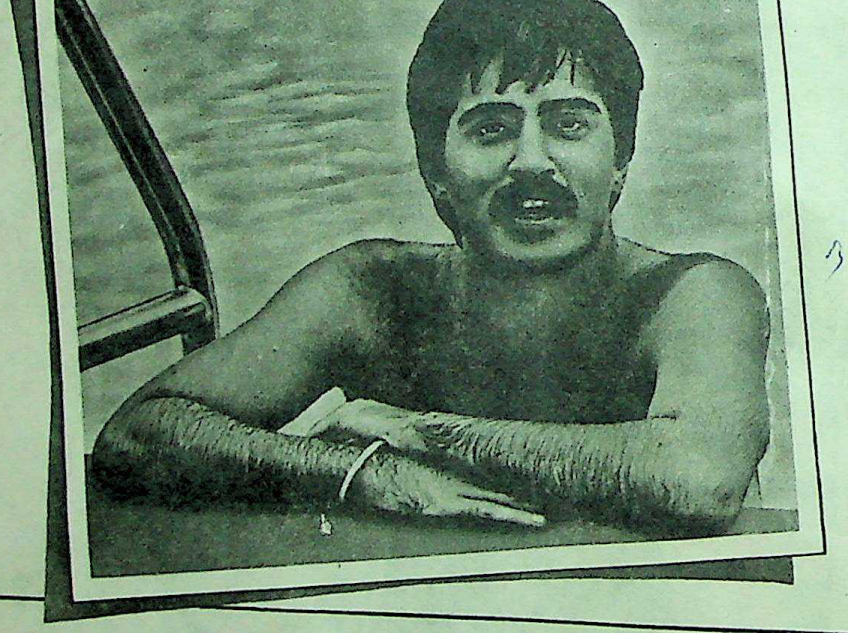
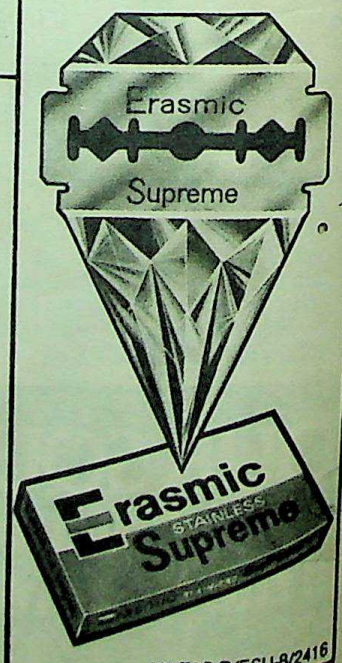
"I don't believe a visit
to the health club makes a man
exclusive.
Nor even the initials on his swim-suit.
I believe in an appearance
that's personal.
A look that says it all without
having to say a word...



But first,
a super-smooth shave
to give me the edge."

Erasmic Supreme
The blade with the diamond edge.



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SUNDAY
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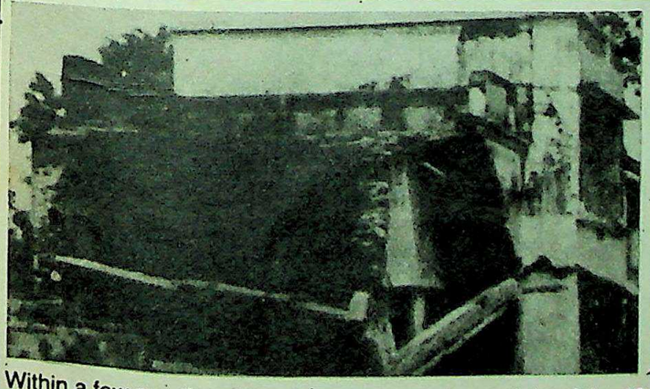
AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

26 September- 2 October '82

In two years, the Congress(I)-ruled state of Andhra Pradesh—one of the most secure and stable states for Mrs Gandhi—has witnessed the rule of four chief ministers. Mrs Gandhi removed Dr Channa Reddy and inducted Mr T. Anjaiah. With charges of inefficiency piling up against him, Mr Anjaiah was given the marching orders. In came Mrs Gandhi's handpicked man, Mr B. Venkataram. And in less than 200 days, the Prime Minister found that her choice had been a wrong one. Why are chief ministers being changed so often? Was the change in the Andhra Pradesh leadership effected because of the impending Assembly elections? SUNDAY correspondents piece together the downfall of Bhavanam Venkataram and analyse the political implications. **Page 16**

The top brass among the army and navy have, for a long time, been wanting an air-strike force of their own. The air force, however, would not like to lose its superiority over the army or the navy. How advantageous would an air-strike force be to the army or the navy? Lt Gen E. A. Vas (Retired) examines the controversy. **Page 24**



Within a few months of the devastating cyclone, eight of the 13 districts of Orissa saw unprecedented floods: 52 lakh people suffered and property worth lakhs of rupees was damaged. The Orissa government, even in the face of such a crisis, has done nothing much to alleviate the peoples' problems. On the contrary, the government's mismanagement of flood relief operations has added to their plight, while vested interests have got political mileage out of the situation. An investigation by Prashant Patnaik. **Page 35**

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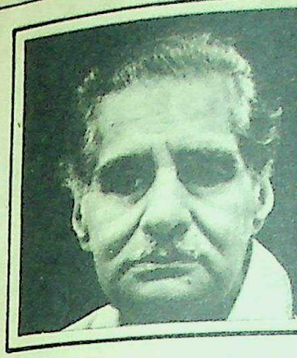

EXCLUSIVE

By KULDIP NAYAR

A government should not glorify a language

What the chief ministers of Hindi-speaking states are trying to do may be good for Hindi but not for the country's emotional integration. Their zeal for greater use of Hindi in their own areas may create an unfavourable reaction in non-Hindi states. And even if their intentions are honest they may unwittingly divide the country into Hindi-India and non-Hindi India.

The effort is a sequel to a closed-door meeting of the chief ministers of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh—all of them have Hindi as their official language—earlier this year. Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, the then UP chief minister, was the host and the meeting was held in New Delhi. The purpose was to adopt "a policy" on the use of a uniform type of Hindi in government work in Hindi-speaking states. (The minutes of the meeting were not made available to even a Lok Sabha member who asked for them in a question on 31 March this year.)

Very few can object to the meeting's decision that "simple and easily understandable terms be used in government work." In fact, the Hindi terms coined—thanks to the followers of Dr Raghuvira, a Hindi zealot, who died nearly two decades ago—are so Sanskritised that they are beyond the comprehension of the common man. The Hindi equivalent of computer is so long that the time taken in writing or speaking it is enough for a computer to work out a difficult proposition.

The meeting's decision to set up an officer-level committee of Hindi-speaking states for adopting uniform Hindi in government work is also unexceptionable. However, it is a duplication of work because the Hindi directorate in the home ministry and the office of the official language commission in New Delhi are spending much time and money in doing the same thing. While introducing Hindi in various government departments, they are evolving terminology and appropriate equivalents. (There were more central government servants doing work in Hindi during the Janata period than today).

Where the meeting has gone grievously wrong is in its recommendations which go beyond the language issue. The meeting has recommended that "the question of naming roads etc., after the names of eminent writers be considered." Apart from the fact that the practice of changing names of roads is a foolish exercise, the recommendation, if implemented, may demarcate the country even roadwise, each state having roads by the name of the literary figures of its own official language.

Another recommendation in fact dilutes the language policy followed so far. It wants the use of Hindi for correspondence among Hindi-speaking states to be "made effective." The formula devised during the prime ministership of Shastri—and non-Hindi states vigorously agitated for it—was that any state or, for that matter, any individual was free to address a state or the centre in English or Hindi and that the reply would be in the language of the letter sent. A Hindi-speaking state should be free to send its communication to other Hindi-speaking states in English (there are officials from non-Hindi states). If only Hindi is used in Hindi-speaking states for all purposes, non-Hindi states can also gang up against this practice.

And for the meeting to decide that "all posssible steps be taken for making the Third World Hindi Conference in Delhi a success" is to play with fire. The Tamil Nadu government's association with the World Tamil Conference was bad enough, for Hindi-speaking states to follow suit would be worse. Their action can have wider repercussions because fears about the imposition of Hindi can revive. Imagine all states holding world conferences for their languages.

A government should have nothing to do with a conference to glorify a particular language. It is a chauvinistic act and can lead to pitting one state against another or one segment of a population against the other since there are different linguistic groups in every state. The very idea of a meeting of chief ministers of only Hindi-speaking states was ill conceived. Nobody thought of its implications: suppose non-Hindi states were to have a meeting to formulate a policy on the use of the other official language, English. Even if Hindi-speaking states have a uniform policy on Hindi, how does that help Hindi or the country as a whole?

I have always held that the greatest harm to Hindi has been done by zealots of Hindi. They spoilt things when the non-Hindi population was coming round to accepting Hindi. All over the south thousands of people were learning Hindi with official encouragement in the late Forties and Fifties. Mr Rajagopalachari, who became India's first governor-general, was in the forefront of the movement for spreading Hindi. Dakshini Pracharik Nidhi, with Mahatma Gandhi's blessings, did a commendable job and continued to do so long after India won freedom.

Then came the Hindi agitation in the mid '60s in UP and elsewhere in the north. As a reaction to that came the anti-Hindi agitation in the south. Hindi received a setback from which it is yet to recover. Many private institutions in the south have begun teaching Hindi and thousands have again started learning the language. Now, again Hindi zealots are spoiling their cause by holding meetings like the one held in Delhi.

True, Hindi has to replace English one day, not because Hindi is superior to other regional languages but because it is understood by the majority of Indians. In a democracy where numbers count, a language of the few made "national" cannot but make a mockery of the system. But Hindiwallas have missed the bus; now they must wait till the non-Hindi population is ready to adopt Hindi. Exclusive attempts to "push" Hindi will only further harm Hindi.

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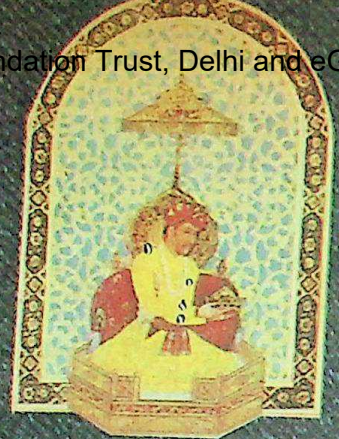

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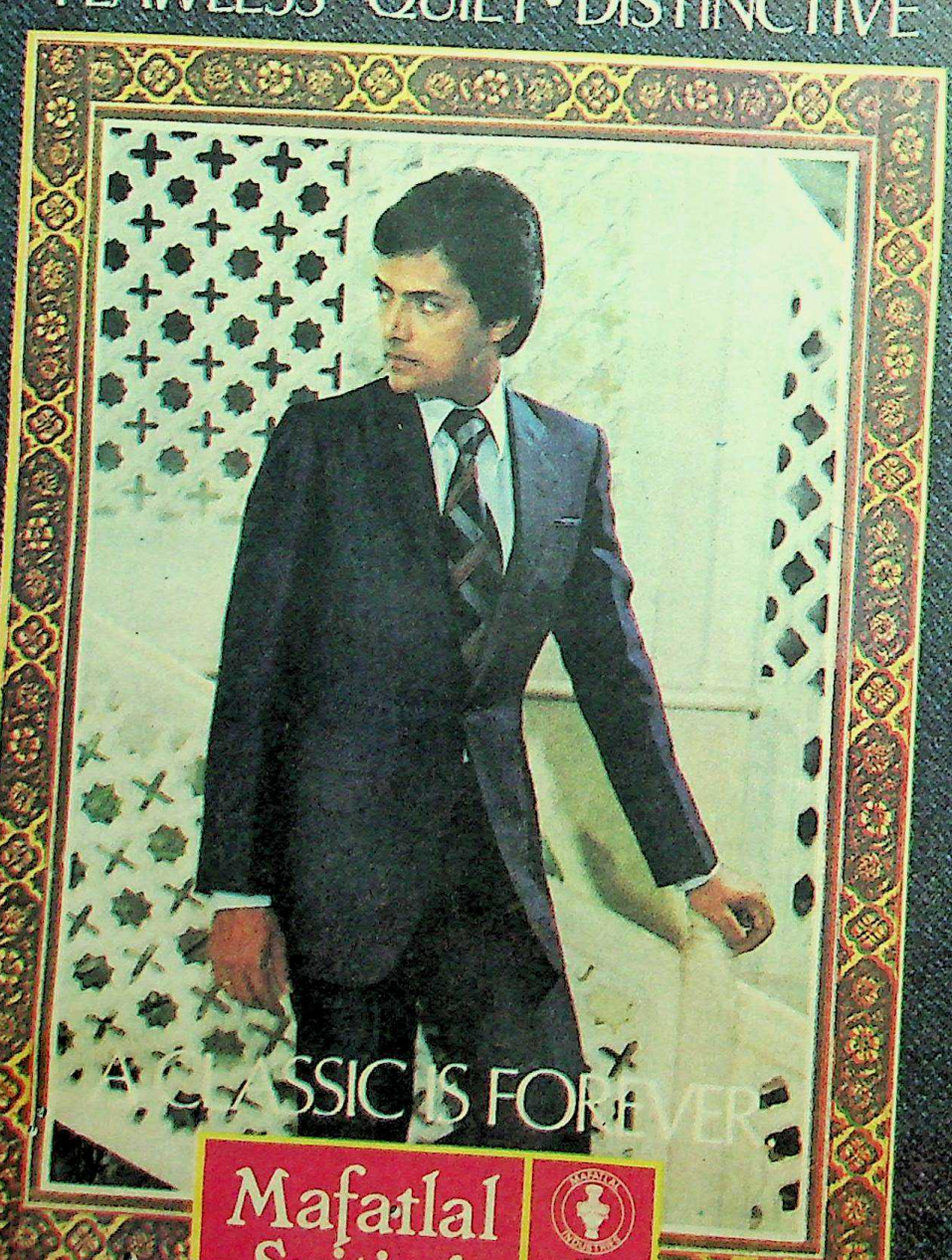

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LOOKING GLASS

Tussle between Azad and Rajiv Gandhi

Dharam Vir Jayner

Rajiv Gandhi and Azad: disagreement

Ghulam Nabi Azad, the new deputy law minister, and Mr Rajiv Gandhi have had their first tussle, it is reliably learnt. The disagreement concerns Capt. Davar, a service officer, who had resigned and joined the Indian Youth Congress(I) as its press adviser. Mr Gandhi had wished to appoint him as the joint secretary of the organisation. This, however, was strongly opposed by Mr Azad, president of the IYC(I) who, apprehensive of losing his influence in the IYC(I), did everything he could to thwart the move. The result: Capt. Davar now finds himself in an innocuous post, assisting Mr Arun Nehru at the Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Trust. The first round, it seems, has gone to Mr Azad.

Parthasarathi planned PM's tour

While the foreign office and the PM's secretariat are officially responsible for the planning of Mrs Gandhi's tours abroad, the visit to Moscow is being handled by Mr G. Parthasarathi, the adviser, foreign affairs although he is not a signatory to the Official Secrets Act, Mrs Gandhi's programme in Moscow has been worked out between the ubiquitous Mr Parthasarthi and the Soviet ambassador in New Delhi.

IB makes a faux pas

The top brass of the intelligence bureau have received a dressing down from the Prime Minister because of their failure to correctly report the antecedents of a newly inducted union deputy minister. After the swearing-in ceremony of 2 September, Mrs Gandhi learnt to her dismay that one of the new deputy ministers was having an affair with an Indian lady who acts as the honorary consul for a small Indian Ocean republic, in New Delhi. Though the two are not formally married, they have entered into a contractual marriage popularly known as *maitri karar* at Ahmedabad (where such "marriages" are common). There is nothing wrong in this kind of a relationship, except that a minister cannot be expected to truly adhere to his oath of office and secrecy when the woman in his life has open links with a foreign country.

RSS to control two newspapers in MP

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has decided to directly control all newspapers which formally back the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). It plans to begin this process in Madhya Pradesh, where the BJP is certain it will be able to snatch power from the Congress(I) in the 1985 elections. It is with this end in view that the party leadership has selected Bhopal as the venue of their annual session at the end of this year. The newspapers in question are: *Yugdharma*, a Hindi daily published from Jabalpur and Raipur and *Swadesh* a Hindi daily published from Indore, Bhopal and Gwalior. Though many BJP and RSS leaders are shareholders of the companies which run the papers, the papers are running at a loss. The RSS leader, Mr Bala Saheb Deoras, has posted one of his most trusted lieutenants to oversee the running of the papers. The lieutenant does not have an official designation, nor is a member of the company, but his authority over the finances, and editorial management will be paramount.

IAS vs IPS in Maharashtra

The IAS bureaucrats in the home ministry, government of Mahrashtra, seem to be locked in a power struggle with the top brass of the Indian Police Service (IPS) in the state. Though the centre has directed that the seniormost officer of the IPS cadre in the state be appointed as the director general of police, a post created in Maharashtra from 1 July 1982, no one has yet been appointed. The two persons eligible for this position are Mr Nagarkar, head of the home guards, who is due to retire from the police force in October 1982, and second-in-line is Mr K.P. Medhkar, presently the inspector general of police. The hitch is that the rank of director general of police is equivalent to that of a secretary. The bureaucrats in the home ministry do not favour this idea as their importance in the law and order controlling machinery would decrease. The IAS officials have been opposing the creation of this post for over a year, and now that it has been created they are delaying the appointment.

Changes in PM's secretariat?

The recent cabinet reshuffle does not seem to have satiated Mrs Gandhi's zest for the game of musical chairs. She is reportedly contemplating some changes among the senior bureaucrats in her secretariat. Dr P.C. Alexander, the principal secretary to the PM, is being tipped for a gubernatorial assignment. His place is to be taken by Mr Abid Hassan, presently the union commerce secretary.

Mrs Gandhi: musical chairs

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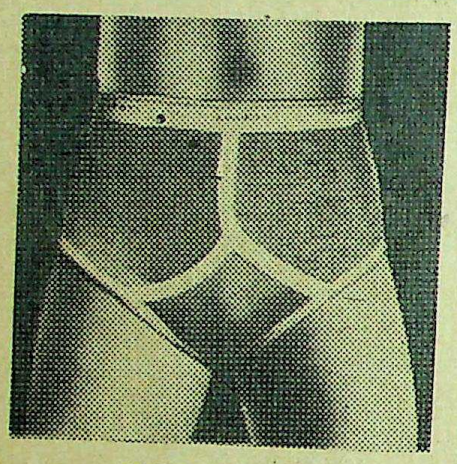

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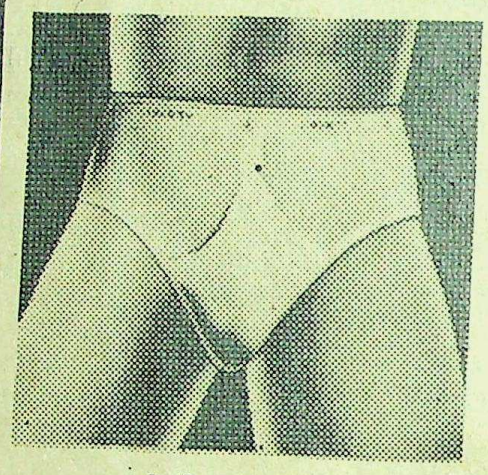

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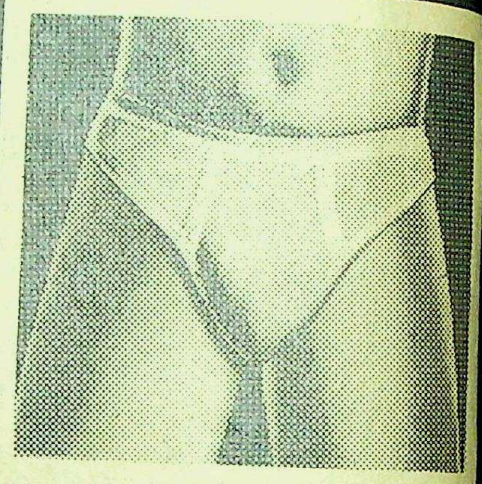

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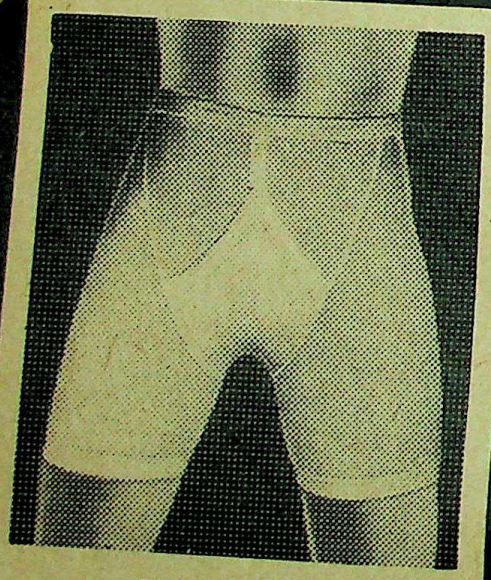

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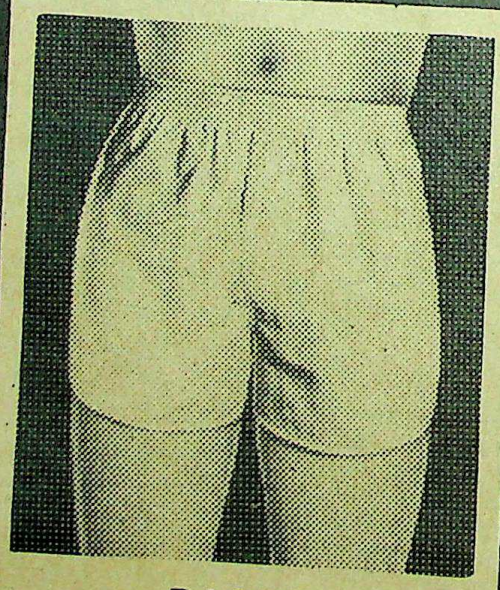

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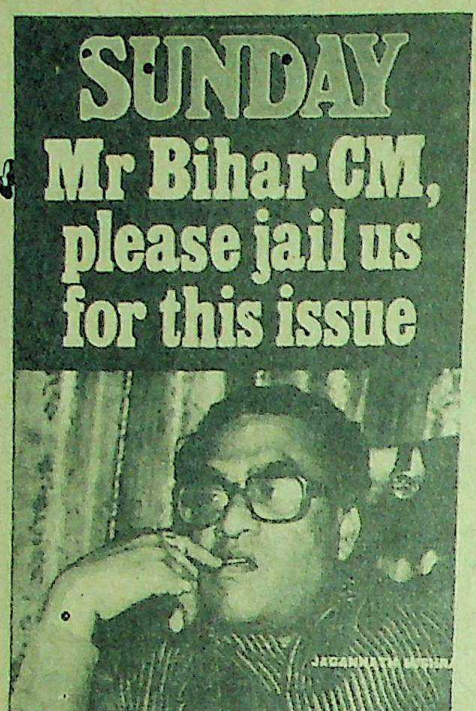

Press Bill examined

I am filled with admiration for your bold cover story, *Mr Bihar CM, please jail us for this issue* (22 August), against Dr Jagannath Mishra's misguided tirade against the press. The manner in which the Bill was carried through the Bihar Assembly and the Editors Guild team's discussion with the chief minister, totally reveals the exact stuff that Dr Mishra is made of. The Bill is not merely anti-press, it is anti-people too. In your fight against it, you have full support from all the freedom loving people of the country. Let there be no letup.
Kamal Laddha, Bangalore

By a single issue of your magazine, you have managed to rouse the conscience of thousands of SUNDAY readers. We are spellbound.
K. A. Balakrishnan, Madras

The Press Bill is yet another evidence of the extent to which the ruling party fears and hates the press—the only organ of the mass media largely independent of government control. It is only the press which is relentlessly exposing the corruption and ineptitude of the country's 'leaders.' The President must refrain from giving his consent to the Bill, for it would amount to signing the death warrant of parliamentary democracy in India.
Sourish Bhattacharyya, New Delhi

Your cover heading was a brilliant satire on the entire Press Bill, and it has become the talk of the town here in Patna. You must also comment on Mrs Gandhi's unholy alliance with 'Lord Jagannath.'
Gyan Prakash, Patna

Forgive him Lord, for he knows not what he does!
Unnikrishnan Nair, Cuttack

The report from the Editors Guild was a magnificent piece of journalism, though I'm quite certain that the jaundiced eye of Dr Jagannath Mishra will find a 'yellow' hue in it. Your team of writers have done a great service to the readers by providing us a bit of the Bihar CM's stench.
Sanjay Somani, Calcutta

On going through the cover story one could immediately realise what exactly it is that the Bihar CM is after. We are totally with the journalists.
N. Sharma, Rourkela

Congratulations to SUNDAY. Please carry on your crusade against the Mishras of this nation, resolutely. We are all with you.
S. Rao and S. S. Rao, Calcutta

Being a student of journalism, I have learnt from SUNDAY's cover story heading what exactly we can expect from politicians like Dr Jagannath Mishra.
Tish K. Malhotra, New Delhi

Is the Bihar chief minister trying to prove that the pen, in fact, is not mighter than the *lathi?*
R. K. Bhowmik, New Delhi

Is it a Press Bill or a 'suppress Bill'?
Malay Nath, Barrackpore

Obviously, Dr Mishra has moved the Press Bill because he is convinced about one thing—that he is fit to be described only in unprintable words.
N. Madhavan, New Delhi

Your cover story synchronised with public opinion. It is publications like yours, which have been regularly exposing the CM's misdeeds that will go into the bad books of Dr Mishra.
Shambhu Tiwary, Jamshedpur

Will your challenge provoke the chief minister to respond? But surely, you should have dared the 'Empress' herself rather than her minion, for she certainly knows and supports what her sycophants do.
A. K. Rakshit, Bombay

What Dr Mishra has lost sight of,is the fact that journalists in a democratic country cannot and should not operate as timorous sycophants in deference to the wishes of the ruling party. Eternal vigilance as the price of liberty is indeed a time-tested truth. Similarly, a wide-awake press in a democratic country, which is never afraid to call a spade a spade, actually acts as a safety valve for safeguarding its very democracy. If it were not for a free press, President Nixon would not have left after Watergate; Mr Antulay would have remained solid as a rock in Maharashtra, despite his ignominous trusts.
Sushil Kumar Ganguly, Serampore

Does Dr Jagannath Mishra want to figuratively blind the eyes of the pressmen as his men literally did to the prisoners of Bhagalpur?
R. Ventakeswaran, Kancheepuram

Dr Mishra's corruption is like cancer in the terminal stages. No medicine or operation can cure the disease.
K. Sen, Calcutta

There are good newsmen and there are bad newsmen, just as there are good chief ministers and bad chief ministers. It is highly unfair to condemn the entire press for the faults of perhaps a few journalists. Instead of wasting his time on the Press Bill, why doesn't Dr Jagannath Mishra tackle the millions of problems facing his state?
Pushpa Tiwary, Ranchi

Under the Constitution of India, every individual has the fundamental right to express his or her opinion freely. So, any attempt to gag the free and independent press in a democratic country, is sheer injustice.
V. L. Narayana, Howrah

Dr Mishra cannot stand the press for the simple reason that it stands in the way of perpetuating corruption and nepotism. As it is, the Indian press is subjected to various pressures from the government like the government advertisements and the allocation of newsprint quota. Despite this, our press is doing its duty well, much to the chagrin of those at the helm of power. The exposures of Antulay's misdeeds and of the Kuo oil deal are testimony enough. Therefore, it will be a blatant injustice if the Press Bill is allowed to come through.
Buddhadeb Chattopadhyay, Burdwan

Mrs Gandhi's defence of the Bill is an indication of her grand conspiracy against a press which does not sing her praises. SUNDAY should have exposed her connection more in the cover story.
Jose Vincent K. J., Secunderabad

Mrs Gandhi should have made Dr Jagannath Mishra the minister for information and broadcasting. With a man like him at that post, the press would have been instantly gagged and then she could have had peaceful sleep at nights.
Pankaj Singh, Sahibganj (Bihar)

It is very clear from the extracts of the report of the Editors Guild, that Dr Jagannath Mishra, the hon'ble chief minister of Bihar, is a first rate liar. So much so that he ought to be immediately awarded the 'Bharat Ratna' for delivering blatant lies.
Asok Kr Biswas, Hooghly

The only thing I regret about your cover story is that it is a little belated. Had the journalists reacted as vehemently and protested as violently as they are doing now, when the Press Bill was introduced in Tamil Nadu, we would have had no reason to lament now.
M. S. Vaidyanathan, Madras

Who says there is inefficiency in Bihar? The Press Bill was passed through the Assembly in just four minutes!
S. P. Bakshi, Patiala

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It is about time our government realised that the journalists are the voice of the people, and the voice of the people can never be crushed. Dr Mishra and his colleagues will have to pay dearly for this measure.
M. S. Salim, Aligarh

No one knows better than Mrs Gandhi that Dr Jagannath Mishra is leading one of the most corrupt and inefficient Congress(I) governments in the state. The controversial Bihar Press Bill is very obviously, merely a measure to gag the press. I hope the pressmen of this country take the advice of Mr Arun Shourie that was published in SUNDAY's cover story and carry on, with added strength, the functions of investigations and exposures. We, the masses, are with you completely.
Sandhya Swain, Cuttack

If the Bihar chief minister wants to seal the borders of Bihar for any magazine that writes against his government, he must also realise that this is the surest way of launching large-scale smuggling of those magazines into the state.
Pathia Par, Patna

Mr Arun Shourie's expose of Dr Mishra, in your cover story, is astounding. It bares the web of lies and deceit in which the chief minister has enmeshed himself.
Lt Col S. K. Mushran (Retd), Lucknow

That was a remarkable exposition on the Bihar Press Bill. The report by Saumitra Banerjee and the extracts of the Editors Guild report, gave a very clear picture of why the Bill was thought of in the first place, and of its frightful implications.
O. P. Bajaj, Varanasi

The journalists deserve wholehearted support and admiration for their concerted fight against the massive onslaught by the government on the freedom of the press and on democracy.
R. P. Choudhury, Chandigarh

Dr Jagannath Mishra is guilty of attempting to murder—to murder the Fourth Estate. Is it not clear that Mrs Gandhi and Co. are creeping towards dictatorship?
Ranbir Pahwa, Ludhiana

In this politically corrupt nation, many more SUNDAYS are yet to be born. Press Bills like this one, trying to subject the media to tubectomy, will try unsuccessfully to hammer in nails on the coffin of democratic India.
Dr C. Madhusudan, Coimbatore

An ambassadorial task

Dr Subramaniam Swamy's article, *China's return to religion*, (15 August) was very interesting. Whether Dr Swamy brainwashed the Chinese leaders, or whether they were genuinely impressed by him, it certainly resulted in a coming closer together for the two peoples. The young politician has done a wonderful bit of work — much better than even our ambassadors!
M. J. Edwards, Bangalore

It was a wonderful feeling to get a detailed view of our neighbouring country, which since 1962, had become 'so near and yet so far' for us. Dr Swamy gave a thrilling report of his experiences and we felt as if we were rediscovering that great land.
E. N. Murthy, Berhampur (Orissa)

Dr Swamy's article covered some very important aspects of our largest neighbouring country. Once we realise why exactly our relations with China had soured, regaining harmony will be much simpler. Dr Swamy has given us a fresh view of this nation. Chinese pragmatism in both its politics and economics, is worth eulogising, and it is about time we took a cue and reviewed many of our fallacious policies and ideas.
B. L. Saha, 24 Parganas (West Bengal)

The article contains valuable information regarding the changing trends in China, but your heading for the piece was very misleading. China has certainly not gone back to her old religious faith. To a certain extent, there is religious freedom in every socialist country and China too guarantees this in her new Constitution. One cannot forget, however, that religion in a socialist state is quite different from religion as it is practised in a capitalist state. Under capitalism, god too becomes a commodity to be cashed in upon.

In India itself, we have seen how foreign money flows in, under the name of religion and how it has affected our economy. Here, religious leaders freely indulge in politics, win elections and even become rulers. The framers of China's new Constitution are too well aware of this danger. So, while making religious freedom a fundamental right, they clearly state that no religious affairs may be dominated by any foreign country. Communism in religious terms is nothing other than the realisation of god's justice on earth; it stands against exploitation in every form — including the exploitation in the name of religion — and instead, promotes equality among all, putting an end to injustice. Thus, spiritual happiness in a communist country is pure and untinged by selfish gains.
M. K. Gangadharan, Trivandrum

Multinational games

The report, *The name of the game is profiteering* (15 August) by Ajai Mishra and Syed Kamaluddin, exposes brilliantly the game that the multinational drug companies are playing at the cost of the lives of the Third World people.
Jagajjiban Satapathi, Jatni (Orissa)

The article was very timely and informative. However, it must be realised that the doctors in India are prescribing these drugs because there are no substitutes of these drugs available here yet. Neither our government nor the multinationals show any inclination of bringing these new, safe drugs into our country. It is for the government now to take the adequate steps to ban the use of these harmful drugs and to get in the new drugs here. If a small government like that of Bangladesh can take bold steps in modifying its drug policy., it is a matter of surprise that our government has not been able to do so yet.
Dr C. P. Das, Bhubaneswar

A balanced view

Mr Ranjit Sau's column on the economy, *New Delhi is curbing inflation the wrong way* (22 August) has made an extremely valid point: that, when the Western method of economics has not solved even the West's problems, it will certainly not solve India's problems. However, what is our alternative? For the past three decades, India has followed "Socialist" economics, but we seem to have merely got into deeper and deeper trouble, resulting, ironically, in the IMF loan. Will just blaming the Western system put an end to our difficulties? It is very necessary, at this juncture, that we in India must take a very balanced view and not get carried away by ideologies.
Sujash Kumar, Calcutta

Lack of dignity

It is clear from Ms Madhu Jain's article, *The new crusaders of Hinduism* (22 August) that the 'Operation Homecoming' launched by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, is a basically coercive movement. Although there might be some truth in the stories that Arab money is behind the conversion of harijans to Islam, the root cause of this is the lack of human dignity that the harijans face in Hindu society.
Bimalendu S. Dutta Roy, Cuttack

Admirable cool

It was with great pride that I read your report, *Col S. P. Wahi: The man who kept his cool* (22 August). It is very heartening to know that we have people of the stature of Col Wahi in our country, at such important posts today, who can take control of crisis situations
Tapan Ganguli, Tezpur (Assam)

Last letter

Insat is dead. May it rust in peace.
G. Viswanathan, Bombay

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COVER STORY

WAR AND PEACE

Chapter Two

Maneka Gandhi, for the first time since she left 1 Safdarjang Road, threw an open challenge to Rajiv Gandhi when she declared in a meeting in Amethi on 19 September, that she would contest the next Lok Sabha elections from this constituency. SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA, who toured the Amethi and Rae Bareli constituencies with Mrs Maneka Gandhi, says that the reception she received from the people was rousing, and as things stand, the advantage definitely lies with Sanjay Gandhi's widow

On 18 and 19 September, Maneka Gandhi challenged Rajiv Gandhi and his principal aide, Arun Nehru, in their respective dens. She extensively toured the Amethi and Rae Bareli Lok Sabha constituencies, which were formerly represented by the late Sanjay Gandhi and Mrs Indira Gandhi, respectively. And the response which she evoked in the people of the area toured by her, showed that at the age of 26, she certainly has emerged as the youngest major political entity in the country. Had the Amethi byelection been held after 26 August 1981, Maneka could have thought of contesting. But the byelection was held in June 1981, when she was yet to achieve the statutory minimum age of 25 to contest the elections. Seeing the reception which she got in her late husband's constituency, one thing is certain—Maneka has come of age and if she were to contest the next Amethi elections, her chances of success could be rated as being fair.

The Amethi visit of Maneka Gandhi marks the zenith of the succession battle in the Nehru-Gandhi household. As things stand today, Maneka certainly has stolen a march over Rajiv. All the resources of the state are available to Rajiv, like they were to Maneka's late husband, Sanjay. Like Sanjay, Rajiv too has been clearly declared to be the heir-apparent by Mrs Indira Gandhi. But Rajiv does not seem to have been able to show the political acumen of his younger brother. And that is not his fault; in the Nehru-Gandhi household, right from 1970, Sanjay was being slowly groomed for public life whereas Rajiv was the gentle wage-earner, flying turboprop aircraft for the Indian Airlines. The flying accident of Sanjay in June 1980 suddenly saw the mantle fall on Rajiv's

Supporters of Maneka Gandhi crowd around her car in Lucknow: enthusiastic welcome

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shoulders. He gave up flying very reluctantly and had it not been for Maneka's age factor, which necessitated the holding of the Amethi elections in June 1981, Rajiv would have preferred to continue serving the Indian Airlines a little longer, while dabbling in politics as a learner, which he had started doing from August 1980. The Amethi elections saw Rajiv emerge victorious with a massive mandate. He entered active politics. But till today, he has not been able to fill Sanjay's void either for his mother or in the party.

Maneka, on the other hand, had been closely associated with Sanjay's activities for a long time. During the Janata days, when the family was being persecuted, Maneka's *Surya India* became an effective mouthpiece of the Congress(I). Even these days, Rajiv Gandhi has remained the "gentle" member of the household, judiciously keeping himself away from the hustle and the bustle of political life. So, today, when Maneka is challenging Rajiv, the first advantage she has over him is the fact that she has been closely associated with politics and politicians longer than Rajiv. Another advantage which Maneka cashed in on at Amethi and Rae Bareli was the fact that Rajiv Gandhi and Arun Nehru have distrusted most people who had been trusted by Sanjay Gandhi. So, in Amethi and Rae Bareli, Maneka had a ready bank of people who had been given importance by the party and the government during Sanjay Gandhi's days and who feel neglected today. Even if they are out of power, certainly their past importance has given them a certain amount of public relations value. The people being propped up by the present powers that be are mostly novices, whereas the experienced hands, who are out of the limelight today, are handy for Maneka Gandhi.

After her two-day tour of the two constituencies, Maneka has announced that she is going to seek elections from Amethi in the next Lok Sabha polls. On the first day of her tour she did not make any such claim. But after seeing the success of the first day's tour, on 19 September, she started making direct attacks at Rajiv Gandhi and announced that she was going to seek elections from Amethi. "*Maneka ne lalkara hai, Amethi kshetra hamara hai* (Maneka has declared that Amethi is her area)" became the main slogan of her followers from 19 September. Till the previous day, the oft-repeated slogan "*Maneka tum sangharsh karo, hum tumhare saath hain* (Maneka we are one with you in your struggle)" was heard. On 19 September, a new slogan was added to the political lexicon of Uttar Pradesh.

While Maneka has certainly emerged as a major political personality, her brand of politics is not yet clear. In her meetings, the Congress tricolour is used. Is her organisation an offshoot of the Indian National Congress? Till now no policy statement has come from her to show that the Sanjay Gandhi Vichar Manch has any political colour. The five-point programme of the late Sanjay Gandhi, which is the rallying point of the Sanjay Gandhi Vichar Manch, was essentially a programme of social action which had been taken up by the Youth Congress in 1976, during a period when there was internal Emergency in the country and hardly any political activity was visible. Sanjay Gandhi's political ideology was only once made clear, in his interview to Mrs Uma Vasudev in *Surge*, which was published in the pre-Emergency days. In that interview Sanjay Gandhi had made it clear that he did not agree with a lot in the Congress ideology. He had openly criticised the public sector, which had been the brainchild of his late grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru. Later in a public meeting at Calcutta in early 1976, Sanjay Gandhi had criticised the people who branded themselves as being either "left" or "right." He had said that he was a centrist. Will Maneka also take a similar stance?

The crowds which this correspondent saw on the entire route through which Maneka Gandhi's impressive motorcade passed in the Rae Bareli and Amethi areas are a testimony of her mass appeal. Seeing her popularity one has to accept her as a political personality. But what is her brand of politics?

If the masses were to turn up for Maneka the way they are doing at every place she goes, then a very disturbing sign in the national polity becomes visible. Are the people endorsing Sanjay Gandhi's line of "no left, no right"? Are they supporting the emergence of personality-oriented politics, as distinguished from policy-oriented politics? The present impasse is certainly the result of the growing lack of political organisation at the grassroots level. Apart from the left parties, limited to certain regions of the country, there is little political organisation among other parties. This is perhaps the reason why a non-political trade unionist like Datta Samant is able to catch the imagination of the workers in Bombay. Dacoits have been there since ages, but a phenomenon like Chhabiram (who was shot dead some months back) is unprecedented in the villages. The void created by the lack of political organisation is being filled up by anyone who is able to successfully catch the imagination of the people.

The Rajiv vs Maneka battle has entered an interesting phase. For the present, the score is advantage Maneka. And the way the people of Rae Bareli and Amethi have given a rousing reception to Maneka, it seems that Mrs Gandhi need not be blamed for promoting hereditary politics. The people seem to be loving every minute of the game.

Maneka at a public meeting in Amethi

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Maneka comes of age

UDAYAN SHARMA reports on the receptions Maneka Gandhi got in Amethi and Rae Bareli on 18 and 19 September

"While floods and poverty have hit your region, your present Member of Parliament is busy with foreign tours. I hope he will return before the flood waters recede. I know that after my visit to this constituency, development work which had been neglected for the past two years would be stepped up." With these words Mrs Maneka Gandhi, daughter-in-law of the Prime Minister, fired her first direct salvo at Mr Rajiv Gandhi who is the elected representative from the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency. She came and she conquered—but not because of her policies or her personality. She went back a victor because of over-reactions, lies and false promises made by the ruling party. It is entirely due to the Congress(I) that Maneka Gandhi has won the preliminary rounds against the ruling party without doing anything much. She has no political programme (she herself admits that the five-point programme is a social programme) and she is yet to prove that she can match Mrs Indira Gandhi's political astuteness and sharpness. Even so, she has secured a political victory over Mr Rajiv Gandhi. Maneka Gandhi is prepared for a long-drawn political battle, while the Arun Nehrus and the Siddhartha Reddys are not. On her two-day visit to the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency on 18 and 19 September she exposed that the efficiency of Rajiv Gandhi's confidants was simply over-estimated. During her hectic tour of the constituency, Maneka Gandhi travelled over about 220 kilometres of bad roads. When she arrived at Amausi airport in Lucknow on the morning of 18 September from Delhi, she was welcomed by at least a thousand slogan-shouting and dancing Sanjay Vichar Manch boys.

They took her to Lucknow city in a motorcade consisting of nine buses and 50 cars, numerous tempos and Matador vans. This was Maneka Gandhi's first visit to Lucknow after her ouster from the PM's house. She had been thrown out of 1, Safdarjung Road when she had attended the Lucknow convention of Sanjay faithfuls on 28 March. The massive motorcade slowly inched towards the city while her young supporters chanted: *"Indira tujhe nikali hai, desh tujhe apnayega.* (Mrs Gandhi has thrown you out but the whole country welcomes you)."

When she left Lucknow at about 2.00 pm the same day, her motorcade included 55 cars, a number of Matador vans and four jeeps. Her first stop was at Mohanlalganj in Lucknow itself, where she was welcomed by a cheering crowd led by Jhabbu Raja alias Shivendra Bakshi Singh. She then went to Jais to address a public meeting. In between Jais and Mohanlalganj, she was forced to stop at Satyanarayan Tiwari Vidya Mandir, Sanjay Shiksha Sangh, Nigoha, on the border of Rae Bareli district, Harchandpur, Kathwara, Gangaganj, ITI industrial area in Rae Bareli,

Maneka Gandhi stands on her toes to make a point: reaching out to an audience

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Rae Bareli textile mills workers' office, Fursatganj, the Sanjay Bal Mandir at Fursatganj, Uttar Pradesh Anusoochit Jati Seva Sangh office in Naseerabad, Gram Sabha, Mohana and several other places. Everywhere she was welcomed and cheered by the poor villagers. All the schools situated near the route had declared an unofficial holiday to welcome Maneka Gandhi. Surprisingly, most of the teachers of these schools were leading the processions. No one could have imagined that she would get such an enthusiastic response from the crowds. During the brief stopovers, she always started her speeches with an attempt to win over the simple villagers. Said she, "I came here first to you as a bride to seek blessings. Today, I return to you as a widow asking for your support and strength." With these words she stormed through the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency.

Jais must have been an experience for her because, according to two senior journalists from Lucknow, who have covered elections in Amethi in the past two decades, the attendance at the public meeting was unprecedented. Jais is a small locality with a population of not more than three or four thousand people. Most of the people who had gathered there had come from adjoining villages to hear the PM's *bahu*. She told the cheering crowds that the "Congress of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi has now been turned into a party of *goondas* and smugglers. One person tried to end the misery of the local people but the local people have only got a helipad after his death which you can neither use nor eat."

She then pointed out one by one the projects which had been initiated by Sanjay Gandhi which have been neglected after his death.

She had a dig at the Prime Minister herself when, while referring to the foundation stone laid by Mrs Indira Gandhi for the Sanjay Memorial Hospital at Munshiganj on 1 Septemper, she said: "The foundation stone had been laid once before in June 1981. But no progress has been made even after the second foundation stone was laid for setting up the hospital."

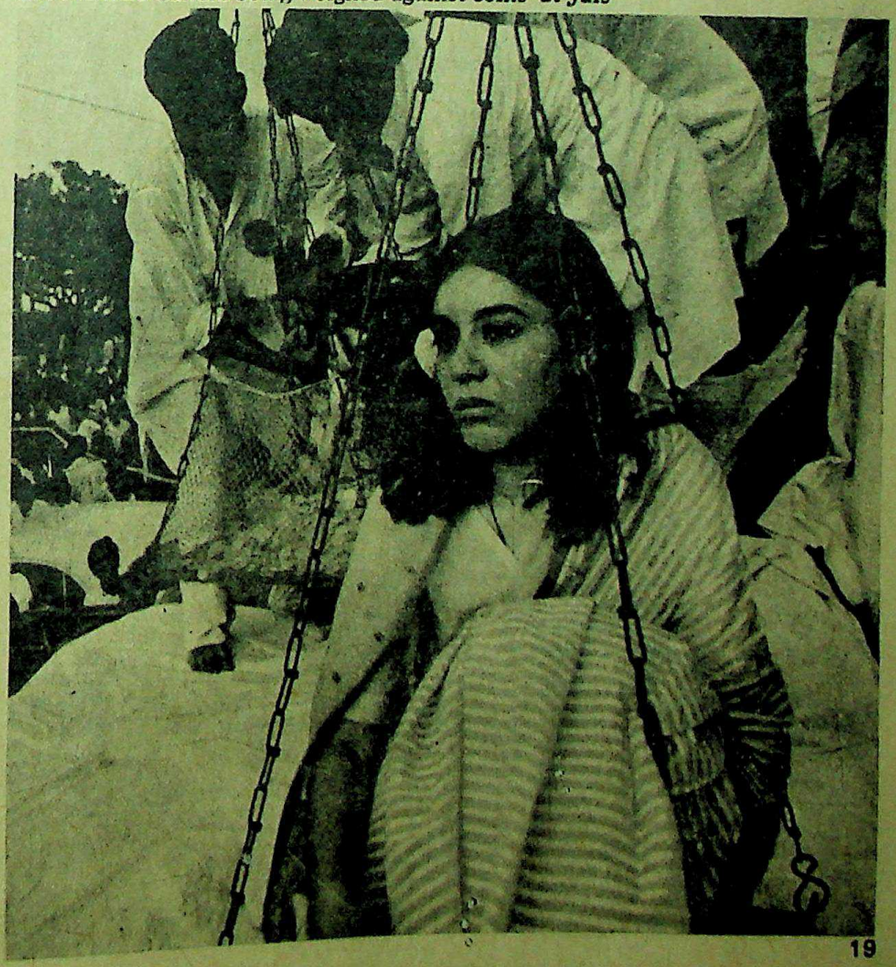
What is the cause of so much resentment against the ruling party in this VIP constituency? The reasons are very simple. Just before the June 1981 Lok Sabha byelections, the local people had high expectations from the ruling party. But Rajiv Gandhi's victory from Amethi has not changed things: thus far little has been done for the people of Amethi. Inspite of all the promises and well-advertised plans and schemes, nothing concrete has come about. Perhaps, Mr Gandhi is to blame. He committed a blunder in placing Siddhartha Reddy incharge of his constituency. The local people are not ready to accept sermons and the bureaucratic approaches of Mr Reddy or Mr Arun Nehru, the other Rajiv Gandhi aide. Their disenchantment with this setup has proved to be a boon in disguise for Maneka Gandhi. One the other side, firebrand Maneka loyalist Akbar Ahmed has worked hard in the constituency over the last two years. He has toured Amethi and has been successful in establishing Sanjay Vichar Manch offices in every village of the area. And Mrs Maneka Gandhi's successful tour has proved the political acumen of Akbar "Dumpy" Ahmed.

The second day of her tour was different: her mood had changed. During the tour, her supporters, for the first time challenged Rajiv Gandhi to face the people of Amethi. She began her second day with a public meeting at Gauriganj. There was a marked difference in the speech too. For the first time, she directly attacked her brother-in-law. She mentioned that their Member of Parliament was busy with his foreign tours when floods were ravaging the region. She covered 110 kms and stopped at Paniyar, Musafirkhana, Kasimganj, Jagdishpur, Jafarganj and Inhona. Huge crowds welcomed her everywhere.

It was like a homecoming she told everyone. She got a rousing reception at Inhona where Chowdhary Azhar Hussain had engaged four sets of bands and about a hundred riflemen. There were ear-piercing sounds of crackers everywhere. Thousands of local Muslims welcomed her with songs and dances. She criticised the government in every public meeting and asked them to support her fight against persons in power.

There were three main features of her visit. Azhar Hussain was the first person who asked the gathering at Inhona, *"Hath uthao kaun-kaun chahta hai ki Manekaji Amethi say chunav ladain* (All those who want Maneka Gandhi to contest elections from Amethi, raise your hands)." Mr Narayan Dutt Tiwari had done the same thing for the late Sanjay Gandhi at Fursatganj in 1976. Maneka Gandhi told everybody during her meetings that she has started offices everywhere in Amethi constituency to receive reports of peoples' problems in the area. And a new slogan was heard. It was a change from the earlier slogan of *"Indira nay nikala hai, desh tujhe apnayega."* The new slogan heard at Munshiganj was *"Maneka nay lalkara hai, Amethi kshetra hamara hai* (Maneka has said, 'Amethi is ours')." She has given clear hints that she will contest from this constituency in the next elections. Mrs Maneka Gandhi will march in protest against the Criminal Penal Code amendments and the Bihar Press Bill in Patna on 3 October. The war between Maneka Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi is now clearly on.

Mrs Maneka Gandhi being weighed against coins at Jais



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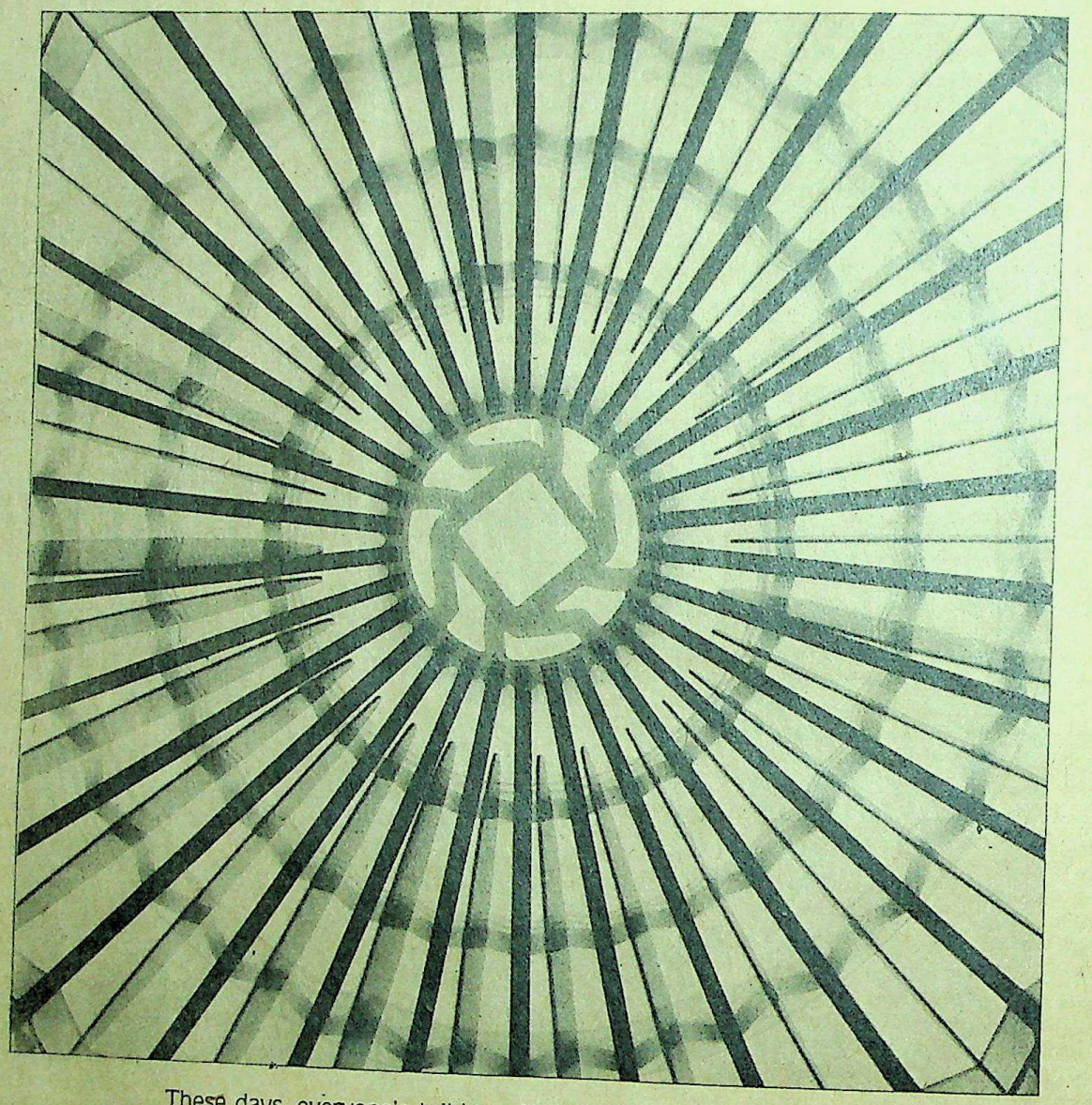

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Resentment against Mrs Gandhi is growing

By KEWAL VARMA

While ruling their vast empire, India's Moghul rulers always faced a dilemma: should they have strong *subedars* to run the provincial governments or weak *subedars*? The emperors who were sure of their own power, opted for strong governors who could provide stable administrations. Insecure rulers, on the other hand, appointed weak *subedars*, whose administrations tended to be anarchic, causing misery to the people. Weak Moghul emperors feared that strong *subedars*, finding the seat of power unstable, would declare UDI (unilateral declaration of independence) and conspire to wrest power from the emperor in Delhi.

Independent India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was confident of his own position, and the chief ministers in the Congress-ruled states—Bidhan Chandra Roy, Govind Ballabh Pant, Pratap Singh Kairon, Sanjiva Reddy, Morarji Desai and later Y.B. Chavan—were leaders in their own right. They did not need Delhi to prop up their governments. The chief ministers played a crucial role in the succession battle that took place after Nehru's death, in making Lal Bahadur Shastri the Prime Minister. After Shastri died at Tashkent, the chief ministers had an even bigger hand in Mrs Gandhi's emergence as the PM. In fact, during the initial days of Mrs Gandhi's prime ministership, a group of chief ministers and a few leaders of the Congress, known as the Syndicate, guided her actions. But within a short while, Mrs Gandhi used her political skill, courage and populism to out-manoeuvre them and establish her supremacy. But even then, there still remained a few chief ministers who were leaders in their own right, and who would not act at the PM's bidding: Kamalapati Tripathi followed by H. N. Bahuguna in UP, Mohanlal Sukhadia in Rajasthan, Brahmananda Reddy in Andhra and V.P. Naik backed by Y.B. Chavan in Maharashtra.

But after the 1969 split in the Congress, Mrs Gandhi's confidence in her position seemed to have been eroded: she was uncertain and immensely suspicious of her own colleagues. Therefore, in order to make her position more secure, Mrs Gandhi consciously set about destabilising some of the chief ministers who thought they were in their positions, not by the grace of Mrs Gandhi but by virtue of their own power-base. One by one, all such chief ministers were deposed on one pretext on another. By the time the Emergency was declared in 1975, only one independent chief minister remained: H.N. Bahuguna. But within a few months of the Emergency being declared, even he had to leave office.

When Mrs Gandhi was defeated by the Janata in 1977, some of the men she had set up were the first to desert her. As she is never tired of remarking in private conversations on politics, "Who else but Sanjay stood by me?" (It is a separate point, that today she wants to wipe out all traces of Sanjay's legacy, in order to ease the succession for her elder son.) Once back in power after the Lok Sabha polls in 1980, Mrs Gandhi made absolutely certain that no one with any claims to power in his own right, became the chief minister of a state. Dr Channa Reddy apparently entertained such illusions and had the temerity to celebrate his birthday in a big way. The Prime Minister raised her little finger and Dr Channa Reddy was no longer the CM of Andhra Pradesh.

The selection of chief ministers in 1980 was left mainly to Sanjay Gandhi. With the exception of Mr Darbara Singh, not a single Congress(I) CM in the country had been tried and tested in politics. In the process, even the well-established caste equations were ignored. Next to loyalty, the only other criterion for a potential chief minister was that he should have no independent power-base of his own. From that crop of chief ministers, only Mr A. R. Antulay tried to spread his own wings, and it is well-known that Mrs Gandhi was not unduly upset when he had to leave.

It is precisely because Mrs Gandhi does not like any chief minister to have his own political base that she does not give a chance to the state legislatures to elect leaders freely. Similarly since she does not want any chief minister to feel obliged to any other person except herself for getting the post, the final choice are always her's. Her consultations in this regard with others is only a formality. The only other person who is privy to her decision-making process is her son, Rajiv. If a normal democratic process of decision-making is not followed, subjective likes and dislikes determine the choices. It is no wonder that her choices are proving to be wrong. A number of chief ministers selected in 1980 had to go: Jagannath Pahadia, T. Anjaiah, B. Venkataram, V. P. Singh and A. R. Antulay. Even Sripati Mishra who was selected only a few weeks ago as chief minister of UP is proving to be a flop. Because the number of persons consulted are so few, Mrs Gandhi cannot get to know their antecedents. For instance, only after the announcement was made, Mrs Gandhi learnt that Mr B. Venkataram is a member of the Upper House.

Mrs Gandhi's style of functioning has created a situation of permanent instability in the states. The chief minister's authority is totally eroded. Ministers ignore their chief ministers, visit Delhi and after clearance from the Prime Minister's house take decisions — all without the knowledge of their chief ministers. Chief ministers cannot include men of their own choice into the cabinet without the clearance of Delhi. They cannot even change the portfolios of their colleagues. For instance Mr Shiv Charan Mathur, chief minister of Rajasthan, submitted his proposals for a cabinet expansion about three months ago. But these proposals have not yet been processed by the PM's aide, M. L. Fotedar. When these will reach the Prime Minister's table is anybody's guess. Result: there is a total breakdown of law-and-order in the Hindi belt. Maharashtra was the best-administered state in the country but its government was taken unawares by the policemen's strike. The administration has become callous towards the problems of the people. If Mrs Gandhi still wins elections, it is only by default. If Mrs Gandhi's personality cult still holds good it is because the people believe in one God, and not in many Gods.

The resentment against this style of functioning, within the party, is growing albeit slowly. When Mr T. Anjaiah was removed, Mr Narain Dutt Tiwari went to Hyderabad to get the consensus of the party legislature. The party passed a one-line resolution which said that "it authorises Mrs Gandhi to select the leader." Mr Tiwari wanted to add these words "in accordance with the consensus expressed by the members," but he was not allowed to do so. This time over 50 legislators, in a signed memorandum to the Prime Minister, said, "The honour of 60 crores of Telugus cannot be bartered away on the streets of Delhi." The trend is dangerous and one has to wait and watch.

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SPECIAL REPORT

Is Andhra Pradesh slipping out of Mrs Gandhi's hands?

TOOSHAR PANDIT and SYED MAJEEDUL HASAN report on why the state has had four chief ministers in three years

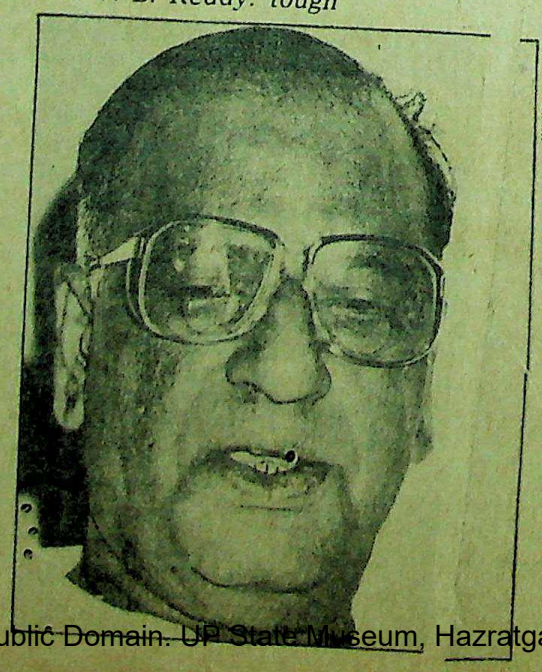
It was a few minutes past 8 pm on Saturday 11 September when one of the Prime Minister's aides, M. L. Fotedar, after several attempts, finally got through by telephone to the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy at his Hyderabad residence. The CM was away since midday touring parts of Mrs Gandhi's constituency: Medak. The major industries minister, M. Baga Reddy, Mrs Gandhi's major domo for the constituency too would have been with the CM. But responding to summons which he received late on the previous night, Baga Reddy had left for Delhi by the morning flight. He was not the only one to be called to Delhi. Already half of Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy's 34-member cabinet, the APCC(I) president C. Dass, and a number of other important party leaders had reached Delhi, most of them without even bothering to inform the CM that they were going. So, when the call came from Delhi, Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy was not surprised. Indeed, he was expecting it. And the message was that he should come to Delhi as fast as he could.

Bhavanam Venkataram, was in any case planning to go to Delhi on Monday 13 September to ask for funds to finance the state's drought relief plans. More than one-third of the state was affected by drought and money was urgently needed to stave off famine in the affected areas. The summons meant advancing his departure by a day. For the officers preparing the note for the CM on the nature and extent of the drought, it meant working extra hours to complete it before the CM's departure. By the time Mr Venkatram arrived in Delhi at around 11 am on Sunday 12 September, rumours of his dismissal were doing the rounds in the capital. Mrs Gandhi had already met several Andhra leaders, including two former chief ministers K. Brahmananda Reddy and T. Anjaiah. And the choice for Bhavanam's likely successor appeared to have narrowed down to just two people: revenue minister N. Janardhan Reddy and a MP from Kurnool and former finance minister of the state K. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy. At that stage Mr Venkatram could hardly do anything else but resign to his inevitable fate.

Normally, Mrs Gandhi avoids party meetings on Sundays unless it is very urgent. That Sunday, however, while she met a number of Andhra Pradesh leaders to discuss the political situation there, she could not find any time for Bhavanam Venkatram, waiting at Andhra Bhavan, to be called by her. The pattern is familiar by now. When Dr Channa Reddy fell foul with her she treated him similarly; when she decided to get rid of Anjaiah she kept him waiting. And now it was Venkatram's turn. Finally, after waiting for about 30 hours, Bhavanam Venkatram could get to see Mrs Gandhi for about 10 minutes in the afternoon of Monday 13 September. During his conversation, Mr Venkatram could hardly detect anything, let alone think that Mrs Gandhi was planning a change in the Andhra Pradesh leadership. She talked mostly about the drought in Andhra Pradesh, how to fight it, what the CM's problems were in implementing the party programmes, and how best the party could fight the Assembly elections in February 1983. The party affairs were discussed only casually. She even remonstrated the ministers and party leaders from Andhra for crowding in Delhi. "Why are they here?" she asked the CM. "Tell them to go back and be with the drought-affected people," she counselled.

Mrs Gandhi, wiser after her experiment with Venkatram was, of course, playing her cards this time close to her chest. It was she, who, bypassing the normal democratic process had foisted Bhavanam Venkatram, a political lightweight, on Andhra Pradesh to succeed Anjaiah. Bhavanam Venkatram had neither the political support nor the administrative competence to offer the leadership that he was expected to. Worse, he had hardly any say in selecting either his cabinet or in matters relating to party organisation. His deputy was named by Delhi and so was his entire cabinet. Again, Delhi chose C. Das to succeed Kona Prabhakara Rao as the APCC(I) president even though he had been suspended by the APCC(I) for indulging in anti-party activities. Indeed, the first thing that C. Das did on becoming the party president was to withdraw the suspension order against himself. So, if Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy had failed to deliver the goods, the fault clearly lay with Mrs Gandhi. She might not admit this in public but deep down in her heart she knew that the folly was hers. And with elections round the corner she could hardly afford the luxury of a blundering and basically an inactive person as the CM of a state which had been with her even in her darkerst days. At the same time she did not want to give the impression that she had hustled Bhavanam Venkatram out. That would be owning up the guilt. And that she surely was not prepared to do. But

CM V. B. Reddy: tough



M. A. Rahim

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her mind was made up almost the day the Telugu filmstar N. T. Rama Rao launched his Telegu Desam, on 29 march, a month after Mr Venkatram had taken over as the CM. One consideration which weighed in favour of Mr Venkatram, while being selected as the CM was that as his wife was from the economically powerfully Kamma community, he would be able to win over the Kammas, who were smarting under neglect and appeared to be turning against tthe Congress(I). Keeping them within the fold of the Congress(I) was important for the party because much of the money for the party coffers came from them. But Mr Venkatram lost that advantage and with it his weight with Mrs Gandhi when N. T. Rama Rao, a Kamma, launched his party and immediately attracted the Kammas to his fold. Worse still, Bhavanam Venkatram had no answer to his one-time classmate, N. T. Rama Rao. In all his 200-day tenure as CM, Mr Venkatram could not organise a single major rally anywhere in the state to effectively combat the steady advance that Rama Rao was making. By itself the Telugu Desam hardly looks a match for the formidable Congress(I) in Andhra Pradesh: till now its influence is limited to the Kamma community and the coastal region only. But Rama Rao looms larger than life in Andhra Pradesh more by default: through the incompetence of and the frictions within the ruling party.

Mrs Gandhi was understandably disturbed by this. But this time she did not want to rush things. One reason was that she did not want to interrupt the Assembly session once again. Anjaiah was dismissed in the middle of the session of the Assembly. To facilitate his dismissal, Anjaiahwas asked to adjourn the Assembly sine die after the motion of thanks on the Governor's address had been adopted. His successor Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy had an Assembly session in March for a brief period to get a vote on account budget passed. And Mrs Gandhi decided to let him present the annual budget for which the Assembly was summoned on 9 July and continued till 9 September with a brief break in between.

But even as the budget session was in progress, she was talking with her advisers on Andhra affairs—union ministers Pranab Mukherjee, R. Venkataraman and P. V. Narasimha Rao—as to what should be done next. Indeed, she was willing to listen to anybody. She would talk to her industries minister N. D. Tiwari, petroleum minister P. Shiv Shanker, the AICC(I) general secretary, G. K. Moopanar—and even K. Brahmananda Reddy, once her bitter enemy. The first hint that she was thinking of a change in leadership in Andhra came when she asked Pranab Mukherjee and Narasimha Rao to look for a successor to Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy, after her talks with former Andhra chief ministers Dr M. Channa Reddy and K. Brahmananda Reddy in Delhi in the middle of August.

And, yet till the last moment she sought to give an impression that in selecting and new CM—the fourth in 3 years—she was not imposing her will on the people of Andhra Pradesh but was actually acknowledging the wishes of her partymen from that state. It was to conjure up an illusion that an elaborate drama had to be staged. So elaborate was the drama that one would have thought that Mrs Gandhi was taking precautions against an impending coup. Could not the change in leadership wait for another week or so till she returned from her trip to Moscow? But the way things were handled would make one think that heaven would have fallen if the change did not take place before Mrs Gandhi left. Look at the scenario. As soon as the state Assembly adjourns prominent Andhra Congress(I) leaders rush to Delhi. The finance minister, Pranab Mukherjee, even before he has briefed his colleagues in the cabinet adequately about his mission abroad and almost from the moment he returns from Washington, is preoccupied with just one thing: discussing the future of the Congress(I) in Andhra Pradesh. Indeed for about a week at least three other senior ministers of Mrs Gandhi's cabinet—P. V. Narasimha Rao, R. Venkataraman and P. Shiv Shankar—seem to be doing little else. Even in Moscow, Narasimha Rao makes himself available for consultations by telephone. And, the matter is so urgent that 19 out of the state's 34 ministers have to be in Delhi for days together at a time when Andhra is facing one of the worst droughts. These extraordinary proceedings defy reason and are just mindboggling.

All this for what? Even as the show was being put up, Mrs Gandhi had already made her choice. It was the 62-year-old MP, K. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy. He was in the running for the office of the CM following the dismissal of Anjaiah. But, this time he was so sure about being promoted to the office that he stayed back in Hyderabad till the drama reached a climax on 14 September. If the other contender, N. Janardhan Reddy, had the spotlight on him for a time, it was because Mrs Gandhi wished it to be so. Janardhan Reddy, who was an MP for about six years between 1972 and 1978, of course, had some powerful supporters both among the union ministers advising Mrs Gandhi and in her secretariat and if their will had prevailed he certainly would havebecome the chief minister. But his standing with Mrs Gandhi apparently is not that high: she preferred Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy as successor to Anjaiah. This time also Janardhan Reddy really did not stand a chance. He was fighting just a mock battle he was not aware of, but it suited Mrs Gandhi eminently.

Depend on the Congress(I) for entertainment. Even after Pranab Mukherjee formally informed Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy at around 2 pm on Wednesday 15 September that he was the high command's choice for the office of Andhra CM, the drama did not end. Reaching Hyderabad the next morning, union defence minister R. Venkataraman who had been assigned to see through the rest of the formality at the Andhra Pradesh Congress(I) legislature party meeting, suddenly decided to ascertain the views of the Congress(I) legislators as to whom they would like to succeed Bhavanam Vankatram Reddy. There was really nothing to ascertain: Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy who had arrived in Hyderabad the previous evening from Delhi was already receiving the treatment from his partymen that only a CM could expect. Nevertheless, Venkataraman's exercise delayed the CLP(I) meeting by two hours; it was scheduled at 10 am but actually held a little after noon. In another 35 minutes Mrs Gandhi's wishes received legitimacy as Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy's name was proposed by outgoing chief minister Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy as the Congress(I) legislature party leader and N. Janardhan Reddy, T. Anjaiah and C. Das got to their feet one after another in support of the proposal. The election, predictably, was unanimous.

However, this drama was not without its irony. From the moment he was elected as the CLP(I) leader, Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy had been telling people that he had been elected "democratically" and that he would be free to choose his cabinet. He would, of course, seek the counsel of the central leaders but the cabinet he was going to have would be according to his choice. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy was to leave for Delhi on the morning of 18 September with his list of ministers to get it approved by the high command.

B. Venkatram

Sondeep Shankar

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First Vishwa Kannada Sammelana

(JAN 3–9, 1983)

THE GREAT CONFLUENCE OF A GREAT PEOPLE

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The royal City of Mysore, the venue of the first World Kannada Conference, is getting dressed up to welcome the lovers of Kannada from all over the world. A rich fare of programmes is being finalised for this week-long conference. This conference will trigger a number of projects of permanent nature to help the people of Karnataka fulfil their aspirations.

January 3–9, 1983 it is "ON TO MYSORE CITY" for all Kannada lovers.

WELCOME TO THE FIRST WORLD KANNADA CONFERENCE

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When he reached the airport to catch the flight at around 12.20 pm he was told that the Airbus by which he was to travel would have to be searched before it could take off, as an unidentified person claimed over telephone that there was a bomb hidden in the aircraft. That would delay the departure of the flight by a couple of hours.

Hearing this Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy decided to turn back and get his list approved over the telephone. He was particularly keen that the swearing-in ceremony be held at 1.30 am on Sunday, 19 September as astrologers thought this was the most auspicious time for him to take over. Normally, he would have been sworn-in the day he was elected the CLP(I) leader. But, though the Governor, K. C. Abraham, cut short his holiday in Kerala and returned to Hyderabad on the night of 15 September anticipating this possibility, the swearing-in ceremony was put off, because the three days following 16 September were ruled out by the astrologers as inauspicious. Apparently, Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy could not get his list approved over the telephone and was advised to take the evening flight to Delhi, which he did. As a result, the swearing-in ceremony had to be postponed by another day—till the morning of Monday 20 September. Most of the Congress(I) leaders including some 15 ministers of the outgoing cabinet aspiring for a berth in the new cabinet, however, knew better. And so they left for Delhi ahead of Bhaskara Reddy to lobby for their respective cases. So much for the freedom of a Congress(I) CM.

When Mrs Gandhi promoted Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy to the office of the CM she must have expected him to improve the Congress(I) image which had been badly mauled by internecine quarrels and scandals during the tenure of Dr Channa Reddy and his successor, Anjaiah. Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy could neither remove the stigma of corruption nor restore harmony in the party. The success of minority groups of party legislators in manipulating the ouster of both Dr Reddy and Anjaiah with active encouragement from the high command had created a number of power centres, all gunning for the same target: the office of the chief minister. So, when the plum went Venkatram's way, many influential leaders who had their eyes set on the office felt cheated. If they did not make any noise at that time it was because their instinct for survival took precedence over their ambitions.

Hardly was the ink dry on their solemn pledge of support, when intrigues and infighting began to undermine Venkatram's position. This came out rather sharply, when in March, the Congress(I) candidate M. A. Hashim, who was the home

N. T. R: a threat to Mrs Gandhi

minister in Anjaiah's cabinet lost to the opposition candidate, P. Babul Reddy, of the Janata Party at the Rajya Sabha polls, despite the Congress(I) having a massive majority in the legislature.

All the while Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy could do nothing; he silently suffered the humiliation. Indeed, even at that early stage one could see that he had neither any control over his ministers or the partymen. Having gained their berths in the cabinet on Delhi's dictates, the ministers did not feel obliged to the CM. They knew too well that Venkatram was powerless to discipline them as long as their mentors in Delhi backed them. As a result, Andhra Pradesh appeared to be run by 34 ministers instead of one. Bhavanam Venkatram accepted this state of affairs. What else could he do? Wasn't he the chief minister at the gesture of Mrs Gandhi? Further, he did not command any significant following among the partymen. This sense of insecurity led him to follow the maxim: live and let live. And to do that he withdrew into a shell. He became inaccessible to both partymen and the public. Worse, he lacked any initiative or drive.

All this taken together presented a picture of total confusion. Things came to such a pass that every Congressman, to whichever faction he belonged (there are six distinct factions), were convinced that with a leader like Bhavanam Venkatram at the helm, the Congress(I) in the state was a sinking ship. There was a strong demand that he should be replaced—and as fast as possible if Mrs Gandhi wanted the state to remain with her. It was not really the fear of NTR that was at the back of the demand: the Congressmen were more concerned about the escalating tensions within the party. The present change, most Congress(I) leaders believe, should have come about much earlier, before the Congress(I) image suffered an avoidable erosion due to poor leadership to Bhavanam Venkatram.

No tears were shed at the exit of Bhavanam Venkatram. The Congress(I), as well as a large majority of people, in Andhra Pradesh would like to write off his 200-day tenure as something of a bad debt. His successor, Vijaya Bhaskara Rao, is generally regarded as a shrewd politician: he has risen from the ranks and surely knows his way to move around in the complex Andhra politics. Back in 1955, he surprised everybody when in his debut at the Assembly elections he defeated a formidable rival, N. Sankara Reddy. And, again both in 1977 and 1980, he won the Kurnool Lok Sabha seat by a handsome margin. As a finance minister from 1967 to 1970 in the K. Brahmananda Reddy cabinet, he enjoyed a reputation of being a competent administrator. By and large, his image in Andhra Pradesh is of a person who is honest, competent—and tough.

He certainly has the qualifications to accomplish the task assigned to him—that of carrying a faction-ridden party with him for a massive electoral victory for the Congress(I). Nevertheless, it is an uphill task. What makes the task even more difficult is the fact that many of the prominent central leaders are parties to factional feuds in the state. Two main factions owe their allegiance and look for guidance to P.V. Narasimha Rao and P. Shiv Shankar. Even non-Andhra leaders like Pranab Mukherjee and Narain Dutt Tewari are also said to have their own favourites.

In the circumstances, the latest shuffle, understandably has not inspired as much enthusiasm as it should have normally. The people of Andhra Pradesh have by now become so used to being ruled by Delhi—for a decade now it has had to put up with the chief ministers nominated by Delhi—that nothing encourages enthusiasm in them. The question that they are asking now is even if the new chief minister has the skill and the will to arrest the drift, does he have the necessary authority to enforce the will? Frequent changes in leadership of the Congress(I) have only helped to reinforce cynicism among the people who have been with Mrs Gandhi even in her darkest days.

To put his party back on the rails, Mr Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy would have to accomplish a lot within just about six months. A popular joke doing the rounds in Andhra is that a Congress(I) chief minister is busy in the first few months selecting his cabinet and the rest of the tenure fighting his partymen trying to bring him down. Already he has created quite a few enemies: the people whom he did not include in his cabinet. These were the disgruntled people who had brought the downfall of three successive chief minnisters: Dr Channa Reddy, Tangturi Anjaiah and Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy. And, having tasted blood once, can a tiger keep away from human prey?

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'War' in the Indian armed forces?

The navy claims VSTOL aircraft as a special naval requirement for use on aircraft carriers as well as a larger share of helicopters; the army has stepped up its demand for an army aviation corps. The air force is naturally alarmed by these trends and is putting up a stiff opposition. Should the air force be disbanded and its assets divided between the army and the navy, as one army officer recently suggested? LT GEN E.A. VAS (Retired) looks into the case.

When the Wright brothers first flew their biplane in 1903, the effect was sensational. Somehow, an impression was created that the air was a new mysterious element with unknown dangers and rules. The early apostles of air power were full of romantic prophecies. As a result, a healthy evolution of air power has been confused, both by the initial glamour surrounding a flyer, and by the lack of historical perspective on the part of its exponents.

The World Wars

At the start of World War I, the major European powers each marshalled an assortment of monoplanes and biplanes manned by volunteers. Yet, air power in Britain was looked upon with suspicion and young regimental officers were discouraged by their seniors from associating with the air force for fear that it might ruin their careers. But as the impact of air power was forced on the ground forces, the army was compelled to look around for suitable air volunteers. Relatively obscure and junior army officers suddenly found themselves promoted. This roused jealousy and did not help matters as the air force has since apparently suffered from a permanent complex of having grown, like Eve, from the rib of an army, Adam.

Naval aviation was dominated by the Royal Navy (RN) which developed seaplanes for an anti-submarine role. The first effective aircraft carrier only appeared after World War I, which had left the victorious powers with ruined economies, a large surplus of aircraft and young airmen eager to make flying a career. But there was no real air force higher command. After World War I, the naval air arm in Britain was subordinated to the Royal Air Force (RAF). It was not until 1937 that the error was remedied and the Fleet Air Arm was again brought fully under Admiralty control.

India had several RAF squadrons after World War I but none of these were officered by Indians. Public demand for the admission of Indians in the air force was conceded by the British but was slow to be implemented. By the commencement of World War II, only one Indian squadron had been raised and trained for army cooperation in the North-West Frontier.

At the start of World War II, air power was no longer anciliary; it was a force to be reckoned with. Irrespective of which service was involved, it was clear that efficient command depended upon personalities, planning and communications. It was also evident that the use of aircraft, like any other weapon, without a doctrine was meaningless. Once again, the lack of air power theorists was apparent. But it soon became evident that at no stage of the war was air power alone decisive; whereas its absence might be decisive, its presence could not guarantee decisive results by itself. Most air forces planned on fulfilling four roles:

- Control of the air by fighter aircraft to permit the army, navy or air force to mount operations safe from enemy air activity.
- Reconnaissance, both photographic and visual; also artillery observation.
- Transport air support to enable the movement of stores, men and casualty evacuation.
- Offensive air support at the strategic level by bombers and at the tactical level by fighter and ground attack aircraft for interdiction (the cutting-off of all routes into a battle area) and close support to ground forces.

The German Luftwaffe, to begin with, swarmed over Europe; it seemed that nothing could stop a combination of armour and air, as represented by blitzkrieg tactics. Air Marshal Goering assured Hitler that the Luftwaffe would subdue the RAF and Great Britain, thereby enabling the German army to cross the English Channel. The Battle of Britain saw dog-fights between hundreds of German and British fighters, massive 600-bomber raids on British towns

The warring chiefs: Dawson (navy), Singh (air force) and Krishnarao (army)

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and the first use of radar to direct aircraft during battle. But the Germans lost this battle, diverted their forces to capture Crete with an impressive airborne landing in which 500 transport planes were used, and then turned towards Russia. But eventually they lost air power and the war.

By now, the Indian Air Force (IAF) had expanded and attained a strength of nine squadrons. It was a tactical air force and undertook the roles of reconnaissance, combat fighting, ground support and interdiction. The IAF was solely dependent on the RAF for its supply of machines. Similarly, the Indian navy was always in a secondary and subordinate role to the RN.

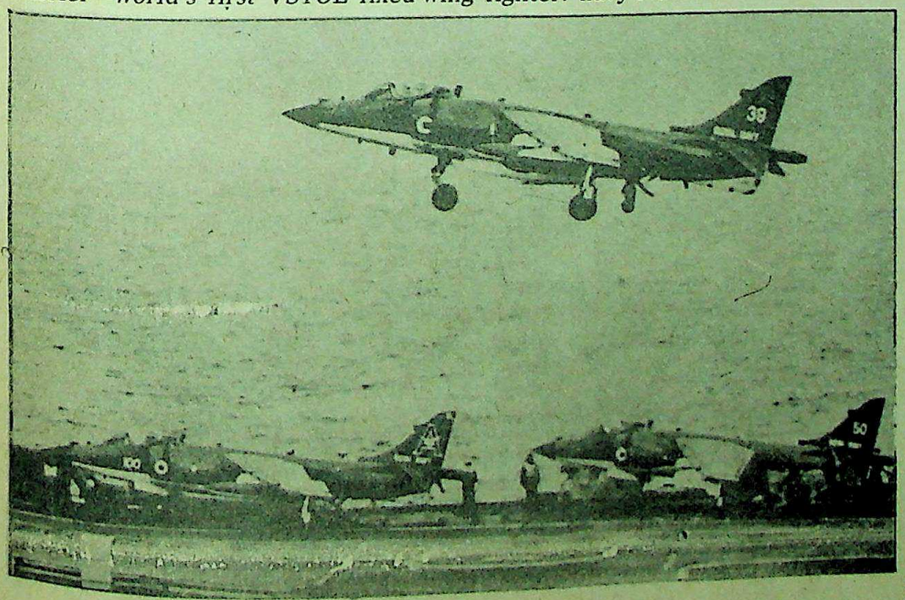
The Post-War Years

After partition, and with the division of assets between Pakistan and India, the IAF was left weaker than it was at the end of World War II. But gradually over the years, by a judicious purchase of modern aircraft and its own aircraft industry, India was able to build up a respectable air force which included several squadrons of air observation planes. These were light 2-seater aircraft of a type being used in India for spraying crops. An Air Observation squadron is an air force unit: the planes are procured and maintained by airmen, but are flown by army artillery officers who are specialised in observing the fall of artillery shells and effecting corrections by passing radio instructions to the gun positions.

After Independence, the Indian navy was left with a handful of small ships. Immediate measures were taken to purchase a cruiser and three destroyers. Later, other ships and an aircraft carrier were added to the fleet. This last acquisition was greeted with sustained opposition, which continues even today, from a section of the public and the press which proclaimed that the age of aircraft carriers was past and that India neither required this, nor could afford the luxury. Extracts from professional articles printed in Russia, America and Britain to support the view that the large aircraft carrier was obsolete, were reprinted and quoted *ad nauseam* at every security seminar. (These extracts omitted those paragraphs which emphasise that small carriers capable of launching jump-jets and anti-submarine helicopters are being suggested as an alternative.) Naval circles in South Block suspected that the anti-carrier campaign was being orchestrated by the IAF which was unabashedly opposed to the organisation and training of a Fleet Air Arm under naval headquarters.

The IAF's opposition was understandable. It had been ordered to hand over all maritime reconnaissance aircraft to the navy; moreover, this was the first time any other service was being allowed to enter the private preserve of the IAF. They could see the trend in other countries and they feared that this would have a snowballing effect on the army which was already thinking about a separate army aviation corps on the lines existing in Britain, America and the Soviet Union. Apart from this, these pressures on the IAF from the two sister services, coincided with the advent of technological compulsions which had occurred owing to the development of missiles. Serious doubts were being cast on the effectiveness, in the offensive role, of manned aircraft as compared with the unmanned missile. The US and USSR had already based their nuclear deterrent on the missile-carrier rather than the manned bomber which had been relegated to a secondary role. Then again, anti-aircraft missiles were making it difficult for any air force to freely exercise its traditional role of close air-support to the ground forces, interdiction or the bombardment of hostile air fields.

Harrier—world's first VSTOL fixed-wing fighter: navy's choice



Mr Jagjivan Ram, the then defence minister, correctly gauged the anxieties of the airmen. In order to assuage the air force's feelings, enable the legitimate expansion of their manpower levels, and to maintain their morale, the defence ministry wisely allotted the air force the role of manning and operating all static heavy anti-aircraft missiles that were then being procured and deployed for the defence of airfields and vital rear areas. (The manning and operating of anti-aircraft guns and light mobile missiles for the defence of tactical targets in the forward areas, continued to remain with the army and navy respectively.)

Inter-service rivalries were postponed by the Indo-Pak war (1965). From the air force's point of view, the war was inconclusive. Air support on both sides was largely tactical with a proportion of aircraft attempting counter-air operations against each other's airfields to reduce the quantum of hostile air power available to support the tactical battle. No attempt was made to gain local air superiority in any sector. But it was significant that the Indian manufactured Gnat fighter was more than a match for the Pakistani manned US Sabre jets. Regrettably, the Indian navy had very little dramatic action. INS Vikrant was in the dry dock when hostilities commenced; this was to become additional fuel for the aircraft-carrier critics, who proclaimed that "the navy s white elephant should be scrapped."

The next Indo-Pak war (1971) was fought on two fronts. In the east, the air force achieved complete air supremacy over Bangladesh. On the western front, IAF fighter-bombers carried out effective strikes on Karachi port and oil installations, and provided tactical support against Pakistani ground forces; this was devastatingly effective in the Rajasthan desert. The navy's performance was outstanding. Rocket ships of the Western Fleet sank two Pakistani destroyers and damaged a third off Karachi. The Eastern Fleet sank a Pakistani submarine and sealed off the sea routes to Bangladesh while aircraft from the carrier bombed the major ports preventing any port activity. The admirals were so elated that one of them even assured the public that the navy was "ready to sink the US 7th Fleet" when it sailed into the Bay of Bengal.

Growing Air Force Fears

But the euphoria of war could not conceal the lack of rapport between the air force on the one hand and the navy and army on the other. Again it was evident that the military lacked well-analysed concepts and a comprehensive theory on air power acceptable to all three services.

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While the Air Observation squadrons had converted to helicopters, many other technological advances had been occurring over the years and these were generating a profound effect on the tactical doctrine. Vertical and Short Take-Off-and-Landing (VSTOL) aircraft had reached a high-performance level; Advance Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) aircraft could now effectively double the performance of a limited number of aircraft in a given zone; and combat helicopter units had come into extensive use in Vietnam and elsewhere.

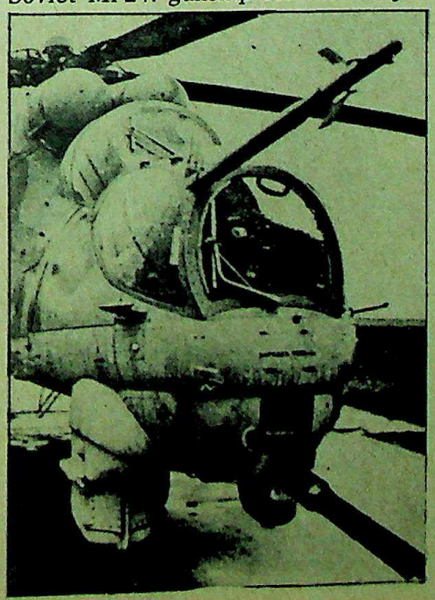
The army and the navy agree that the procurement and employment of AWACS aircraft is an air force responsibility. (These planes are very expensive and only two or three would be required. Thus the IAF would spend a huge slice of its budget and not increase its total aircraft strength.) The navy claims VSTOL aircraft as a special naval requirement for use on short-deck carriers. It also claims a larger share of helicopters, both for communication purposes and also as an anti-submarine weapon. Meanwhile, the army stepped up its demand for an army aviation corps: a requirement that is not only based on historic evolution, as witnessed in all progressive armies of the world, but also on the inevitable outcome of the advent of the combat helicopter. During the Indo-Pak war (1971), a dashing corps commander in Eastern Army had used unarmed helicopters with unorthodox abandon in Bangladesh, moving infantry and guns behind the Pakistani defences to disrupt their communications, demoralise the defenders and hasten their collapse. The generals were so enthusiastic that one of them boasted that "considering what we did spontaneously with unarmed helicopters, if the army had gunships and a deliberate plan, we could have overrun Pakistan in one week."

Quite understandably, the IAF was deeply upset by these trends, more so because then the Israeli air force had suffered very high losses of aircraft from Egyptian-manned Russian SA-6 and -7 missiles in the Israeli-Arab war (1973), emphasising the vulnerability of aircraft in the traditional close support role. Then again, satellite photography had made strategic reconnaissance aircraft obsolescent. Some army wits suggested that the IAF be disbanded "as an economy measure, and its assets be divided between the army and navy who could be made responsible for the security of the skies above them."

The air force was alarmed by all this and attempted to counter these moves at every available opportunity and by all possible means. Senior officers, during official talks, no matter what the subject matter of the talk, made it a point to introduce the topic and emphasise that, whilst rich and self-sufficient countries like the Soviet Union or America could afford to have separate air forces for their armies and navies, and also maintain a strategic and tactical air force manned by airmen, India which had to import all its major requirements, and had limited resources, should count every paise it spent. Therefore, the most cost effective method would be to have all the air resources pooled into one air force manned by airmen which could then make available whatever was needed to the other two services without loss of efficiency. This argument based on economy was their strongest card. Unfortunately, one very senior air force officer took the argument a step further and spoilt it all. Whilst lecturing to an inter-service audience at Staff College, he pleaded that defence spending was too heavily weighed in the army's favour. He recommended that the annual budget be proportionately distributed to each service based on their respective manpower levels: a suggestion so patently unscientific that it provoked much amusement. (Anyway, if taken seriously, the suggestion would have been most unfavourable to the air force.)

In 1974, the army formally presented its case for the creation of an Army Aviation Corps. Whilst so doing, it accepted that the air force should continue to man and operate all fixed wing aircraft, but claimed that the army should take over all helicopters, thus assuming sole responsibility for the roles of short-distance communication flights, casualty evacuation and artillery observation. The army also wanted a proportion of the existing helicopter fleet to be converted into gun-ships and reorganised into combat units designed to be used offensively or defensively in a ground battle. (All the equipment required to do this can be fabricated in India.) Whilst the army's case was being examined by the defence ministry, selected air force officers made desperate moves to cultivate Mr Sanjay Gandhi and win him over to their cause. The electoral defeat of the Congress and the installation of a Janata government upset their calculations in that direction.

Soviet Mi-24: gunship for the army?



Defining the problem

When the Army Aviation Corps papers were put up to Mr Jagjivan Ram who had been reappointed defence minister in the new government, he requested the air force to give their comments on the army's proposals. He then constituted a special committee composed of the three seniormost secretaries. The committee was asked to study the proposals and give its recommendations to the government. The secretaries functioned like a minor Supreme Court; they gave an opportunity to the two services to present their arguments and spent over a month listening to both sides. One member earned the reputation of sleeping through it all; another apparently listened to everything attentively but understood nothing; the third is reported to have heard and absorbed every word, but pretended that he had understood nothing. The net result was that no decision has been taken till today. This is not exceptional. A committee is not fertile ground for the growth of strategic or tactical concepts that must flow from dispassionate professionals who should consider technical, economic and military factors, devoid of emotional or other extraneous aspects.

Genuine inter-service cooperation arises from a joint consideration at all stages of operational planning: conception, discussion and execution. This can best happen when the services are made to live and work together. (This is the rationale for the National Defence College, the Defence Staff College and the National Defence Academy being inter-service institutions.) The first principle of close air support, therefore, demands that operational army and air headquarters be located alongside each other. Unfortunately, we have located our air and army headquarters at all the command levels in widely separated stations. (In Eastern Command, for example, one is at Calcutta and the other at Shillong. The problem of coordinating air support for Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland or Mizoram is by no means simplified by such locations of headquarters.) Some have suggested that this had been deliberately encouraged by Mr Krishna Menon, when he was defence minister, as an anti-coup measure, to prevent the air force and army from getting too close together. If that be so, then it has worked admirably. Huge investments of public money have taken place to establish these various

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headquarters and it is too late to remedy this defect by changing locations now. Because of this basic defect, the success of any joint army-air venture is usually effected more by the good fortune of personal relations between individual army and air force commanders, than on any institutionalised system. The services have tried to improve matters by the establishment of cells from the air force with army field headquarters wherever necessary. In spite of this, army officers complain that their legitimate demands for close support in war are sometimes not met promptly at critical junctures in battle. They consider the situation unredeemable as the same defects prevail during ideal peacetime training conditions.

However, it would be unfair to blame the air force for the short comings of the system; it would also be naive to believe that these matters will somehow be solved by raising an Army Air Corps. Economy demands that an improvement be made by a dispassionate analysis of the problem and reorganising the system with improved equipment and serious training, to enable a quicker response in a fast moving battle situation, whether this be for photographic and visual reconnaissance, interdiction or close offensive support. All these tasks are performed by fixed-wing aircraft; the army, whilst agreeing that economic considerations are of paramount importance, has therefore, accepted that these responsibilities continue to be shouldered by the air force. The army, however, sees no justification for the air force continuing to be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the helicopter fleet employed in the roles of artillery observation, communication flights, casualty evacuation and the proposed gun-ships.

The air force admits that the army could be trained to operate and maintain the helicopter fleet, but consider that it would be uneconomical for them to do this as it would only be duplicating the existing facilities required to maintain such a fleet. If the army can accept that fixed-wing close support continue to be provided by the air force, then why should there be this clamour for helicopters? Surely, economic considerations should prevail; surely, the better solution for the proper utilisation of this expensive equipment is through joint training and planning in peace time? The air force is looking after the Air Observation squadrons, even though these are manned by army officers. Surely, the army can accept the same arrangement for its proposed gunships. It would be unfortunate if the army was to blindly follow the navy's wrong example.

The air force still regrets that the navy has a Fleet Air Arm. It believes that this would never have happened if the navy had lost its case for an aircraft carrier. Having acquired that "white elephant", it was unavoidable that the navy has to organise its own air arm and take over the procurement and operational maintenance of all their fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. The Harrier jump-jet's performance in the Falklands war has added weight to the navy's arguments for an expansion of the Fleet Air Arm in that direction. This further distresses the air force who believe that the high costs of a jump-jet, which is a specialised weapon that may never be used in a future war, will eat into the limited overall defence budget and, therefore, restrict the procurement by the air force of other allpurpose fighter bombers which would have enhanced the overall air power of the nation and would have been a powerful back-up support for either the navy or the army in a future war; the IAF is convinced that this would be a more practical and cost-effective expenditure of Indian money.

These suggestions by the air force are pertinent and touch two crux problems that face our military planners. Firstly, there is need for a chief of defence staff to oversee the three chiefs and bring dispassionate profesional balance and wisdom when the three have a disagreement over concepts and budgetary allotments; it is fallacious to believe that this can be resolved by a committee of secretaries. (This whole business of the need for a chief of defence staff is a separate issue which is not being dealt with in this article.) The second problem, which is relevant to this debate, is: Where should we fit the proposed armed helicopter combat unit in the military order of battle? Must this be an army unit? Why can this not be an air force unit manned by the army, as is the case with the Air Observation squadrons? To answer these questions will require a brief review of the evolution of military organisations.

SA-6 missiles that crippled Israel

The Changing Rhythm of War

Man is eternally inventive. No sooner does he perfect a successful system of waging war, than the urge to eliminate the danger he has created compels him to develop yet another pattern of fighting. Invasions of villages by armed bands gave rise to forts; siege warfare perfected battering rams; mass infantry was overcome by horsed cavalry who in their turn were subdued by firearm—so it goes on. Success in one form of attack always calls forth a kind of defence which will compel a change to another strategy and different tactics; these terms refer to the conception and execution of war and their choice will characterise the pattern of any fighting. Strategy conceives of how an enemy may be defeated; tactics decide the means by which this conception is executed. Strategy prepares an army for battle; tactics designs how the battle will be fought. The government's decision to provide armed helicopters to our forces is a strategic decision; the decision on where to fit the armed helicopter in our battle order is also a strategic one; the organisations and systems evolved for its subsequent employment would be a tactical decision.

The choice of tactics is directly influenced by four factors: terrain, weather, the enemy himself and weapons. These factors are variable which is why the tactics used in war are constantly changing and why warfare is so uncertain. It is easy to see how terrain may influence tactics. Fast armour tactics cannot be employed on the rugged mountains of north India or in the jungles of east India. The wide open western border affords Pakistan with opportunity to carry out land-grabbing surprise attack tactics. The quick-moving armed helicopter is the best anti-tank defensive weapon to counter this and gain time whilst the conventional defences are mobilised. (This establishes the justification for the employment of armed helicopter tactics in the defence, though it does not, by itself, help one to decide whether this weapon should be employed by the air force or the army.) Weather effects modern armies, for men and materials can be made to function poorly by extremes of cold, heat or rain. The third element effecting the choice of tactics is the character and habits of the enemy. With a bold enemy you can be cautious; if he is timid you can be daring; if he is overconfident you can surprise and humble him.

That weapons, the fourth factor, play a decisive part in the choice of tactics, requires no emphasis. If a man is armed with a rifle and another with a pistol, the former

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would prefer to fight at a distance, for the superior range of his rifle would give him an advantage; the man armed with a pistol, would attempt to reduce this superiority and would try to crawl forward as close as possible before opening fire. Individual weapons can drastically change the character of tactics; the weapon with superior range invariably becomes the fulcrum of tactics. Thus, all things being equal, should an army be equipped with bows, spears and swords, their tactics would be shaped around the arrow; if armed with cannon and muskets, then around the cannon. The relative values of bows and muskets is easy to assess. However, the matter becomes more complicated when one tries to compare tanks and artillery. Paradoxically, even though an artillery gun may have a much longer range than a tank's gun, the fulcrum of tactics shifts to the tank and not artillery. This happens because of the factor of mobility.

Mobility

Having studied the various factors and decided on the tactics and weapons desired for the conduct of war, the military is still left with the problem of correctly organising the army to fulfil a given tactical plan. As range is the dominant characteristic of any weapon, so speed and mobility are the characteristics of offensive or defensive operations. Movement has been called the "soul" of war. An army which moves quickly can always anticipate the actions of a less rapid opponent; it can, therefore, bring more men and weapons into action at any decisive point, even if inferior in overall numbers. Thus, the basic problem in organisations is to arrange that a number of men can move and act with the greatest possible speed. Just as tactics is decided by the dominant weapon, tactical organisations are decided by the fastest moving element in the group.

Since an elephant, over long marches, had about the same speed as a foot soldier, so for centuries in India, tactical organisations were built round the foot soldier. The first radical change in mobility came with the taming of the horse and its use in war. Our ancestors could not see the need for change until our elephants were repeatedly overwhelmed by horses; firstly by those used by Alexander and later by the Turks; a gap of many centuries during which our ancestors incorporated horse cavalry but apparently learnt nothing and forgot nothing. However, it should be noted that this was a tactical lapse not in the choice of a weapon but in understanding the function of mobility in reshaping organisations. The invention of the tank brought about another radical change in mobility. As its power of movement was greater than that of the foot soldier or the horse or artillery, existing military organisations had to be remodelled around it.

Thus, there are three basic questions facing our planners today: firstly, will the armed helicopter, as a weapon influence future tactics? The answer is "yes;" the fact that our government is introducing this weapon is proof that there is wide agreement on this strategic issue. Secondly, as we are going to have armed helicopters, where do we fit these in our battle order? There are two broad alternatives: keep them as an air force unit which is manned by army crews and employed by the army; or evolve a new organisation for the ground forces around this new fulcrum of tactics—an army unit manned and commanded by soldiers. This decision is also a strategic one, but it cannot be answered with assurance, without asking and answering the third question—a tactical one. Does the introduction of this weapon warrant the re-modelling of units around the air cavalry concept? The answer is "yes." It is this answer which effects the answer to the second strategic question.

A Rational Concept

Concepts must flow from a dispassionate professional consideration of technical, economic and military factors; the sole aim is victory in war for the survival of the nation, and not inter-service or civil service one-upmanship. The navy needs its aircraft carriers and the fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters that operate with its fleets. The IAF must retain full control over all other fixed-wing aircraft and the roles that they perform for the army; the profesional skills that air force pilots bring to such tasks cannot be matched by parttime army pilots.

The fast-moving armed helicopter is not merely a carrier; it is the best defensive weapon to gain time over a widespread sector whilst conventional defences are activated. Technology enables the same force to be used also as a reconnaissance force or an offensive force. In the former role, it could watch a wide front. In the offensive role it can jump the ditch-cum-bund defences and other tank obstacles which have been constructed all along the international border of Pakistan and, thus, act as a deterrent to any future aggression from that direction. An offensive helicopter force must consist of a combination of artillery observers, infantry to hold a bridge-head across an obstacle and armed helicopters to beat off hostile counter attacks until the main ground forces link up. The armed helicopter will, therefore, be the fulcrum of tactics on the Western Front; new ground organisations will have to take shape around this element. Because of these considerations, it becomes unavoidable that the armed helicopter be integrated into the army battle order, which must be indivisible in close combat.

The question of whether all the remaining air force helicopters which perform the tasks of communication, artillery observation and casualty evacuation, should also become the army's responsibility is of minor consequence; those are merely carriers. No strategic or tactical considerations are involved in that decision which can be postponed till time decides which service can control this most economically. (By the same analogy, the army's Parachute Brigade is not interested in piloting the planes (carriers) which fly them into their dropping zone. But once they jump out, they need their own organisations for command reconnaissance, defence and attack—this must be indivisible. Similarly, the air force should not fear that the border security force or police will begin asking for an independent air arm; there can be no strategic or tactical justification for this.) But we cannot delay the organisation and training of the new combat helicopter units. It would be naive to believe that if these recommendations are implemented today, we can guarantee that the new helicopter units will be tactically effective tomorrow. Everything will depend on how old units are reshaped and reorganised around this new fulcrum of power. This requires time professional clarity of thought and intellectual honesty if it is to be done efficiently.

Our ancestors could not understand the function of mobility in reshaping organisations and, therefore, neglected horse cavalry in favour of the elephant until it was too late. This neglect is not historically exceptional. The British, who were pioneers in the concept of the tank and naval support aircraft, neglected both weapons after World War I; it was others who used them to advantage as fulcrums of power. Our military ancestors, though brave individuals, also never seemed to grasp the crucial value of weapons to tactics. The Marathas had gun foundries established in 1739, but the tactics of their army remained of a heterogeneous character. While they accepted new arms they did not relegate the old ones to a secondary position. Consequently, the weapons used by their soldiers represented all stages of development, and some of them were relics of the early stone age; one finds slings and arrows being used along with firearms in 1761. In fact, Indian rulers of that time saw the strategic value of cannon and firearms, but seemed unable to reorganise their tactics around the new fulcrum of firearms. An inability to appreciate the crucial value of mobility and weapons to tactics is a tactical lapse. Are we going to repeat history and fail to reorganise our tactics around the new weapon of the mobile armed helicopter? ■

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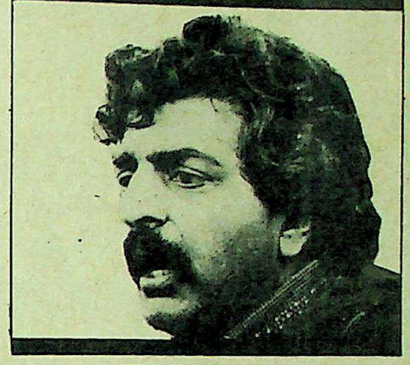
'Things have not changed in Pakistan'

Fifth Column



TARIQ ALI

"Things have not changed in Pakistan. The army remains in complete control. The existence of Pakistan is not needed by the people of Pakistan. It is needed by a tiny Punjabi-dominated ruling class, which comprises the army chiefs and the bureaucrats." These words were spoken by a former chief minister of Pakistan's border province of Baluchistan, who now lives in exile in a leafy London suburb. The Baluchi triumvirate consisted of Khair Baksh Marri, Ataullah Mengal and Ghaus Bux Bizenjo. Marri is now based in Kabul, Mengal is in London, while Bizenjo remains in Pakistan. The first two have lost hope in a solution which is dependent on the existing socio-political structure of Pakistan. Bizenjo, increasingly reviled and isolated, continues to argue for a federal Pakistan.

And yet there can be little doubt that history's strange decision, whereby the country's smallest province (in terms of population) has produced its most advanced politicians, bothers the military regime much more than stray terrorists.

Mengal admits that it is now endgame. He argues that the Baluchis will not be satisfied till they have won all their rights: "Till Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination, the bureaucracy had not decided how to run the country. Their dilemma was simple: how to retain colonies that would not challenge the central authority of the powerful military-bureaucratic complex that was beginning to establish itself. For Baluchistan, it (Pakistan) was always an uncomfortable state. Kalat did not agree to accession. However, after the chicanery that led to a merger with Pakistan, we decided to adjust ourselves to the new situation. What was the result? The entire bureaucracy treated the Baluchis as traitors. The mistrust was phenomenal and it was initiated by the ruling stratum. They flooded non-Baluchis into the province. They discriminated against us on every level.

"When I was in Mach jail in Baluchistan I noticed a remarkable fact. A prison warder is the lowest-paid employee of the government. There were 120 warders in the prison. Only 11 were Baluchis! If anyone had stated this, he would have been dubbed a traitor. The Kalat Scouts have only two Baluchis in them and the Sibi Scouts have none. The officers are from Punjab and the soldiery is from the NWFP (North West Frontier Province.) Today, if you land at Quetta airport you will find that 95 per cent of the police are from outside."

Mengal speaks calmly, without demagogy and with an anger that is repressed. His case is unanswerable. He regards the Bhutto period as the last chance there was for a satisfactory solution but he believes that Bhutto retreated under a series of external and internal pressures and finally signed his own death warrant by sending in the army to occupy the recalcitrant province. There were heavy casualties on both sides. An even more dramatic death was that of democracy: the army used Baluchistan to take over the entire country. According to Mengal: "When Marri, Bizenjo and I, met General Zia after our release from prison in 1977 we came to the conclusion that there was no change whatsoever. Today, in Baluchistan you will come across a military fort every 50 miles. Sibi, Dera Bugti, Kuzdar, Kalat are all full of military HQs. Their attitude to the people is that of conquerors. All these years we had been hoping that the East Pakistanis would one day prevail and minority rights in the West would be protected. Then came Bangladesh and there was no protection left. We had one last hope. We thought that the West Pakistani rulers would assimilate the lessons of Bangladesh. Today, we realise that this was an illusion. We have come to the firm conclusion that we cannot live honourably in the present setup in Pakistan."

> "After the merger with Pakistan, the Baluchis tried to adjust themselves to the new situation. What was the result? The entire bureaucracy treated the Baluchis as traitors. The mistrust was phenomenal and it was initiated by the ruling stratum."

During the guerrilla war in Baluchistan, special commando units were formed to hunt down Baluch oppositionists throughout the country. The operation was headed by a military-fascist Brigadier Bashir based in Quetta. It was Bashir who ordered the killing of Mengal's eldest son, Asadullah. The young Mengal was trapped and shot dead in a side street in Karachi. Mengal was heartbroken, but says: "I've lost so many sons in Baluchistan, so another is dead." Brigadier Bashir was never reprimanded. He left the army after the Baluch leaders were released. Bashir regarded this as a betrayal and wanted Marri and Mengal to be hanged. He was rewarded by being made chairman of the Ghee corporation, where he sits today getting richer by the day.

A fortnight ago there was a knock at Mengal's front door. It was the neighbours who told him that his car had been set on fire. The blaze was subdued before it spread to the house. A few days after this episode his children were assaulted in broad daylight on a street near where he lives. When the local police asked Mengal whether he had any enemies, the Baluch chief replied: "Yes, the government of Pakistan." It could, of course, be yet another racist attack on an Asian family. These are, after all, only too common. But the suburb where Mengal lives is not known for such attacks. The possibility remains that these acts constituted a warning to the former chief minister from his traditional political opponents.

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Tariq Ali writes from London

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ORISSA FLOODS

How relief operations were mismanaged

The state's Congress(I) politicians made merry while the people suffered, reports PRASHANT PATNAIK, after touring the flood-affected areas

"Do you know the cause of this flood which has created havoc in Orissa? It is the curse of Chhabirani, wife of journalist Naba Kishore Mahapatra, who was raped and killed on the banks of Biluakhai river just two years back. It took two years for her tears to swell and create havoc for the people and the government who have silently tolerated the criminals," said Rasalata Mishra, a 40-year-old widow of Kamasasan village, which has been completely devastated and washed away by the huge breach on the embankment of Kathjori at Daleighai in Cuttack district, when this correspondent visited the village on 5 September. Then, pointing her finger towards Biluakhai river, Rasalata continued, "That was the riverbed where Chhabirani was raped and there is Biridi village. The waters have completely washed away the village." Rasalata's eyes were full of tears. Three starving daughters were pestering her for food and her 11-year-old son was shivering with fever.

Since 30 August, when flood waters entered her village, she and her children had been without food and shelter. Rasalata's was not an isolated case; the other villagers too had faced the same fate, waiting every day for relief to reach them. Even six days after the flood waters had swept their village, no relief or medical aid had arrived. The politicians of Orissa were obviously too busy to bother themselves with mundane matters like these. And keeping in pace with Orissa's corrupt government, the person who has been put in charge of flood relief operations of this area is Nanda Mohanty, who is allegedly involved in the Chhabirani murder case. Bhagaban Mishra, a cook in Raghunathpur primary health centre, "When a person like Nanda Mohanty is put in charge of relief operations, is it possible to expect aid to reach the people?"

This was not the only charge against Nanda Mohanty. Villagers complained that most of the relief material meant for distribution in the flood-affected areas of Daleighai was being diverted, at Nanda Mohanty's insistence, to Biridi and few other surrounding villages where Mohanty has political interests. This is just one instance of how flood relief operations in Orissa are being mismanaged.

Unprecedented floods played havoc in Orissa from 29 August when 25 rivers in the Mahanadi and Rushikulya systems were in spate due to heavy rainfall in the catchment areas. The floods affected eight out of Orissa's 13 districts, and 8,000 villages spread over 24 sub-divisions and 100 blocks were flooded, causing misery to about a crore of people. According to official estimates, however, only 52 lakh people have been affected. Again, though the government claimed that 150 people had died due to the floods, an extensive tour of the flood-affected areas proved that the toll was at least 500. While people of the villages located near embankments could take shelter, others whose homes were in low-lying areas were not so fortunate. The only places they could rush to were distant highways, which were under ten to 15 feet of water. A number of villages have been completely washed away by the floods; one can only locate a village from its surroundings.

The Orissa government received the flood warning a day before the floods came. Mr J. B. Patnaik, Orissa's CM sent an SOS to the army, air force and the West Bengal government for sending rescue and relief teams. The following day, air force helicopters arrived to begin rescue

The World Peace Pagoda cut off by the floods

Prashant Patnaik

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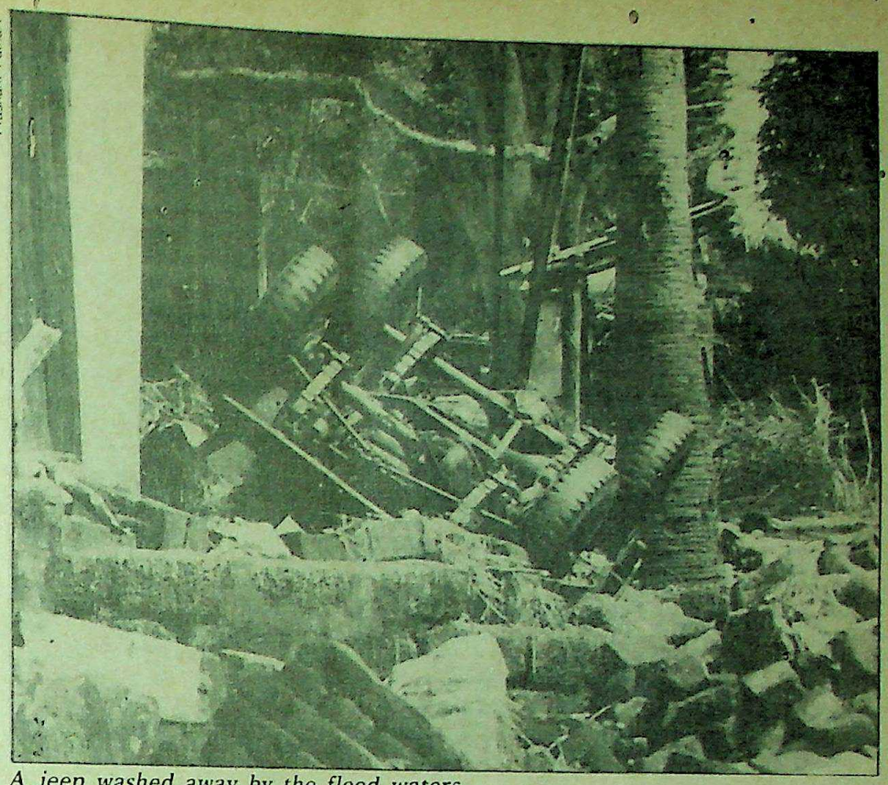
operations. Yet, in spite of the timely help, even 15 days after the floods, thousands of people in flood-affected areas, staying on river and canal embankments exposed to the sun and the rain, had attacks of pneumonia and gastro-intestinal diseases. Why? The reason is that the government had totally mismanaged the flood relief operations and corrupt politicians were busy indulging in petty rivalries by diverting aid to only those areas where they had political interests. For instance, though the state government had promised emergency relief for seven days to 52 lakhs of flood-affected people, till the time of writing, only about half of them had received any aid. One reason for this was the wrong placement of officers in key positions. Mr D. P. Bagchi, registrar of cooperative societies and Mr A. K. Roy, chairman of the forest corporation, were incharge, at Bhubaneswar airport, of coordinating food-dropping operations. Both these officers have had little or no experience in this field. Nor were they as familiar with the topography of the flood-affected areas. As a result, these two officers did not get the cooperation of the revenue and food and civil supplies departments which usually do such emergency relief work. Besides, while the IAF was prepared to airdrop food to the flood-affected areas, the state government officials failed to supply them with sufficient quantities of foodstuff nor could they determine clearly the spots where food had to be airdropped. Since all land routes had been cut off, the only way of reaching food to the marooned people was by airdropping it.

The IAF had put five helicopters at the disposal of the Orissa government, besides two helicopters which had been provided by Oil India. But, on most occasions, the helicopters were doing sorties transporting politicians and VIPs to the flood-affected areas, instead of carrying out relief operations. Such was the situation, that at one point of time, some air force officials, exasperated at the irresponsible behaviour of the politicians and state government officials, complained to the union deputy minister of defence, Mr K. P. Singh Deo. On 2 September, the army after receiving an SOS from Cuttack loaded six speed boats onto an IAF helicopter but had to unload it as quickly to make room for a minister who wanted to visit the flood-affected areas. When this happened thrice, each time the cargo of speed boats had to be unloaded at the arrival of VIPs who were given priority by the state government officials, this was brought to the notice of Mr Singh Deo. The speed-boats were finally airlifted after the minister's timely intervention. Said one IAF personnel to this correspondent, "We are more interested in helping the people than entertaining politicians and VIPs."



Prashant Patnaik

A jeep washed away by the flood waters

The experience of the army personnel was even worse. On receiving an SOS from the Orissa government on 29 August, 260 armymen from the Engineering and Signals Division rushed to the state with 33 power-boats and ten rowboats to carry out relief and rescue operations. Brigadier Sukhinder Singh of the 120 Infantry Battalion was in charge of coordination and liaison between the Orissa government and the army. The state government officials were to contact the army units by six o'clock every morning and provide them with relief materials and guides to take them to the flooded areas for conducting relief operations. But, according to the army officers this correspondent met, it was routine for the state government officials to contact the army control only around 11 am, when nearly half the day was wasted doing nothing.

To add to this already mismanaged situation, the Congress(I) leaders of the state decided to distribute relief material according to political considerations. For instance, when rescue boats were urgently required in Daleighai in Cuttack district, Mr Gangadhar Mahapatra, the education minister of Orissa, decided to send the boats instead to Kanas in Puri, which was relatively less affected, simply because he represents that area. Similarly, Kujang, an area represented by Lok Dal leader Dr Damodar Rout, got relief only on 8 September. There has hardly been any relief operation in this area though, till the time of writing, it is still under about 10 feet of water. Again, 39 persons in the Kokatpur area of Puri district were arrested because they complained that the officials involved in flood relief operations had issued more relief materials in Congress(I) pockets and had ignored the opposition pockets. Even voluntary organisations had a difficult time in distributing food for the marooned people simply because of the apathetic attitude of the state government. A spokesman of the Bhubaneswar branch of the Utkal Mahila Samity (affiliated to the National Federation of Indian Women), told this correspondent that the organisation had arranged cooked food for about 2,000 people and requested the officials in charge of relief operations to provide transport to carry it to the flood-affected areas. But, the government officials took no steps to help out the organisation.

While the people of the state were suffering because of the floods, some MLAs were busy making trips outside the state. Mr Bipin Das, government chief whip, whose Pipli Assembly constituency was totally submerged under water, left for Delhi along with former community development minister, Mr Krushna Charan Patnaik, to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Mr Ramchandra Rath. Mr Jagabandhu Das, a Congress(I) MLA, threw a lavish party for the press and his friends on 8 September at Pantha Nivas, Bhubaneswar to celebrate his becoming the president of the Orissa State Cooperative Bank Ltd, Bhubaneswar. The Orissa CM, Mr J. B. Patnaik, who had toured the flood-affected areas, meanwhile, thought it better to let his colleagues do as they pleased. And people continue to suffer in misery and silence.

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Triumph and despair of a hockey player

Three years after Aslam Sher Khan angrily put away his hockey stick and turned his back on international competitions, the story of his life is the most candid and frank portrait we have yet had of an Indian hockey player—a modern hero continuously assaulted by officialdom, fate and his own failings. *To Hell With Hockey: The life story of Aslam Sher Khan* by Matin Khan (Allied Publishers, price Rs 15) is different from the general run of Indian sports books and biographies. It goes much beyond the playing field to the emotional makeup and the sociological tensions pressing upon the mind of a young boy born in a Bhopal back-alley, who discovered that the intricacies of hockey came naturally to him. This official biography of Aslam Sher Khan's life is in the same genre as Mohammed Ali's story, *The Greatest.* It is honest and unashamed. It is also the first book that explains exactly what is wrong with Indian hockey today. We publish exclusive extracts.

When does a man begin to live!
How does a person learn to die!

The answers depend on the meaning you give to life and to your conception of death. To me, Aslam Sher Khan, born in a *kuchcha*-tiled roof house in Bhopal, life has always meant fulfilment. And frustration, death. I began to live and learnt to die in the same year: 1969.

Life was a total mess. All efforts of my widowed mother had gone to waste. So had my father's training to groom me to represent India in the Olympics in hockey. I had staked a claim for a place in my hometown Bhopal's team for the National Hockey tournament at Ernakulam. I had been selected, was played at Ernakulam but was dropped in the final games just because I refused to join the 55-year-old coach of the team in bed. My baptism in the hockey arena was as sordid as it was tragic for my teenage ambition to represent my country in hockey. Like my father.

I am now 26, and during the last 10 years of my life a lot has happened in my little world. I have tasted triumph few sportsmen ever have in hockey. And humiliation. I have skyrocketed to fame and crashlanded in infamy—oscillating to and fro between fulfilment and frustration.

Generals in politics are bad. Policemen in sports even worse. I say this with a deep conviction, born out of my experience with Indian hockey. In India, hockey or any other sport is just a lucrative pastime for officials. It is a gravy train that catapults you to popularity and power faster than any other profession.

Ashwini Kumar was known more as the president of the Indian Hockey Federation (IHP) than for his policing job. Vijay Gupta, a young brilliant lawyer in Bhopal, was attracting a larger clientele because he was the honorary general secretary of the Bhopal Hockey Association (BHA).

Elsewhere in the country things of greater import were happening. Indira Gandhi had broken away from tradition, sounding the clarion for a renaissance in Indian politics for the betterment of the common man. At Bangalore, the ruling Congress party had split. But I was unaware of it. All I understood was hockey. Politics and I were still strangers. I had been called to the selection trials for the state team for the nationals at Aishbagh grounds. The coach of the state team, since dead, had toured New Zealand as a member of the Indian team. He asked me to see him everyday after play at Ibrahimpura, nerve-centre of Bhopal. Meeting at Ibrahimpura in the evenings after practice had always been the fashion for players and coaches known as *Ustads.* They discussed the day's play, analysed the performance of players and indulged in sports politics over rounds of tea. Anyone who was not a part of this sports syndicate found it extremely difficult to gain entry in the state team. It was also rumoured that the basis of selection to the state team was not only active excellence in hockey but passive participation in games indulged by the *Ustads* off the field.

I refused to believe it could be true. My father too had been a coach—a respected figure. Nearly everyone knew him and I could only consider his former teammates' interest in me as paternal; the love one has for a dead friend's son. But I was mistaken.

A day before the final selection of the team, the coach asked me to come over to his place to take the jersey which is the state colour worn by players in national tournaments. I had been told that if you are called to take the jersey personally you are on their "list" and if you do not respond to their overtures you are considered no good for the game as well. Since I understood what being called for the jersey meant, I spent a restless night, more so as I could not even tell anybody about it, especially my mother.

Bhopal is a small town. A forsaken acre close to the navel of the country on the map. A place where religious and social rigidity had established the *purdah* system. And adolescent urges found expression in homosexuality. The inheritance of this Pathan trait by a state ruled by women for generations is inexplicable. The intensity with which it was practised was frowned upon by parents who did not want their sons to play a passive role. A strict check was kept on young boys so that they did not make friends with older people. But then necessity, which is responsible for inventions, mothered hockey clubs as a respectable alibi to attract young boys. Here *Ustads* groomed talented boys to perform better on the field and in bad.

By the morning I had decided that hockey was important to me, and cycled across to his place. He gave me the jersey, praised my talent and

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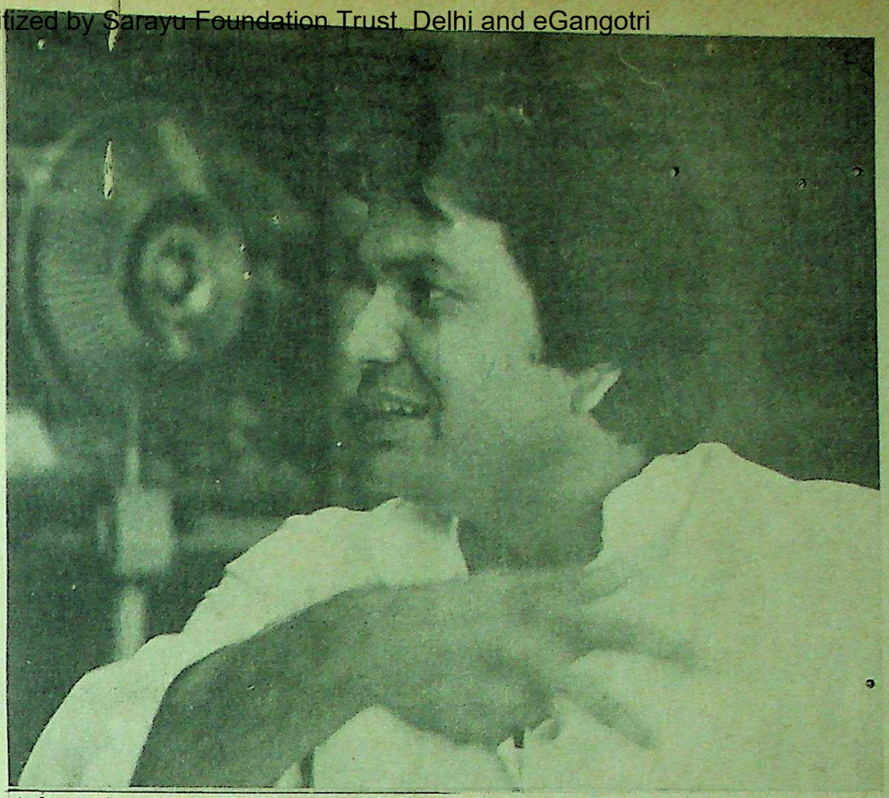
nted a kiss on my cheek which I
sidered a congratulatory peck on
attaining an ambition. I had lived
hockey and my inclusion in the
te team was the beginning of the
d to Mount Olympus. That is
ere the gods had sported till man
ought "sports", down to a mortal,
petitive level and labelled it
mpics.

My father, Ahmed Sher Khan, had
presented India at the Berlin
mpics in 1936 along with Dhyan
and, the legendary wizard of hock-

Much later, his son Ashok and I
re destined to play together for
dia. After the Olympic games of
36, Ahmed Sher Khan married a
some Pathan lass called Ahmedi,
o bore him two daughters and me.
our father had a streak of mad-
ss in him," my maternal grand-
her used to say. "Like you, his
session with hockey was a joke. He
d made your mother promise that
they had a son, she would bring
m up to be a great hockey player.
hen you were born he gave her the
ket he always wore, which con-
ined a miniature of the Holy
ran. It's the one you wear now."

My father died when I was 13, and
eded him most. During the time
e allowed us to live together he
ok me to all hockey tournaments
d made me watch great players in
tion. It was his insistence that
ving a goal was more important
an scoring one which along with
thritis, later forced me to start
aying as a fullback instead of as a
rward.

My private battles in life have
ways been very personal, very
inful. The first was with rheumatic
thritis in 1959. In a graveyard by
e side of the lower lake at Raitghat
e had made a small clearing where
ildren of my age played hockey.
he ground was opposite the house
one of Bhopal's more colourful
rsonalities, Nahar Singh, whom
m scripwriter Javed later immor-
lised as, Soorma Bhopali, in *Sho-*
y. One day, during practice I felt
ain in my right leg. I tried to stand
t could not. My joints did not
spond. They could not bear the
eight of my little body. I crumpled
the ground. My maternal uncle,
adat, picked me up in his arms and
ok me home. That started a chain
prescriptions, but the medical
tention that we could afford on my
ther's salary as a teacher, was too
eagre for complete recovery. La-
r, an elderly *hakim* who was a
mily friend treated me and it was
s prescriptions and my obsession
ith hockey which finally cured me.
I would lie in bed daydreaming
bout the future when I would grow
p into a athletic figure like my
ther and play hockey for my coun-
y. Evenings were intolerable as I
isualised my friends playing hock-
, and nearly every arthritis ridden
vening was stained by my tearful



Aslam Sher Khan: fulfilment and frustration

prayers to God to make me well. Uncle Saadat found my tears unbearable too. He started taking me to the ground. Each evening saw me perched on the bar of Saadat's cycle going to the ground where I would wistfully look at the boys playing hockey. I started learning to stand again holding the handle of the cycle. Slowly my joints started responding and finally one day I found I had no pain. The first evening I started playing hockey again I remember running back home panting, deliriously happy merely because I could play again.

Father allowed me to play hockey whenever I wanted, wherever I wanted, except in the clubs. "It will keep his mind off sex," he used to tell my uncle. Sex and sports do not go together. That was his creed. He did his best to coach me from a tender age.

Our day would begin early. Even before dawn as the muezzin's call from the mosque rang out over a sleepy town calling the faithful to morning prayer, my father would wake me up. We would leave home and start running, not towards the mosque but in the maze of Bhopal's deserted streets. In the evenings he would teach me the art of dribbling and dodging, tapping, pushing and hitting the ball correctly at the Saidia school ground where among other players was Inam-ur-Rehman. "Watch Inam," my father would say, "he plays like a machine," meaning that Inam's reflexes were honed to a second. "He will be the best left-in in the world." Father was wrong. The world has only heard of Shahnaz Sheikh of Pakistan. Inam's talent was buried in the rubble of India's sports politics. My first hockey stick was selected for me by Inam at my father's request. That broken stick is still one of my most cherished possessions.

In spite of his efforts at grooming me, father never selected me to play for the school team even though he was the coach. Whenever I would ask father if I was good for the school team, his stock reply was, "You still have a lot to learn." It left me crestfallen to see that while other boys who did not play half as well were selected, I was never played. As I look back I realise that father wanted me to always be better than the team in which I played, so that my performance stood out. His old world values perhaps also restricted my selection—to avoid any accusation that a coach had selected his own son for the team. During monsoons when rains lashed Bhopal and it was impossible to play hockey, father would take me fishing. We would sit on a *parcha*, a stone outcropping jutting out of the water, and angle for fish the whole day. I did not like it. I wished the rains would end so that I could start playing hockey again. "Fishing will help you to play hockey better," I can still hear him say. "Watch that float bobbing up and down the water. Think of it as a ball, concentrate on it. The ball is the most important thing in hockey. Learn to concentrate on it, only on it." A bobbing float helped me to concentrate on the ball in hockey fields.

In 1966, father fell ill and was admitted in the Hamidia hospital. During the period of his hospitalisation I was called for the All India

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schools hockey championship. I did not want to go. I only wanted to be at my father's bedside. When he learnt that I had been called for the trials he asked me to go. "The better you play, the more I'll know you love me." Anything father said in his soft-spoken way was an order. He never raised his voice. "You only make a fool of yourself by raising your voice. You should never be angry often or nobody will pay heed to it. Learn to control anger. Only when it comes to a cinch and it becomes totally important, only then hit out and make it a fight to the finish, one way or the other." I was selected to represent the all-India schools' hockey team as a forward. When the famous hockey player Roop Singh, who was coach of the all-India schools'team, visited father in hospital and told him about my selection and praised my performance, father broke down and sobbed. A few days later he died as though he was waiting only to see my career begin.

Three years went by before I wore colours for Bhopal at Ernakulam in 1969. We had won two matches and were to play the third round next day when fate intervened. I had tried to maintain a distance from the coach after he had kissed me at Bhopal. As I sat mentally preparing for the match next day, Shahid Noor who was playing outside-left for us (he later captained Bhopal and played for India), informed me that the coach wanted to see me. The coach had a straight proposition. He asked me to sleep with him. If not, he made it clear, I would not be played, the next day or any day after that for Bhopal as long as he was the coach. The crystals of becoming an Olympian of representing my country in hockey like my father shattered into ugly, sordid fragments. So this was the bottom line, this old, dark, slimy balding coach who ordered bottoms up. I had fought arthritis because I loved hockey and borne my mother's merciless thrashing whenever I neglected the game because she wanted to live up to the promise she had made to her husband to bring me up as a hockey player. I was not played the next day. After the match I cornered him in his room. "You were my father's friend," I yelled. "You are a bastard. To hell with you. To hell with hockey," I broke the hockey stick, flung it at him and left the room.

I promised I would never touch a hockey stick again. But destiny had other little ideas for me. Other little lives, other little triumphs, and other little deaths.

After the nationals, the team was eager to be back in Bhopal. All except me. I sat huddled in a corner of the third class compartment near a window on my grimy holdall, away from the rest of the team which was gambling to while away the time. I did not give a damn to their gambling or their occasional snide remarks about me. In fact, I did not care as I would have nothing to do with them once we reached Bhopal.

The Grand Trunk Express which connects Delhi with Madras has a habit of reaching Bhopal late. That night it was unexpectedly early. I had, all along the journey dreaded returning home in spite of wanting to be with my mother who, after my father's death had become the pivot around which my life revolved. After father's death in 1966, Amma had taken over his role to provide food and shelter to the family.

The train had stopped at the outer signal. Instead of waiting for it to reach the station I quietly threw down the holdall from the train, picked up my attache case and got down. Even before the train had started moving, I took a *tonga* outside the railway perimeter and was on my way home. The clanging of utensils at the wayside shops heralded the end of another day. The *tonga* turned towards Saidia Middle School where I had once studied and played hockey under my father's guidance with boys like the great Inam. It was strange that even after giving up hockey my thoughts kept going back to it. Even before joining Saidia School we had started playing hockey in the narrow lanes outside my house. I was fortunate to start playing with a hockey stick. Others like Inam had been less fortunate. They started playing hockey with *khapotas*. They would climb trees in search of a branch curved at a slight angle, cut the branch and fashion it into a hockey stick.

The ball was made likewise. search would be on for a round piec of stone. Others would knead sand water and mud together into a paste A layer of the paste would be put round the stone and dried. Then would come a layer of smaller stones which were embedded to the paste, covered with another layer of paste and rounded like a ball. When it dried it would be covered on all sides with bits of cloth and put into an old stocking or vest. One of the mothers would be pestered to stitch it into a ball, and the game would be on.

Hockey has always been a poor man's game. And Bhopal has always been its cradle. Little boys would be found playing hockey in the narrow lanes of Bhopal which had running drains on either side. Since everybody contributed in making the ball or years later in buying it, everyone had an equal right to have the ball with him. This resulted in the ball being passed from boy to boy. Since the lanes were narrow, the passes had to be short. Similarly it was necessary to keep the ball glued to the stick lest it fall in the drain and the game was over till a new ball was made. This was how the short passing, ball control technique evolved in Indian hockey. It was taken from these lanes by the same boys to the year-round inter-school championships, primary, middle and high school. The best of the talent on display found a place in the state team then known as the Bhopal Wanderers, which participated

Aslam Sher Khan in action for Indian Airlines

Nikhil Bhattacharya

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national tournaments.

In spite of the clamour for traditional hockey, Bhopal was always relegated to a back seat. Perhaps, because there was nobody forceful enough to advocate the claim of its players or maybe because they were not rich enough to be considered good. Some of these boys who represented Bhopal and had been called to hockey camps for selection to the national team, made a living out of rolling *bidis* during the day. Others sold *samosas*, which their mothers prepared, in the streets of Bhopal. Some earned their livelihood from *paan* shops and others from tea stalls. All of them left their work in the evenings, some with permission, others without it, to play hockey. It was in their blood. So was it in mine but just now I had promised to rinse it out of my system.

On my return from Ernakulam I sought refuge from hockey in illness. Mother felt concerned for the first few days, and then one day she forced me out of bed and the house. "You will be able to get over whatever illness you have. I know you are not ill and I will not have my son turn into a pretender." I could hardly refuse going to play after that.

Every evening, I left home but instead of going to play I would visit my paternal uncle Hamid Sher Khan's house closeby. His son, Taufiq Sher Khan, had been offered admission as a player by talent scouts of Aligarh University. Getting admission as a player in the university was regarded an achievement. You did not have to pay fees and were provided all facilities for the game including full playing kits. Taufiq kept after me to accompany him to Aligarh. He felt confident that I would get admission as a player. I would not really have minded going but what prevented me from doing so was that the opening was being provided by my uncle's son. Father had always been against it. Mother even more so. She denounced making such a headway in life and termed it shooting a gun from another man's shoulder. But as the days went by I mellowed to Taufiq's persuasion and had almost decided in favour of Aligarh till I went for Friday prayers.

Friday has a special significance for me like all Muslims. In the afternoon, men gather in mosques for prayers. I have never been able to understand any other significance of this congregation except of bringing people together. To me a man's religion is very personal, like sex: prayer comes from the heart and wherever you pray, God being omnipresent hears you. Yet I continued to go for Friday prayers, especially after father's death, less for the prayers and more as a sop for my mother's feelings. Amma, a deeply religious woman, wanted me to pray at least once a week on Fridays, if not five times a day like a good Muslim should.

Sandeep Shankar

Generals in politics are bad. Policemen in sports even worse. In India, hockey or any other sports is just a lucrative pastime for officials. It is a gravy train that catapults you to popularity and power faster than any other profession

After the prayers as I came out of the mosque I saw a labourer cutting wood in the vacant plot of land adjacent to the mosque. His body glistened with sweat, shimmering in the glare of the afternoon sun. With every stroke of the axe his muscles came into play and stood out. Father used to cut wood occasionally to keep trim after he had given up playing hockey. Since the woodcutter's shack was near my house, I decided to keep trim by cutting wood since my hockey-days too were over. That evening instead of going to Taufiq's house I went to the woodcutter's shed. The open space in front of the shack was littered with logs of wood, cut and brought from forests to the city and sold by contractors. The logs of wood after being cut in small sizes were sold for use as firewood. The woodcutter had known my family for a long time and had no hesitation in lending one his axe. Dressed in shorts, and a sweat shirt I started axing away. I wasn't making any progress. "Swing from the right and then from the left," said the woodcutter. I took his advice and splinters of wood soon started flying in all directions.

I was so engrossed in the exercise that I did not hear a motorcycle stop on the road. "Ahmed Sher Khan's son is aspiring to be a woodcutter instead of an Olympic hockey player," I heard a half-taunting, half-serious voice and turned to face it. Perched on a log of wood behind me was Ghufran Azam, a student leader who was also a sports promoter for the local Saifia College. The college had been built by a philanthropist, Sajjad Hussain, and his son, Fakhruddin, was the secretary of the Saifia Educational Trust which was responsible for running the institution. Ghufran, who had his early schooling in Jamia Milia at Delhi was one of the first boys to have joined Saifia College. It was here that he developed a taste for politics and became a student leader. His abstemious and spartan way of life won him friends and followers, both boys and girls. To him, everybody was important and the one who mattered most was one who was genuinely in need of help, especially sportsmen. It was his effort and advocacy that prompted Saifia College to adopt the pattern of Aligarh University in sports promotion. A player who was admitted in Saifia did not have to worry about his fees; he also received a monthly scholarship and a free playing kit.

I stood sheepishly before him; eyes lowered. "I do not want to play hockey anymore," I said meekly.

"Quitters never win," he snapped, "and winners never quit. You know things have a habit of reaching me and there's no reason why you have to give up hockey, at least not with me alive. I won't let you bury your talent in frustration."

I argued with him that hockey was in the hands of clubs and every club was as bad as the other, so where could I go. "To college," was the prompt reply, "Saifia College. The clubs are bad, I agree, but they will continue to remain bad if people like us start quitting instead of fighting the system and bringing hockey back from clubs to educational institutions. I do not promise anything to you," he said while leaving, "except that you will be a brother to me, like the rest of the boys. If your game is worth it, I will see that you play."

Ghufran's acceptance as the leader by students resulted mainly from his being a man of his word. He did not make a promise but once made it, he stuck to it. He stood by the students and the students stood by him en masse. That night after dinner, I told Taufiq that I was not interested in Aligarh University but would be joining Saifia College, after which I went to Ghufran's house at Khirni Wala Maidan. Ghufran and his close friends used to patronise a small tea shop below the Moti Masjid in the evenings. It was from here, in my opinion, that Ashwini Kumar's downfall as president of the Indian Hockey Federation began. Since the 1948 Olympics, at London, in which Latif-ur-Rehman and Akhtar Hussain had represented India but not played, no player from Bhopal had found a place in the Indian hockey team. Even when the great Inam, accepted as the best inside-left ever

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produced by the country, was playing at his peak for Calcutta's famous club, Mohun Bagan, in the early Sixties, he had not found a place in the Indian team for the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Bhopal's hockey had been seething with rage at the stepmotherly treatment it received from the Indian Hockey Federation. This rage found expression in 1968 when Indian Airlines embarked on a sports promotion programme. The first on the list of its priorities was hockey. Their choice fell on discarded players who were considered the best bet and recruited. In the debut, in the Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey tournament in 1968, Indian Airlines captained by Inam and with seven other boys from Bhopal mesmerised team after team with their ball control, short passing, web weaving technique and stickwork. They lifted the trophy, shocking spectators, sports pundits and sport writers alike that such talent, though available in the country, was being neglected. The shock gave way to questions by the press and in 1968, Inam-ur-Rehman became the first Bhopal player to be selected to represent India in the Mexico Olympics, 20 years after another Rehman had been selected for the London Olympics; selected but not played in any important match. Inam's inclusion in the team was the beginning of the end of Punjab's monopoly in Indian hockey. The doors were opened to talent from other parts of the country. When Indian Airlines made attempts to recruit discarded players, Ghufran played a vital role in offering the Bhopal players to Indian Airlines. Some of these players had joined the Airlines as assistants, some others even as loaders. They joined the Airlines not because of money as the salaries were paltry compared to those offered to players in later years. They joined, as Ghufran told me that night, "because hockey is a religion to us if we have to vindicate ourselves, we have to prove that we are better than others."

I joined Saifia College next day. On the hockey field, things were not as easy as I had anticipated. The senior players took an instant dislike to me but the awe and respect in which they held Ghufran softened the hostility.

The Saifia College is affiliated to Vikram University and for the university trials in 1969, Ghufran had given his choice of players from Saifia College to the university coach, Qamar, who had represented Bhopal as outside-right and lost the berth to Kishan Lal in the Indian team to the 1948 Olympics. The list contained only one name: Aslam Sher Khan.

In the Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey tournament at Delhi, I represented Saifia College. We were staying at the National Stadium and Ghufran was the manager of the team. On my return from prayers that Friday, I found two people sitting on the cot talking to Ghufranbhai. One of them was introduced to me as K.P. Roy of Indian Airlines. He was a hefty man and looked like a wrestler past his prime. Keshav Roy, I learnt later, had captained the Indian wrestling contingent to the London Olympics. He was now a sports officer with Indian Airlines. When Ghufran told me that Indian Airlines regarded me as a potential national player and wanted to recruit me, I was so thrilled that I failed to grasp the emphasis he placed on the word "potential." I would now have a chance to play with players like Inam, Ashok, Govinda, Krishnamurthy, and fly in planes.

After Roy left, Ghufran turned to me and growled, "That man thinks he can develop you into a top player when you can walk into the Indian team any day. Don't join them yet, they will come again." In spite of my respect for Ghufran, I had apprehensions about his confidence in my talent. The newspapers next morning included my name in the Indian hockey team to tour Pakistan. I kept staring at my name in disbelief and delight. And sure enough K. P. Roy's emissaries were back. The Airlines wanted Aslam Sher Khan.

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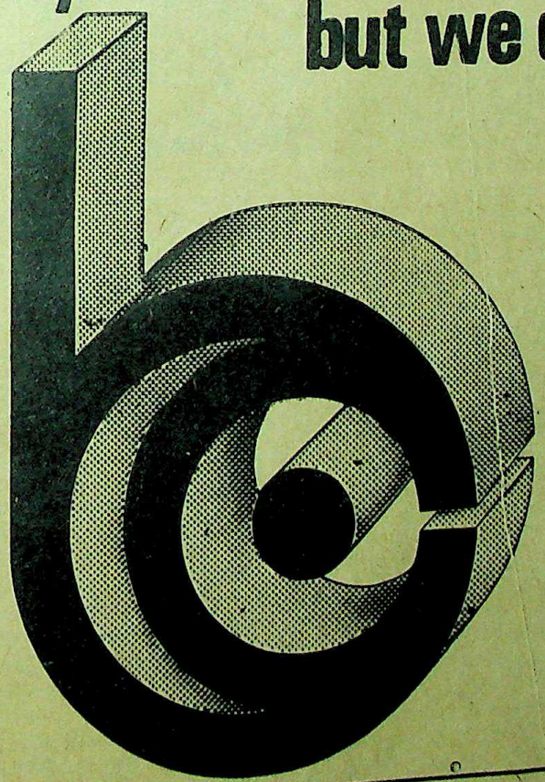

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DEFENCE

Discontent among IAF men

The extravagant golden jubilee celebrations create controversy

New Delhi: There is considerable discontent, rancour and exasperation within the officers' corps of the Indian Air Force at the way in which the IAF has, since 9 October 1981, been celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, which falls on 8 October, 1982. Behind the glitter of aerial pyrotechnics by the Thunderbolts unit, static air displays all over the country, the Doordarshan TV serials and the other celebrations earmarked for the IAF's golden jubilee, the feeling among a large section of the officers and ranks is that no attention has been paid to the pressing needs of the personnel, who in fact, make the IAF a highly rated air force.

This year's Independence Day was particularly gloomy for Indian defence forces. It was expected that on that occasion, the government would announce a number of financial subsidies and other facilities for the Indian Army, the IAF and the Indian Navy. News reports published in various parts of the country last summer had strengthened the defence personnel's belief that the central government had cleared the proposals earlier finalised by the defence ministry. But the 35th Independence Day came and went, without new sanctions for the disgruntled services. Within the IAF, the disappointment crystallised into disillusionment with its golden jubilee celebrations.

Souvenirs worth Rs one crore and 40 lakhs have been already ordered by the Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee. And word has been sent out from Air Headquarters to all IAF messes in the country to book orders for these golden jubilee mementos. But at least 50 per cent of the IAF messes in the country are presently in a tight financial situation because of the general rise in prices over the years. Feeble attempts have been made by several IAF messes to say that they do not have the resources needed to make these purchases, but their protestations have been quietened by senior officers at Air Headquarters. In August and September this year, many of these consignments were airlifted from New Delhi to messes all over the country. Some of the expensive purchases include three special dinner sets priced at Rs 3,000, Rs 6,000 and Rs 9,000. Moreover, the airlifting of these consignments for the IAF messes is being carried out under cover of official air flights on duty. SUNDAY learns that the number of IAF flights that have taken place during the last year, is the maximum ever undertaken by the airforce to a large number of the smaller and more remote air bases.

The PM and AVM Dilbagh Singh watching the IAF's firepower demonstration

One amazing suggestion made to the IAF messes, was to buy huge stocks of playing card packs carrying the golden jubilee insignia. Some messes have been told to buy as many as 500 packs in a single purchase. When these messes represented to the Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee that they did not need to make purchases in such large quantities, the messes were advised to visualise longterm requirements and place orders to last them the next four to five years! The other talked about items are the special gifts that liquor distillers and brewers, Mohan Meakin, have made to the IAF messes. However, none of these glasses, ash trays, ice buckets and other decorative bric-a-brac has come down to the messes; the articles have disappeared somewhere along the line. Mohan Meakin went in for a special gift season for the IAF messes because they are one of the leading suppliers of IMFL (Indian-made foreign liquor) to the IAF. Incidentally, Mohan Meakin will be marketing a special, new drink dedicated to the air force.

Reviewing the activities undertaken for the IAF's golden jubilee celebrations, there is a feeling among air force officers that the year round celebrations have tied up the IAF to 12 months' publicity and public relations work. Nothing else has been done this past year because of the demands on men and machines for publicity work. The Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee is staffed by some 50 officers, including eight Air Vice Marshals and three Air Commodores. The number

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extra sorties flown for the celebrations add up to a considerable expenditure in aviation fuel costs as also in aircraft depreciation. For each TV serial shown by Doordarshan every third Saturday, over the last year, hundreds of officers have been involved in arranging demonstration flights and coordinating ground activity. Each time a Doordarshan team visited an IAF base, almost the entire station would get involved in the filming operations.

Realising that the golden jubilee year has not sorted any of their own problems, many IAF personnel have lately begun to complain against the Shashi Kapoor-Govind Nihalani feature film, *Vijeta*. *Vijeta* has been made as a tribute to the IAF and when filming started last year, the movie was a favourite with the personnel. That excitement is now largely missing. Instead, complaints are made that more than Rs 80 lakhs worth of extra flying hours was undertaken by the IAF for *Vijeta*, in contravention of the initial policy decision, conveyed in a Government of India letter, that no extra flying effort should be put in for the feature film and that the *Vijeta* unit should be allowed to feature normal air force flights only.

In its eagerness to help the filmmakers, the IAF circumvented this policy decision and the majority of the sorties flown for the shooting were extra flights, undertaken outside the course of normal air force flights. Planes were also specially flown in from their bases for the filming, which was done at Pune, the Air Force Academy at Hyderabad and Jamnagar.

The 30 senior officers in the Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee, plus the officers and ranks brought in to assist them, were posted at Air Headquarters in New Delhi, working permanently on the celebrations. During the year, these officers and men did no professional air force duty. Looking after the publicity campaign and public relations, they have spent this past year in procuring sponsors—such as the Canara Bank, the Bank of Boroda, the Syndicate Bank, the Punjab National Bank and India Tobacco Company—to print special golden jubilee calendars, buy TV time and radio spots and secure advertising hoardings for the IAF's celebrations.

The most intriguing aspect of the committee itself is that it is headed by Air Vice Marshal T.J. D'Sa, who was removed overnight from his command at the Air Force Academy, Hyderabad, last autumn because Air Headquarters had received a number of anonymous complaints against him from officers and airmen. AVM D'Sa's choice as head of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee has only added to the discontent among the IAF personnel.

Anil Saari

COMMUNAL TENSION

The Meerut riots were preplanned

Meerut: If the Shiva temple had not appeared overnight under the *peepul* tree and caused Meerut's recent communal riots, something else would surely have. Someone, somewhere, was making sure of this. From the desecration of the mosques to the murder of the temple priest and the mysterious consignment of 1,600 knives which arrived in the city the day before rioting began, everything seems to have been carefully planned.

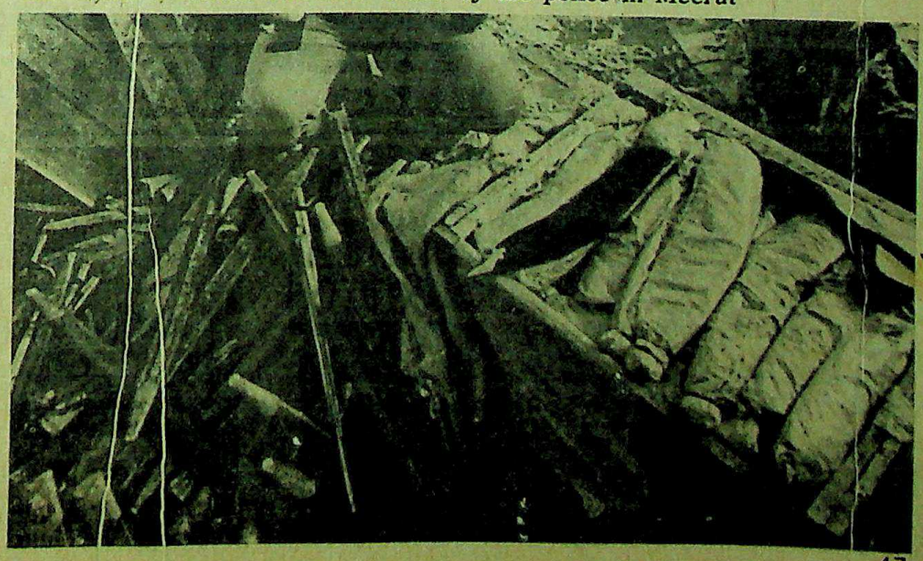
As the silent, curfew-bound streets slowly return to normal, rumours and allegations rent the air and add to the tension which is still hidden under the surface calm. Among those who appear to have had a clear hand in stirring up trouble are the Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid, Syed Abdullah Bukhari and the Bharatiya Janata Party, whose local leaders have disappeared in order to escape the arrest warrants. For a change, the local administration appears to have taken whatever precautions it was possible to take, short of arresting the Imam and the BJP leaders.

Although actual rioting began only after the temple priest was murdered on 6 September, tension began to develop in the city from 12 August when a special Janmashtami *aarti* was forcibly performed at the disputed temple at midnight.

Shahghasa is a predominantly Muslim area where the shopkeepers are mainly Hindu. Till early this year the so-called temple was merely a *peepul* tree which Hindus considered sacred and made offerings to. Then, suddenly, overnight a makeshift room appeared in which a *Shivalinga* was installed. Another room came up shortly in which *pujari* (priest) Ram Bholey (30) began to live. The sudden appearance of the temple caused a Muslim lawyer, Qazi Zaheer Ahmed, to declare that the temple could not be situated there because there was a Muslim shrine just below it, adjoining his house, under the *peepul* tree. This was being enquired into by a magistrate when the special *aarti* was performed on Janmashtami.

Tension was created as a result and four Hindus were arrested on the night of 12 August. The following day, around 500 Hindus led by Mr Mohan Lal Kapoor, former BJP MLA and Mr Brahm Pal Singh, BJP district president, picketed the Kotwali police station demanding the release of the four men. The police had to resort to a *lathi* charge to control the crowd and 19 more people were arrested. On the same day the BJP held a provincial divisional convention of its various units a few kilometres from the police station. At the convention, Mr Sundar Singh Bhandari, well-known for his RSS leanings, and M. P. Tripathi, state president of the BJP, criticised the administration for the arrests. The arrested men were released later that day after a delegation met the district magistrate, Mr Shambhu Nath. By then, there was considerable tension in the Shahghasa area and police patrolling was intensified and other precautionary measures,

The cache of knives and arms seized by the police in Meerut



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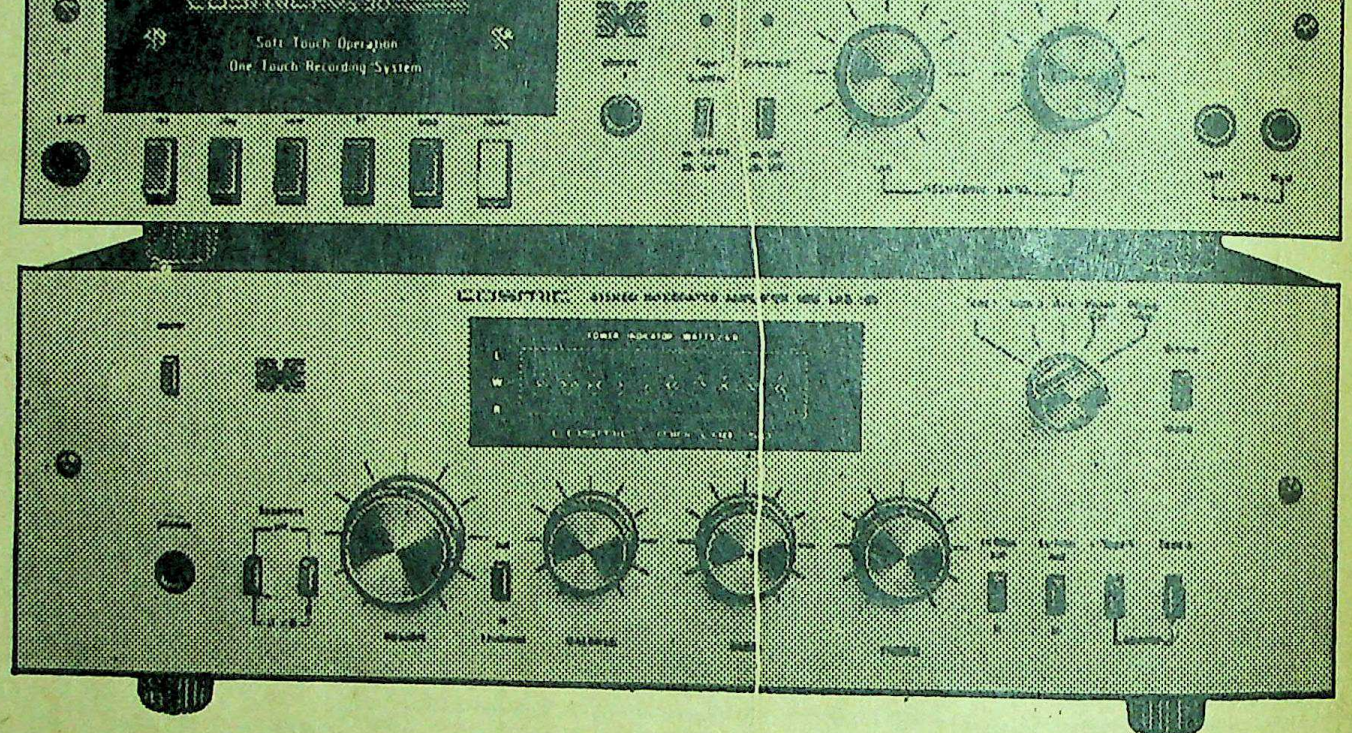
BIG SOUND
doesn't have to mean big size



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USP 82

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like alerting the army, were taken.

On 20 August, the magistrate who had been enquiring into the disputed "holy" spot publicised his findings. He was of the opinion that the place was sacred neither to the Hindus nor to the Muslims for till recently, there had been neither a temple nor a *mazar* there. As a result, a group of prominent Hindu and Muslim citizens met on 20 August and agreed that although the temple would be allowed to continue where it was, no ringing of bells or blowing of conch shells would be permitted.

The following day the Imam of the Jama Masjid is reported to have arrived in Meerut and held meetings with various Muslim groups. It was around this time that the incidents of pig meat being thrown into mosques began. About four mosques were desecrated and tension continued to mount resulting in the stabbing of a Muslim boy in Nandram Ki Chowk on 4 September. Police sources maintain that this was not a communal incident; the boy was stabbed in a fight.

In any case, the Imam returned to Meerut the next day, and made public his disaproval of the agreement reached in the Shahghasa dispute. He is also said to have met local Muslims and stirred up communal feelings. The following evening around 10 pm, crowds of rioters converged on the temple and in the melee the *pujari* was stabbed to death. From 4.00 am that morning, 16 areas under the Kotwali, Delhi Gate and Lisadi Gate police stations were put under indefinite curfew. On that day, however, there was no further trouble but on 8 September, when there was a slight relaxation in the curfew, there was violence as Hindus and Muslims fired at and stoned each other from rooftops. There was another stabbing incident.

From then onwards, there have been sporadic spurts of violence which have resulted in 11 people being killed, 25 being injured and 552 arrests. The violence could have been serious, had the police not apprehended the nine crates with their lethal cargo of knives, *khukris*, *kirpans* and bayonets. According to the police these weapons were meant specifically to be used in a riot; they could have no other possible use. Although a few people are being questioned in connection with the cache of arms, the police were not releasing details. Investigations are still in progress and more weapons are expected to be found.

In the areas where curfew is being gradually lifted, the predominant emotion is mistrust. Abandoned, burnt out Muslim houses can be seen in Hindu areas and the reverse in Muslim areas. What can also be seen quite clearly, is that in Muslim areas, the mistrust extends not merely to other Hindus but also to the police and the PAC (Provincial Armed Constabulary) in particular. In some Muslim areas, in fact, the violence seemed to have taken place mainly between the PAC and the Muslims. There were allegations that doors had been broken down and houses looted by PAC men.

Among those who believe that the riot was engineered, is Congress(I) MLA Manzur Ahmed who felt that communal organisations like the RSS and the Jamaat-e-Islami were interested in creating trouble for him because he stood for secularism. He was elected in 1977 and 1980 from a seat which till then had been a Jana Sangh stronghold. Some local dailies accused Mr Ahmed of instigating the riot but nobody could prove the allegations.

Meerut has had a history of communal riots. Way back in 1936 when Veer Savarkar is said to have visited the city, there was a riot. Since then, there has been a riot virtually every five years with the last major one being in 1973 which was allegedly sparked off by a cyclist colliding with a rickshawallah. One was a Muslim and the other a Hindu. It is quite easy to start a riot in this city because the population is almost equally divided. Out of 600,000 people, 45 per cent are Muslim and the rest Hindu. The atmosphere is still explosive and seems to require only a spark for the city to go up in flames again.

Tavleen Singh

TAMIL NADU

Hell is a stone quarry in MP

Madras: Government legislation has once again come up short against the stone wall of rural reality—this time in Tamil Nadu. With the recent 'rescue' of 254 bonded labourers of Tamil Nadu from the stone quarries of Madhya Pradesh by a team of CID crime branch officials, the sentiment has again gained ground that legislative and executive action against the institution of bonded labour has been peripheral with only minimal impact in the hinterlands.

Over the years, hundreds of Tamilian men, women and children have been lured from their native places to the stone quarries of Raisen and Vidisha districts of Madhya Pradesh with promises of quick money, abundant food and clothing. Quarry contractors, represented by roving agents, have drummed up cheap labour from the remote, backward areas of the state with stories of splendour and riches. Entire families have consequently migrated to Madhya Pradesh. Once there, the dreams have always shattered into wretched reality as the hapless victims are trapped in a world of

Bonded labourers in Madras, soon after their rescue from the MP quarries

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drudgery, deprivation and even tor-ture.

Whether it is Valiyammal, Raju or Muniyamma, the tale of woe is the same. The guillible victims were either stonecutters or farm labourers leading a misersble existence. When the agents of the contractors arrived at their villages with assurances of Rs 30 a day as wages, food and shelter, they sold their possessions and set off for Madhya Pardesh. Once at the quarry, they were given Rs three or even less—children were paid as little as 50 paise—and were accommodated in shanty towns without even the most basic of amenities.

The women were frequently raped by the contractors and their toughs. Take the case of Janaki, who had left for the quarries with her parents when she was six years old. Years later, she was married off to another bonded labourer. According to her testimony, she was repeatedly raped by the quarry contractor in front of her husband. Following complaints registered by their relatives in Tamil Nadu, a police team from Pudikottai visited the Raisen stone quarry and freed persons, including five women, in July this year. Later, another police team from Trichy rescued 20, including eight women. The police officers who conducted the rescue operations recounted to their seniors horrifying tales of inhuman suffering and cruelty.

In August this year, four cases were registered: two in Arimalam police station in Pudukottai, one in Vaiyampatti police station and one in Melur police station. Realising the dimensions of the slave trade, the CID crime branch moved in to conduct a major rescue operation. Their investigations revealed that A. L. Subramaniam and Chokkalingam (both Tamilians), contractors of stone quarries in Raisén district, assisted by their relatives in collusion with some persons in Madhya Pradesh, have been systematically conducting this inhuman trade. Cases have been filed against them under the Bonded Labour Abolition Act of 1976. A posse of two inspectors, three sub—inspectors, two head constables and two constables from the CID crime branch left for Bhopal on 6 September. With assistance from the MP police, the Tamil Nadu policemen raided the quarries in the hilly, wooded terrains of Sitarampur, Soorai, Chendura Aktar Patel, Khathir and Thapparapatri and rescued 254 people, including 84 men, 59 women and 111 children.

Under Section 12 of the Bonded Labour Abolition Act, the collector of Raisen ordered an inquiry into the cases of bonded labour in the stone quarries, The victims testified to their having been tortured, raped, starved and cheated by the contractors. They even displayed their scars and injuries as testimony to the brutalities they had been subjected to.

For the freed 254, it was a rare bid for freedom. They were brought back to Madras on 13 September by the Link Express. A stream of bedraggled labourers trickled onto the platform, exhausted and plagued by visions of a bleak future. The next day the victims were transported to their hometowns. The Tamil Nadu government has sanctioned Rs 1,000 to each of them and through the district collectors, has initiated rehabilitation proceedings. The 254 liberated workers are only the proverbial tip of the iceberg. There are scores of them who are duped into sordid captivity in quarries spread all over the country, particularly Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

Anita Pratap

"We will not allow the culprits to escape"

Trivandrum: The Vypeen liquor tragedy in Kerala on 3 September during the Onam festivities, left more than a 100 dead and many others seriously impaired for life (SUNDAY 19 September). What is the Kerala government doing to stop such an occurence being repeated? **Anita Pratap** met the Kerala finance and law minister, Mr K. M. Mani, to find out. Excerpts from their conversation:

Q: What do you have to say about Vypeen liquor deaths?

A: It has to be treated like murder. It has left 65 dead and several others blind. We will not allow the culprits to escape. Police is very vigilant. We will take all measures to see to it that it doesn't happen again.

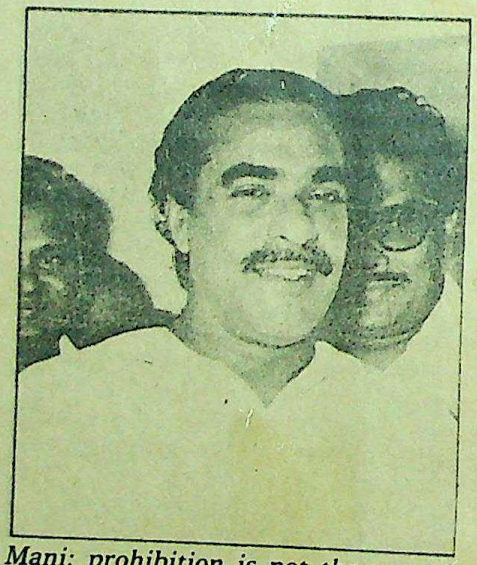
Q: When you say that "it will be treated like murder," does that mean that the perpetrators will be given the same penalty as those guilty of murder?

A: No, I don't mean that. What I mean to say is that it is very, very serious. The contractors will be blacklisted.

Q: Blacklisting does not mean much. Can you not introduce amendments in the existing laws to ensure conviction?

A: Yes, amendments can be made. It willhave to be made under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act .

Q: What are some of the measures that your government is planning to adopt to ensure that such deaths do not take place again?



Mani: prohibition is not the answer

A: One suggestion that the government is experimenting with is bottling. At present, contractors lift arrack from the distilleries and the bottling is done by them. At this stage we have no control and it is easy to adulterate the arrack. The excise rules have to be stricter and any existing loopholes in the excise policy will have to be plugged. Stern measures have to be adopted even if it means a loss in revenue. We do not mind as we want to weed out this problem. We have to change the excise policy—it is not the fault of this government but the policy which has been existing for several years. The government is also planning to launch a massive campaign against drinking. The youth wing of the political parties will take it up as a movement. Prohibition might be a remedy but it won't solve the problem. We have to induce the people to refrain from drinking *"Madhya nirodhanam* (prohibition)" is not the answer *"Madhya varjanam* (voluntary abstinence)" is.

Q: Would you say that negligence and collusion of excise officials is responsible for this tragedy?

A: (*Smiles).* On the face of it, it appears excise officials were negligent. 1 September was Sri Narayana Jayanti day and liquor shops were to be closed. But they were open. As for collusion, I don't know. Anyway, I should not say anything as a judicial probe has been ordered.

Q: The spirits scandal exposed in no uncertain terms the nexus between politicians and liquor barons. What do you have to say?

A: It is not true of all politicians. I agree, some of the covntractors have strong political connections with some political parties.

A: The political parties should themselves keep away from these contractors. They should have absolutely no truck with them otherwise these liquor contractors will adulterate politics also.

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UCO/CAS-99/81

Sexist attitudes thrive in St Stephen's

New Delhi: Of the 52 colleges in Delhi University, admission to St Stephen's is the cherished objective of every fresher. The college celebrated its centenary in 1981, and over the years it has acquired a sacrosanct reputation of superiority in academics, sports and the overall development of a student.

During the annual students union elections of St. Stephen's College, the issues at stake have always been cultural and social. There has never been interference by political parties and elections have been conspicuously bereft of any controversy. This year, however, the recently concluded annual students union elections, sparked off an acrimonious debate and controversy which threatens to besmirch the hallowed reputation of St Stephen's College.

For the first time in the century-old history of the college, a woman candidate, Jyotsana Kapoor of third year history honours, contested for the post of president of the students union at the annual election. There were five candidates contesting for this coveted post. The other four candidates were boys, three of them being from Ms Kapoor's class namely Tariq Shamsul Haque, Dilip Menon and Barun Mitra, and the fourth was Sange Dorji of the 3rd year B.A. pass course.

Pre-election trends tended to be primarily in favour of Jyotsana Kapoor, with Tariq Haque being a close second. Jyotsana Kapoor's election platform was different from the usual issues of better mess facilities, allocation of funds for the students union and sports. Her campaign was against the chauvinistic and often reactionary male domination of college affairs, which culminated in the notorious 'holi incident' of 1981. During the festival celebrations that year, a group of boys from outside the college entered the premises of St Stephen's and on the pretext of playing holi, they physically molested the girls present at college that day. None of the Stephanian boys assisted their fellow-students in distress and did not help in any follow-up protest. Even the reaction of principal. W. S. Rajpal and most of the staff (all with professed liberal views) was muted to say the least. (It may be mentioned here that St Stephen's College started admitting girls only since 1975, and so attitudes of male chauvinism still prevail in several quarters.)

It was against such attitudes and with a deep concern for better facilities for girls, that Jyotsana Kapoor and her supporters campaigned. For instance though there are about 400 girls out of a total student strength of about 950, there is till today no proper common-room for girls. Ms Kapoor received the support of liberal boys as well because she intended to include *karamcharis* and lecturers of the institution in various committees. Such an approach naturally upset the status quo of the conservative establishment of the college. Jyotsana Kapoor, a vivacious girl, who participates in anti-dowry campaigns, street-plays on social issues and student movements against oppression and exploitation, was not considered a 'safe president' by the authorities.

On the day of the elections there was a heavy turnout and the students awaited the results eagerly. When the counting concluded, Jyotsana Kapoor's election agents, Sanjoy Roy (3rd year physics honours) and Mahesh (3rd year philosophy honours), emerged jubilantly as their candidate had won by a narrow margin of five votes. The officer for the elections, Mr Bajaj, a lecturer in physics, had even signed the election notice saying that Ms Kapoor had been elected president. It was then that the chicanery of the conservative forces came into the picture.

History had been made, with St Stephen's College having elected a girl president for the first time. But the euphoria and elation lasted only for five minutes. Mohammed Amin, head of the history department, and one of the polling officers, called back Ms Kapoor's election agents and proposed a recount, alleging that three votes of Tariq Haque had been counted in Jyotsana Kapoor's favour by mistake. It was from here that the mischief originated.

Significantly when the results were originally declared, the election agents of all the four candidates except those of Tariq Haque, left the room. For the recounting, the election agents of the three other candidates were not called—a gross violation of the rules and ethics, which St Stephen's College always professes to champion. Mahesh and Sanjoy Roy naively agreed to the recount. In St Stephen's College, the preferential system of voting is followed and in the recounting Tariq Haque was declared winner on the preference votes. The whole procedure was unconstitutional as the results of the recount were signed only by Jyotsana Kapoor's agents and Tariq Ha-

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que's agents and not the agents of any of the other three candidates. Moreover, the paper which all the election agents had signed has now mysteriously disappeared.

The student community of St Stephen's was shocked at such blatant manoeuvring and over 600 of them signed a petition demanding a repoll. Interestingly out of the 600 signatories there were only about 200 girls. Some were even Tariq Haque's supporters. However, principal Rajpal, scornfully rejected this plea and allegedly stated that, "If I am smoking a pipe and 600 people call it a cigar, it does not alter the reality of the pipe." So all the democratic aspirations of the students were stifled. Attempts were made to impeach Tariq Haque, but, according to the constitution of St Stephen's College, the principal must grant permission for impeachment and this was not forthcoming. The three rooted candidates, Menon, Sange Dorji and Barun Mitra, suggested a compromise formula. They offered to withdraw and suggested a repoll between just the two leading candidates. However, this plea too was rejected by the authorities.

The official version at St Stephen's College is, of course, that there was no rigging and it was the premature celebrations by Mahesh and Sanjoy Roy (both now branded as 'impulsive and leftist') that led to the misunderstanding. If this was true then why has the signed paper with the original results now disappeared? If all is above board, then why do not the St Stephen's authorities honestly confess that there was a mistake in counting and so a recount had to be ordered?

Novy Kapadia

MAHARASHTRA

Bill to curb Antulay's control over trusts

Bombay: Mr A. R. Antulay, the former chief minister, like the pavement-dwellers who he sought to hound out of Bombay last year, has gone to the Supreme Court to get justice against the verdict of the division bench of Bombay High Court. He has filed a special leave petition (SPL) challenging the 10 June judgement of Justices S. K. Desai and B. J. Rele, holding him guilty of arbitrary allotment of cement. The division bench held that Mr Antulay had violated the rules and procedures in respect of cement allotment and acted in an "illegal, arbitrary and capricious manner" to favour big builders who had donated to two of the trusts floated by him. Both the judges also held that there was a "nexus and quid pro quo" between allotment of cement by Mr Antulay in favour of the builders and the donations by the latter, directly or indirectly, to the two trusts. It may be mentioned that the state government though indicted by the judgement of the divisional bench, has not gone in appeal along with Mr Antulay. Perhaps, they have already spent enough on him. According to information given by Shivajirao Patil-Nilangekar, the minister for law and judiciary, in the Assembly during question hour, the government incurred an expenditure of Rs 15,000 for filing an appeal before the division bench of the Bombay High Court against the judgement of Justice Lentin in the case filed against Mr Antulay.

According to legal circles, the step taken by Mr Antulay is in the nature of a self-propelling morale booster. It will not make any material difference to the criminal cases which have been filed against him in the sessions court. The case has been filed against him by Mr Ramdas Naik for cheating and fraud and comes up for hearing on 18 October. If Mr Antulay's appeal is admitted in the Supreme Court then he can claim that the findings of the High Court are under challenge in the Supreme Court.

The Maharashtra government, however, has initiated moves to take over Mr Antulay's trusts, since for all practical purposes he is still in complete control. To facilitate the takeover, the government introduced a Bill in the current session of the state legislature to provide for taking over the management of a public trust, or of acquiring and vesting any such trust in a trustee committee and for creation of a common fund.

The statement of objects and reasons states that in view of the regulatory nature of the Bombay Public Trust Act 1950, it does not contain any provision for abolition of the rights and privileges of any person and acquiring and vesting them in a committee appointed by the government. The Bill provides that trustees can be disqualified and removed from the trustee committee if he is a minor, has been convicted by a criminal court of any offence involving moral turpitude, is of unsound mind and is so declared by a competent court, is an insolvent, has directly or indirectly any interest in a lease or any other transaction relating to any immovable property vested in the trustee committee, and so on. If the state government feels that a member has incurred any of the disqualifications, the state government may, after giving such a member an opportunity of showing cause, and after considering any such cause shown by order, remove such a person from membership. And, the decision of the state government in this regard shall be final.

All this has become necessary because Mr Antulay has refused to resign from or give up control of the trusts. The PM obviously feels insecure as long as Mr Antulay has control over the trusts which have a total amount of nearly Rs six crores. In fact, there is another touch of irony. It was the same Mrs Gandhi who used the daredevil Antulay to edge out her arch enemy, the late Mr Rajni Patel, from the controlling position of the Nehru Centre which is said to have funds running into several crores of rupees. Trusts, like the Nehru Centre represented tremendous money power besides a position of patronage.

When Mr Patel fell out of grace with Sanjay Gandhi, there were attempts to take over the Nehru Centre but the then Emergency chief minister, Mr S. B. Chavan, did not have the power to do it. The PM did not want a confrontation with Mr Patel as he was privy to a lot of things. Then came Mr Vasantdada Patil followed by Mr Sharad Pawar both of whom were friends of Mr Patel. When Mr Antulay became chief minister, things were different. According to the rules, every chief minister automatically becomes the chairman of the board of trustees. At first Mr Antulay was reluctant and so was Dr Raja Ramanna, the renowned scientist who Mrs Gandhi wanted as the general secretary of the centre. Mr Antulay was indebted to Mr Patel for past favours but his loyalty to Mrs Gandhi ultimately won and he got himself the prize post of president. Power was taken away from Mr Rajni Patel.

Getting rid of Mr Rajni Patel was easy but Mr Antulay simply refused to hand over the trusts. Several hints were made to him to resign but each time he was more vehement in protesting that he would not. In fact, according to several reports, detectives from the central bureau of investigation came to Bombay to investigate the actual amounts that were allegedly collected by Mr Antulay. Some say the figures are astronomical. It is felt that if the trusts are taken out of his control, it would be one less source of worry. Hence the Bill providing for new provisions for taking over trusts or management of trusts.

Olga Tellis

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HINA

hinese to enjoy nore rights

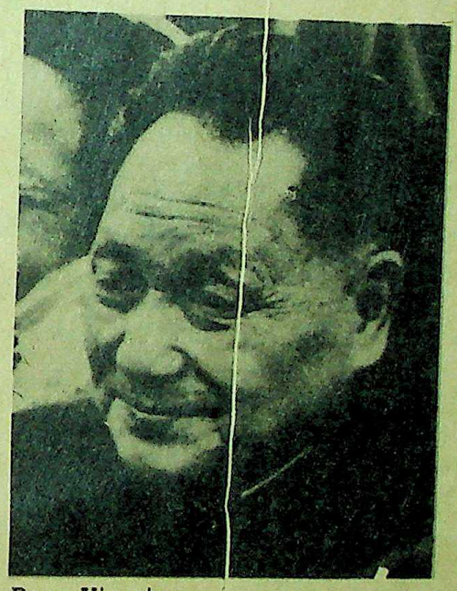
jing: One very hot afternoon in ust in Gansu province, near the ternmost extension of China's eat Wall, this correspondent ed three young college lecturers at they thought of the draft of na's new Constitution which the h Party Congress will ratify this nth. All Chinese have been cted to study the draft but only of my friends had heard of the ument and she hadn't read it. ed, during a month in Inner ngolia, Gansu, and Xinjiang pro-es, in tightly packed railway car-es and crowded hostels this cor-ondent met a few who had ered to read the newest version the rights and duties of every en of the People's Republic.

remains one of the mysteries of ese political life why the Com-ist Party pauses now and again its internal strife to issue new stitutions. The fourth since the founding of the People's Re-ic, and the third in seven years, o ne guarantees anew a galaxy of rights of which no Chinese has been certain.

e draft "defines the nature of country and the status of various es," according to Peng Zhen, chairman of the constitutional sing committee, who observes under the new Constitution na's citizens will enjoy more ts than under a capitalist sys-" The existing 1978 Constitu-which will be superseded with-month, and was once described "major event in the political life ur people," has now been dismis-as "hurriedly drafted and evant." The Chinese authorities drawn special attention to the nges in national administration. State Chairman, or Head of e, will reappear. Stipulated in , the office was abolished in after being held by Mao Zedong then by Liu Shaopi, whom Mao osed in 1967. When appointed, State Chairman will promulgate laws, ratify most senior posi-s, receive foreign dignitaries, award medals. A military coun-with its own chairman, will direct armed forces.

e 50,000 communes, the Maoist erstone of the agricultural eco-y, which were recently ham-ed in the Party's Resolution as of the Chairman's early "errors," will lose their administrative functions; these revert to the towns, as specified in the 1954 Constitution and the move will accelerate the growing independence of Chinese peasants. Article 30 of the new draft hints strongly that Taiwan and Hong Kong can become "special administrative districts." Peng Zhen has underlined this possibility during recent weeks, seeking to reassure anxious entrepreneurs in China's lost possessions, that their economic prosperity could continue under "one state, two systems."

An independent accounting office, the first for over 30 years, will attempt to deal with the rampant corruption in official life, some of whose beneficiaries are now appearing in the dock all over China.



Deng Xiaoping

But the most important difference in the new draft Constitution stems from last year's Party Resolution, with its fundamental dismissal, in effect, of Mao's contribution after 1956 until his death 20 years later. Hailed as supreme in all things in previous constitutions, and named five times in the preamble of the 1978 version, Mao is mentioned just once in the current draft. And unlike its predecessor, which considered "continuing the revolution" the main task, the draft calls on all Chinese "to carry out modernisation," a reflection of the Dengist priorities which prompted one official to explain: "When a policy works, we call it socialism. Those that fail, we call capitalism."

Past constitutional rights to put up wall posters and to strike no longer exist, a reflection of the leadership's astonishment at the public outpourings during the shortlived 1978 Peking Spring with its police style calls for Party reform.

As for personal rights, these have always been trumpeted in the People's Republic—and always denied. In 1957 a bold professor had written to Mao that "an untold number of citizens" had perished in illegal detention. He was soon proclaimed a "vicious Rightist." Since then millions of Chinese have suffered at the hands of the State. Party Chairman Hu Yaobang has estimated 100 million during the Cultural Revolution alone. Hundreds of thousands have died. There may be sceptical smiles when Chinese read the draft's Article 40, which promises compensation to those illegally treated by the State. How do you receive compensation in the after-life?

Chinese citizens can be imprisoned for several years without public trial, quite outside the provisions of the 1980 Criminal Code. A large number of women are now in a Shanghai detention centre, for instance, because they had sexual relations before they were married. Nor are sexual peccadilloes the only route to "labour under the supervision of the masses." Every significant figure in the short-lived Democracy Movement which followed Mao's death is now behind bars; most are there without trial. All have been charged with violating an earlier equivalent of Article 27 of the new Constitution, which prohibits—without defining—"treasonous and counter-revolutionary activity."

One of them, Liu Qing, has been inside since late 1979 for publishing the transcript of the trial of another dissident, Wei Jingsheng, one of the stars of Democracy Wall who maintained that without democracy China's modernisation would be meaningless. Just before he disappeared into the Chinese prison system, from which he later smuggled a lengthy diary, Liu Qing demanded that a security official tell him which laws he had violated. With a crowd of Liu's supporters listening, the officer replied: "We arrest whom we want to, that's what."

In China today it is not the Constitution but the Party which bestows and removes rights and favours. As Deng Xiaoping declared last year "everything decided by the Central Committee and Party organisations must be obeyed until further changes are announced."

Jonathan Mirsky

By arrangement with *New Statesman*

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Asians asked to stay on

In the wake of the abortive coup bid of 1 August in Nairobi, when Asian shops were looted and members of the community assaulted, Kenyan leaders are trying to prevent an Asian exodus from that country. A junior minister in President Moi's cabinet was apparently attempting to reassure the Asian community, when he pointed out that conditions were not any better in the US, Britain or India. Property losses amounted to $ 110 million, several members of the over 70,000-strong community were physically threatened and some women reportedly raped. Aware that the Ugandan economy was seriously affected by the departure of the Asians in 1972, President Moi himself made a statement urging insurance companies to reverse their decision against paying compensation to Asians.

European rocket fails

The failure of the first commercial space flight of the European space rocket, Ariane, is a serious blow to the European space industry. The rocket developed a fault 13 minutes after take off which prevented the launching of the two communications satellites, Marecs B and Sirio-2 which were to be put into geostationary orbit. This will undoubtedly lessen Ariane's potential clients who will now look to the American space shuttle, Columbia, whose first commercial flight is due this November. The Ariane programme is under the aegis of the European Space Agency which comprises 11 participating nations, the major contributors being France and West Germany.

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The Gang of Four today

The Gang of Four, who were disgraced for the alleged excesses of the cultural revolution, are serving sentences in various jails all over China. Mr Zhang Ghunqiao, now in his mid-sixties, is said to be fighting cancer of the throat. Sentenced to death in January last year, he had refused to speak at his trial, but Chinese authorities suspended his sentence and are still hoping he will recant. Jiang Qing, 68, Mao Zedong's widow, is presently making dolls in a prison in the south-western province of Guangxo. She gets a certain sum for each doll, which she will be allowed to draw if released. Her death sentence comes up for review next year but sources say her execution is extremely unlikely. Yao Wenyuman, the extreme left-wing propagandist of the cultural revolution, is now working as a librarian in a maximum security prison near Beijing. He is serving a 20-year prison sentence. The fourth member of the Gang, Wang Hongwen who had risen to the highest positions of the Chinese leadership while still in his early thirties, is serving a life term at a labour camp in north-west China. He is the only member of the Gang who has shown "a determination to reform himself and work hard."

Jiang Qing

Briefly

Brezhnev may retire soon

According to Western diplomatic sources, President Leonid Brezhnev may retire by the end of this year, possibly when the sixtieth anniversary celebrations of the Soviet Union are to take place. The Soviet leader, who has been ailing for a long time, will, according to these sources, retire with extraordinary Soviet honours in recognition of his 18-year tenure which saw the USSR achieve military parity with the USA for the first time. His likely successor is Yuri A. Andropov already a member of the Politburo.

Vietnam allows emigration

Vietnam has agreed to allow children of mixed Vietnamese-American ancestry, to emigrate. Officials said that American members of the World Church Service met the Vietnamese foreign minister, Nguyen Co Thach. The minister agreed to allow 63 children, whose claim to US citizenship has been documented through US courts, to emigrate.

Historic Scottish island saved

The tiny Scottish isle of Iona has been 'saved' by the 46-year-old British businessman, Sir Hugh Fraser, former owner of the department store Harrods. The Scots had feared that the island, where the Irish monk, St Columba, landed in 563 AD to spread the Christian faith in Britain and where several Scottish kings are buried, would pass into the hands of foreigners.

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Sunday week

Beginning 26 September

By AMRITLAL

ARIES (15 April—14 May) This is a week of financial gains for you, and those of you in service will also get a promotion. For those involved in literature and the fine arts, success is certain. This is a good phase for launching new business ventures too. Take the initiative and avail of every opportunity that comes your way. Good days for romance too.

Good dates: 27, 28 and 30
Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 5
Favourable direction: East

TAURUS (15 May—14 June) In spite of all your efforts made in your endeavours, the results will not be up to your expectations. You will have to go through a lot of physical and mental strain. You are advised to keep a tight rein on your temper this week. Take good care of the health of family members. A word of caution: keep away from romance for some time.

Good dates: 28, 29 and 1
Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 6
Favourable direction: South-east

GEMINI (15 June—14 July) Relationships on the domestic front will be strained. Be very careful in your dealings with the opposite sex. Old friends will come to your help now and will also help you in your business ventures. You will gain financially provided caution is exercised in investments. Children born under this sign will do well in examinations.

Good dates: 29, 30 and 2
Lucky numbers: 3, 7 and 9
Favourable direction: West

CANCER (15 July—14 August) You may not have the same luck in your favour as you did last week, but the good phase still continues. Apart from a minor loss, your prospects are encouraging. You will reap the benefits of your past work, but do not get complacent. Be patient in your dealings with elders in the family and superiors at work. Avoid all controversies.

Good dates: 26, 28 and 29
Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 6
Favourable direction: South-west

LEO (15 August—14 September) Your fortunes now take a turn for the better. The monotony and boredom of the last few months will come to an end this week. Your career will prosper in unexpected ways. Romance is on the cards and matrimonial plans must be taken seriously. If you have plans of making important changes this week, you must go right ahead with them.

Good dates: 27, 30 and 1
Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 7
Favourable direction: North

VIRGO (15 September—14 October) New developments on your professional front will demand a lot of your time and energy. However, do not expect success this week. Financially, the time is not favourable either. You may have to resort to some short-term measures to tide over your pressing problems. There will be some tension on the domestic front too, so tread carefully.

Good dates: 28, 1 and 2
Lucky numbers: 6, 8 and 9
Favourable direction: East

LIBRA (15 October—14 November) Financial gains are in store for you. Interviews and correspondence must be dealt with soon. Friends will contribute greatly to your happiness. Pay attention to professional details and forge ahead. The routine that you had been following for the last few months will be broken now. Your health will show a marked improvement.

Good dates: 26, 30 and 1
Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 5
Favourable direction: South-east

SCORPIO (15 November—14 December) A little too much stress on principles and righteousness may hinder your work this week. However, many opportunities for making long-awaited changes will come your way. Be ready to take up new challenges. You are advised not to get involved in any controversy, and not to take any decision on your own.

Good dates: 27, 1 and 2
Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 9
Favourable direction: North-east

SAGITTARIUS (15 December—14 January) For those of you involved in the performing arts, there is travel in store for you this week. Others will enjoy a fair measure of luck and financial gains. Those in business, planning new investments, this is a favourable time. There are some marital problems signified this week, so you are advised restraint in your dealings.

Good dates: 29, 30 and 1
Lucky numbers: 6, 8 and 9
Favourable direction: South

CAPRICORN (15 January—14 February) Your career will get a boost this week, as you will benefit through someone during the early days. Do not take risks in your business affairs. You will require a lot of tact to keep peace in your personal life. The health of your family too will need a great deal of attention now. A letter will bring good tidings. Do not squander away your earnings.

Good dates: 28, 30 and 1
Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 5
Favourable direction: North-west

AQUARIUS (15 February—14 March) Your career will make very good progress this week. In your personal life, a member of the opposite sex will bring a lot of happiness. You might have to undertake a journey which will benefit your family. Curb all extravagant tendencies for you will need the money later. Do not antagonise elders or employers.

Good dates: 30, 1 and 2
Lucky numbers: 1, 7 and 8
Favourable direction: East

PISCES (15 March—14 April) The problems that have been confronting you will be solved with the help of influential friends. For businessmen this is a very busy week since new contracts and deals are in the offing. There will be some anxiety in your personal life and ill-health of family members is indicated. A promotion for you is in the offing.

Good dates: 26, 27 and 28
Lucky numbers: 7, 8 and 9
Favourable direction: North

For those born between 15 September and 14 October: You will have to take a great deal of care of your health this year, for ailments of the stomach, skin and eyes are indicated. Your financial position will be fairly comfortable but some unforeseen and unexpected expenses are likely to occur. You will gain monetarily due to some long-term investment, so avail of the chances. In their personal life, Virgoans will face their share of problems this year. Some trouble in litigation and property matters may arise and you will have to be extra careful against deceit. Career-wise this is a good phase and those who are unemployed will find a job. Those dealing in manual work, may be accident-prone, so take a lot of care.

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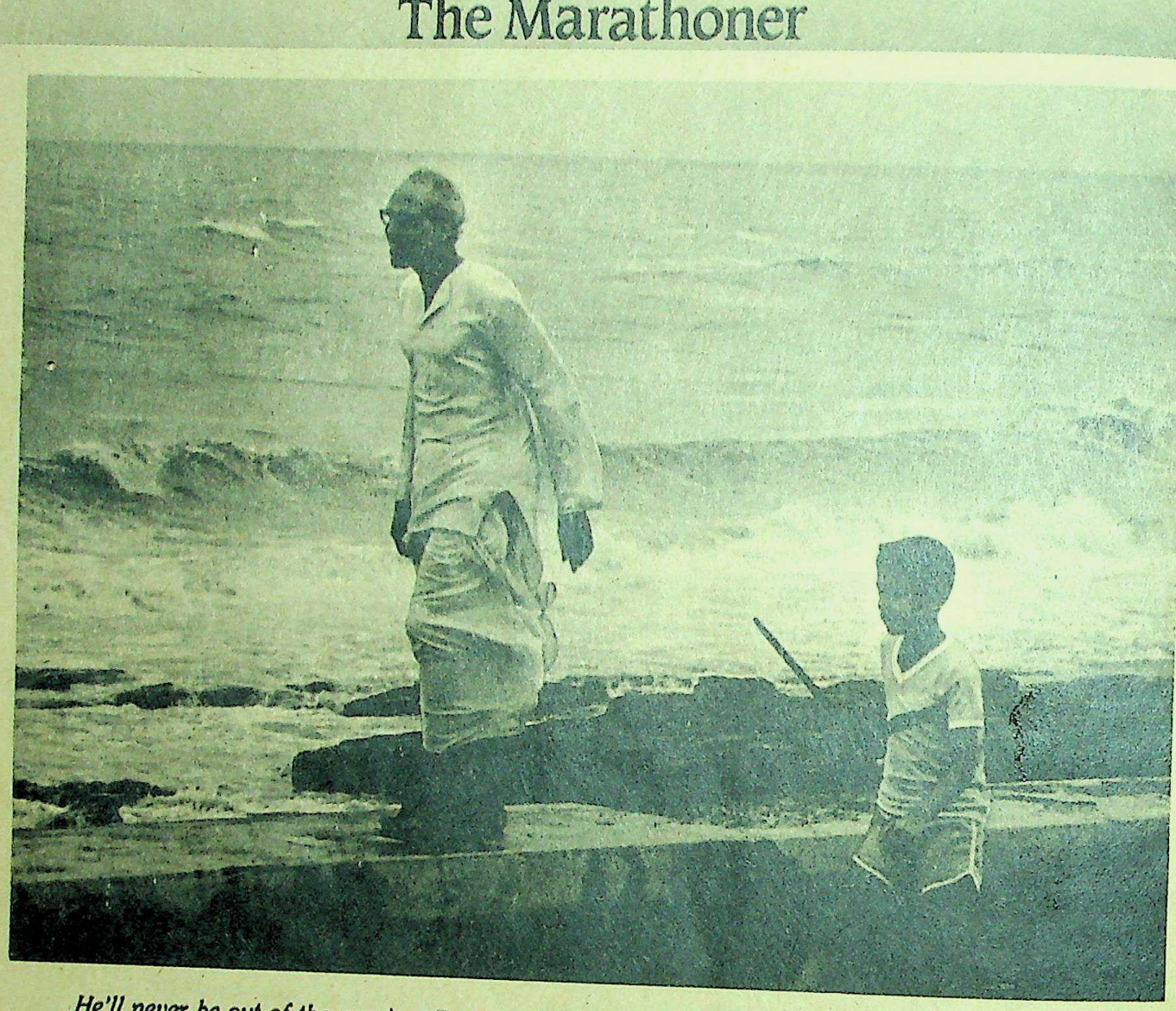
To commemorate the Asian Games, State Bank salutes the unknown and unsung sportsman.

The Marathoner



He'll never be out of the running. Retirement has not robbed him of his vitality. Only the direction has changed. □ *For instance, instead of playing on the office Cricket 'eleven' he challenges his grandson to a game of Table Tennis. Instead of slogging '9 to 5' as a mere cog in a large organisation he works on his own poultry farm. Having saved for years with State Bank, he found it easy to arrange a loan to start this small but thriving business.* □ *He's quite a cheerful person. The only time he scowls is when you ask him his age. Or catch him with his spectacles on. Because he doesn't want to be known as 60 years old. He's only 60 years young!*

State Bank
Security is warm feeling

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Khaas Baat

Dharam Vir Jayner

Naseeruddin

There's no war between *Shashi Kapoor* and *Naseeruddin Shah*. It was just some misunderstanding during the making of *Junoon* that led to a break in their good relationship. They didn't meet for a very long time after the release of *Junoon*, and then they signed a film called *Bezubaan*. The two worked together in a very cordial atmosphere. According to Shashi "most misunderstandings are created by the gossip columnists. At least in this case I am sure it is a figment of their wild imagination. We have solved our problems in an amicable way. We are not children to keep on quarrelling all the time, you know."

The bad phase in *Rishi Kapoor*'s career continues. There are no good films coming his way. In fact, there are very few, just a handful of them. Two big films *Yeh Ishk Nahin Aasaan* and *Deedaar E Yaar* are ready for release. Rishi hopes these films will work the magic he has been waiting for. There was *Coolie* too, the ill-fated film but in the light of what has happened the film will have to wait for one full year at least. And then there is *Duniya* with *Dilip Kumar*. All these films will take time and till then Rishi will have to wait. The release of his father's *Prem Rog* in which he has played one of the most significant roles of his career has still to make an impact.

Everyone is talking about *Raakesh Roshan*'s new film, *Kaam Chor*. It is a film Raakesh started when he was passing through a very bad phase in his career as an actor. It was better to make his own film than to keep waiting for the roles to come. *Kaam Chor* which has been directed by K. Vishwanath has also *Suresh Oberoi* and *Jayapradha* in important roles. Jayapradha according to Raakesh has won the show hands down.

This young man *Sunjay Dutt* is unfortunately becoming a strange case. There was the bad patch in his career recently. Then he decided to change for the better but ill-luck continued to chase him. It is the woman problem all over again. *Tina Munim*, the love in his life for seven years, walked out on him in a surprise move and people started talking about her new affair with *Rajesh Khanna* and before anything more could happen film circles were rife with talk about the *Rekha* and Sunjay affair. Sunjay again became irresponsible and neglected his work till director *S.V. Rajendra Singh* who is directing him in *Mera Faisla* took him to task. Sunjay used to report about five hours late every day. When Rajendra Singh could no longer stand it he threatened to throw him out of the film if he continued his mad ways. Sunjay was chastened. He has changed again—for the better.

Tina: new affair

Madhavi: never grows older

Madhavi recently celebrated her birthday. But she was frightfully secretive about her age. When asked, she would look coy, smile prettily, coo and purr but no word about how old she is. She seems to have set a tradition for herself. At her birthday bash every year she makes an announcement of how she has bagged a covetous role. This year she announced that she had signed for a Hindi film *Woh Kaun Hai*, with *Vinod Mehra*.

A. Nageshwara Rao is indeed a snail. He entered the filmworld in the the Forties and completed his 200th film only recently. Whereas, *Krishna* who entered the film industry in 1964 has already completed his 200th film

One interesting fact came to light recently. *N. T. Rama Rao* started his film career with *Manadesam* (Our Nation). Now his latest film has been titled *Nadesam* (My Nation). Do the titles of the films presage his political progression? He started as a Congressman and now with his Telugu Desam party, will he become a megalomaniac?

Sri Devi has a unique quality. In the case of most actresses the rise in popularity is directly proportional to the size of their heads. They become snooty, difficult and temperamental. Not so Sri Devi. The more popular she gets, the nicer she becomes. She is more friendly and charming than she was a few years ago. She is sweet-natured not only to male actors but also to her female co-stars and that is saying something.

Sri Devi: nice

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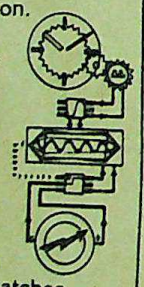

Powered by the battery, the crystal begins to vibrate at 32,768 oscillations per second. A trimmer helps set the vibrations to this frequency. This frequency is technically considered the most suitable for watches.

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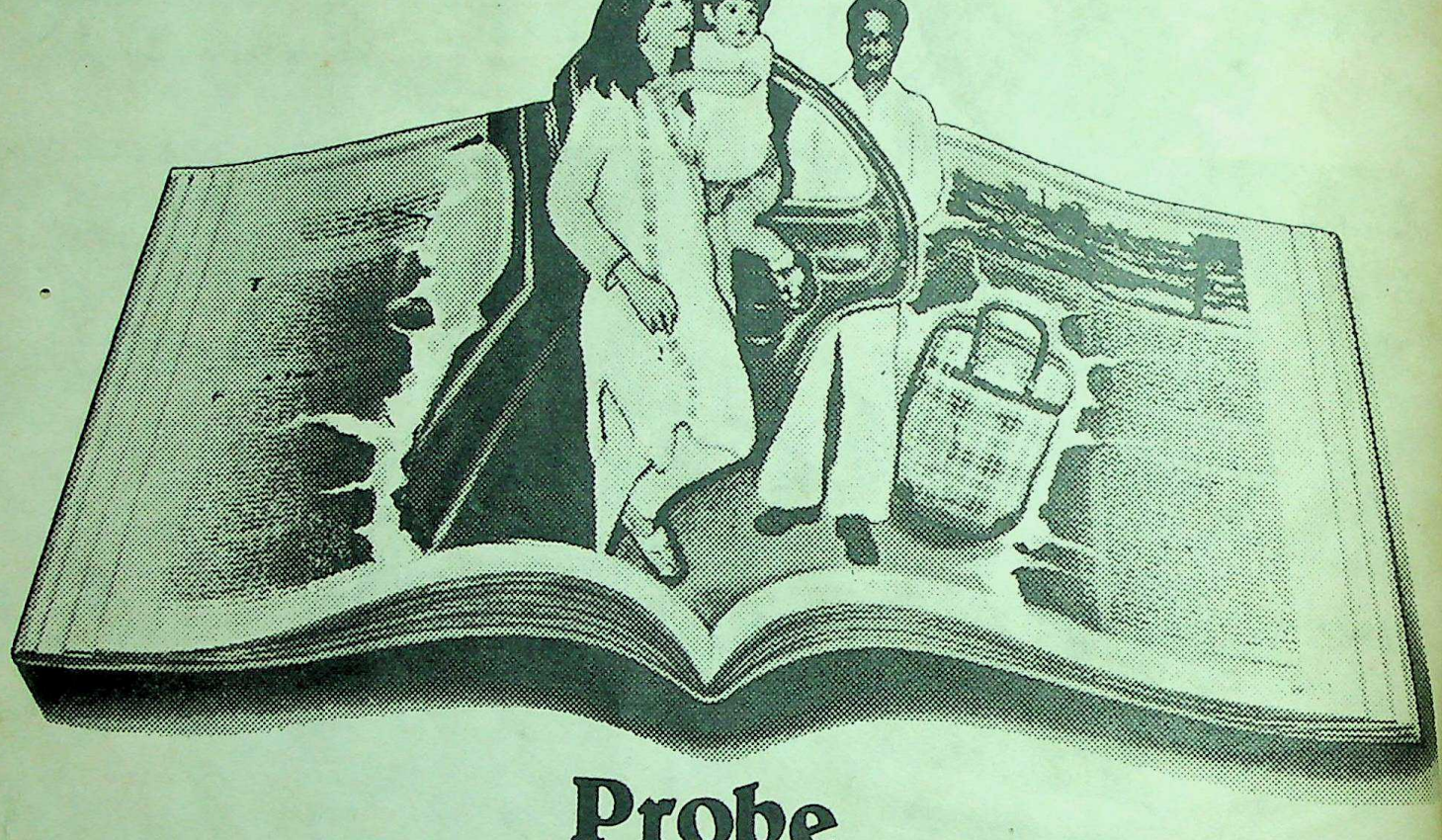
When there is more to it than meets the eye



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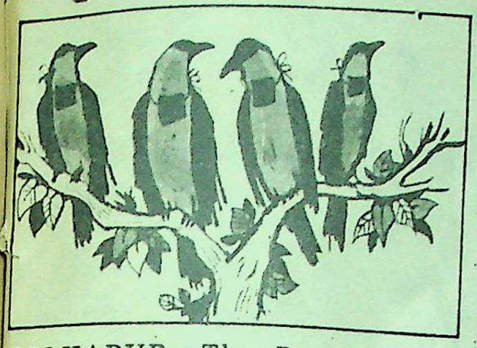

KOLHAPUR: The Panchaganga cremation ground here has turned into a mourning place not merely for human beings but also for crows. On Sunday last (5 September) a flock of crows, apparently grieved by the death of one of their brood at the hands of a mongoose, refused to take any food for three long hours to the astonishment of nearly 500 persons who offered rice as a ritual to mourn their dead. The crows, perched on nearby trees, ended their "mourning" after three hours, according to the superintendent of the cremation ground —*Hindustan Times* (Jitender Parasar, New Delhi)

TRIVANDRUM: For the last few days, the ruling UDF and the opposition MLAs of Kerala were playing games in the evening after fighting each other in the legislature in the morning. The occasion was the silver jubilee of the state legislature. The brain behind the idea was the speaker Mr Vakkom Purshottaman. The playing fields were fringed by unusually large crowds including women and children. The wives of some MLAs participated merrily in all events, ranging from soccer matches to musical chairs. The Congress(I) chief minister Mr K. Karunakaran and the Marxist opposition leader, Mr E. K. Nayanar did not participate in any of the events, obviously because of their advanced age— *Times of India* (Parikshit Bhandari Jaipur)

NEW DELHI: A whopping fee of Rs 2,16,000 has been charged for designing just two chairs and two tables for the Asiad games village here according to Mr Kishore, president of the Delhi Pradesh Janata Party — *Hindustan Times* (S.P.Khosla, New Delhi)

NEW DELHI: Since the day the finance minister Mr Pranab Mukherjee gave in Parliament figures of the per capita foreign debt, he has been receiving cheques from several citizens covering the amount. The minister has asked his office to return the cheques assuring the senders that individuals need not worry about the foreign debt which the government would take care of —*Times of India* (Arbind Gutgutia, Barabanki, UP)

TIRUPATHI: The principle "music for more milk" is accepted and is being implemented at the Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam's 250 acre *gosala*. Experiments conducted abroad showed that milk production can be increased by ten to 70 percent when the milch mammals listen to melodious music. Dr Konda Reddy, the superintendent of the *gosala*, suggested that they implement the scheme. Loud speakers are arranged in various parts of the shed and cassettes are being played to provide the music. Presently the 85 cows are giving 500 litres of milk every day—*Daily* (S. Ranganathan, Kalyan, Maharastra)

RAIPUR: Mr Ram Lakhan Mishra, a *gram sevak* of Raipur district, was reinstated after 18 years. Mr Mishra was appointed *gram sevak* on 8 May, 1964. His order of appointment was in English. Mr Mishra represented to the authorities asking for a copy of the order in Hindi mentioning that the Constitution of India had provided that orders could be given in Hindi also. The then commissioner of Raipur division held his action as indiscipline and terminated his services. Mr Mishra has been making representations since then, at all levels from collector to Prime Minister. Finally on 14 June this year the state cabinet decided that Mr Mishra had not committed any act of indiscipline and ordered his reinstatement—*Indian Express* (P. Elangovan, Madras)

THANJAVUR: The Velankanni Basilica of Our Lady of Health has received a strange gift from a devotee a shield on which is embossed a silver wine bottle and a small silver cup. Rt Rev. Thomas Vaz, parish priest, said the donor, a woman, had written underneath the wine bottle that her husband had been a drunkard and that after a vow to Our Lady of Health he had given up drinking bringing cheer to the family—*Hindu* (Govindan Madurai)

MYSORE: Syed Gaffur, a watchman in the office of the divisional engineer (phones) has been organising Gowri-Ganesha festival in the office since three years. Gaffur has been a devotee of Lord Ganapati whose idol was installed by the then Maharaja of Mysore at Vinayaka in that building. The major part of expenditure on Ganesha *puja* is met by Gaffur—*Times of Deccan* (K.P. Andavan, Gobichettipalayam, TN)

SALEM: A bride walked out of the marriage hall after finding the groom to be a drunkard. On the eve of the marriage, the bride, Shanti (19) saw her husband-to-be dead drunk and decided to walk out on him—*Indian Express* (C. V. Balakrishnan, Coimbatore)

Without Comment

On certain points where I have to be firm, I shall be as hard as a rock and nobody can shake me—Dr Farooq Abdullah

Charisma sustains the grass-root and charismatic personality reflects in the grass root—N.D. Tiwari, union industries minister on Mrs Gandhi's charisma, quoted in *Weekend Review*

Why not ask your leader to try and wrest powers from the state and see what happens?—Jyoti Basu's retort in the Assembly to a Congress(I) member's remark that the state's powers should be curtailed

A melancholy grips me when I see reports saying the chief minister is going or has gone—Babasaheb Bhosale

Even chief ministers are at the mercy of the centre—Prakash Singh Badal, Akali leader

The problem of law and order in UP has been overplayed. Is there no crime in other states?—Sripat Mishra, UP chief minister

I put my politics aside when I change my clothes—French President Mitterrand

Do you know the difference between involvement and commitment? Think of ham and eggs. The chicken is involved, the pig is committed—Martina Navratilova

Grace was a gracious, wonderful woman who was a princess from the moment she was born—Frank Sinatra after the shocking death of Princess Grace of Monaco (former Hollywood star Grace Kelly) following a car accident

I knew about women's liberation before I even knew what the word was. When people ask me 'Why do women walk behind men in India?' I tell them, 'because they are the ones pushing men to the top'—Persis Khambatta, Indian model and Hollywood actress quoted in *Society*

Illustration: Debashis Deb

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Asterix and the BLACK GOLD

by Goscinny and Uderzo

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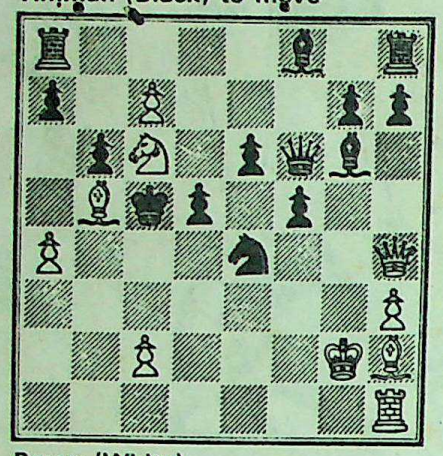
Chess

Timman (Black) to move



Braga (White)

Game of the month: Comedy of errors

It is rare indeed to witness in modern tournament play any of the wild swashbuckling king-hunts of the past with both kings staggering round the board like a couple of drunken gladiators in search of a lion. When one does see such a game, though, and sees how badly it is played, it is tempting to ask whether those good old swashbuckling games of the past contained so many errors.

The following game would not stand up in court, but it is great fun. Just to be awkward though, I decided to point out some of the errors, but my criticism is purely academic. Without the errors the game would not have been so interesting.

White: Braga Black: Timman
Caro-Kan Defence
Argentina 1982

1 P–K4 P–QB3 2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 P–K5 B–B4 4 N–QB3 P–K3
5 P–KN4

Introducing a Russian idea which has recently been developed by the young Dutch master Van der Wiel.

5 B–N3 6 KN–K2 P–QB4
7 B–K3 N–QB3 8 PxP NxP
9 N–Q4 N–KB3 10 P–KB4!?

A clever pawn sacrifice to trap the black king in the centre, but he follows it up incorrectly.

10 N(4)xP 11 B–N5+ K–K2
12 B–N1?

Too slow. Simply 12 Q–K2 followed by 0–0–0 or P–B6 would have left Black in great difficulties.

12 Q–B2 13 P–B6 P–N3
14 Q–K2 QxKBP 15 P–B7

An ingenious but unsound idea. He hopes for 15 . . . QxP 16 N–B6+ K–Q3 17 P–KR3 N–R3 18 B–R2, but Black need not take the pawn at once.

15 N–K5 16 N–B6+ K–Q3
17 P–KR3 Q–N6+ 18 K–B1 QxN!

This must have come as a shock. If 19 PxQ N–N6+

19 QxN(N4) QxNP 20 P–QR4

His position is hopeless. If first 20 B–R2+ K–B4 21 P–QR4 then Black wins by 21 . . . QxR+ 22 K–N2 QxR+ 23 KxR N–B7+

20 QxR+?

Greedy. The modest 20 . . . KxP leaves him with four (!) extras pawns and the stronger attack

21 K–N2 P–B4?

Black suddenly has new problems because of the threat of B–R2+, but he could escape and win quite simply and remarkably by 21 . . . QxB+!! 22 RxQ KxP with rook bishop and his four pawns for the queen

22 Q–R4?

Now 22 B–R2+ K–B4 23 Q–K2 would leave Black in a real mess, but the farce continues.

22 Q–KB3 23 B–R2+ K–B4(diag)
24 N–N8!!

A fantastic saving grace which nearly turns the tables completely.

24 QxQ

What else? He has no check.

25 P–B8–Q+ KN–5 26 R–N1+

It is of course the most incredible piece of good fortune for Black that he is not mated in this position. If 26 N–B6+ K–B6!! and the discovered checks do not help White one iota, or 26 N–R6+ K–R4! again suddenly leaves White in the soup

26 K–R6 27 R–R1+ K–N5

Not 27 . . . K–N7?? 28 B–K5+ and mates

28 R–N1+ Draw!

An eventful game!

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

Australia's leading player, Tim Seres, who is of Hungarian origin, has said for years that it pays to be pessimistic over pre-empts. Two deals from the final of the Australian Interstate championship proved him right again. This was the first:

Dealer, South Game all

	♠ 10 ♥ 8 7 5 3 ♦ A 5 3 2 ♣ K J 10 3	
♠ K Q J 5 ♥ A J 2 ♦ K J ♣ 8 6 5 4	N W E S	♠ A 9 7 4 ♥ K Q 10 9 6 4 ♦ – ♣ A 9 7
	♠ 8 6 3 2 ♥ – ♦ Q 10 9 8 7 6 4 ♣ Q 2	

At both tables South opened Three Diamonds. West at one table bid Four Clubs for take-out – one of the worst conventions ever devised, for partner has no room in which to express his hand. North bid Six Diamonds and East Seven Hearts, for which there was no play.

At the other table, where Seres himself was South, East-West reached Seven Spades, which is a make if nothing bad happens. But alas, South doubled for an unusual lead, and after a heart ruff at trick one West had to lose another trick and 500 points.

Soon after came this hand, with East the dealer at love all:

	♠ K Q 8 6 5 ♥ K 6 2 ♦ A K ♣ K 7 5	
♠ 10 4 2 ♥ Q 5 4 3 ♦ 6 ♣ J 8 4 3 2	N W E S	♠ J 7 ♥ J 10 7 ♦ Q J 8 7 4 2 ♣ 9 6
	♠ A 9 3 ♥ A 9 8 ♦ 10 9 5 3 ♣ A Q 10	

Now Seres himself was South. He doubled the opening Three Diamonds and North, after applying the old Black, quickly promoted himself into 7NT, for which there was no play. At the other table East did not open and North-South stopped in Six Spades.

The point is, of course, that when there has been a pre-empt there is always a danger of bad divisions. Apart from that, East in the first example, and North in the second, lacked intermediates.

TERENCE REESE

Stamp

The youthful portrait of Queen Victoria on this ½d stamp may deceive the tyro into thinking that it dates from the early years of her reign. In fact the Queen was in her 68th year when the stamp was issued in January 1887. It was one of a series of 12, ranging from ½d to 1s, printed by De La Rue Ltd in inks which the company termed fugitive, since even immersion in cold water would cause the colours to run, rendering fruitless any attempt by the dishonest to wash the postmarks off used stamps in order to re-use them. In 1900 the colour of the ½d stamps was changed from vermilion to bluish-green

C. W. HILL

Quiz

QUESTIONS

1. Nowadays women do not have much time to practise embroidery but Victorian women did. They were adept at Stevengraphs. What are Stevengraphs?
2. Who are Wolf Cubs?
3. You have heard of people walking around like zombies. What is the original meaning of the word?
4. Where would you find the Islets of Langerhans?
5. The Isle of Wight is an island but whenever aviary owners speak of the Isle of Wight they speak in hushed, fearful tones. Why?
6. There are some districts in Scotland where only Gaelic is spoken. What are they known as?

ANSWERS

1. They are silk pictures of women in colours.
2. Those who belong to the Wolf Clubs, a junior division of the present day Boy Scouts, were Wolf Cubs.
3. It is a word with an African origin and signified the deity of the python.
4. In your pancreas. They are groups of epithelial cells discovered by Paul Langerhans, a German anatomist (1847-88). These cells produce a secretion whose want causes diabetes.
5. The Isle of Wight is a disease of bees caused by a mite.
6. The Gaidhealtachd.

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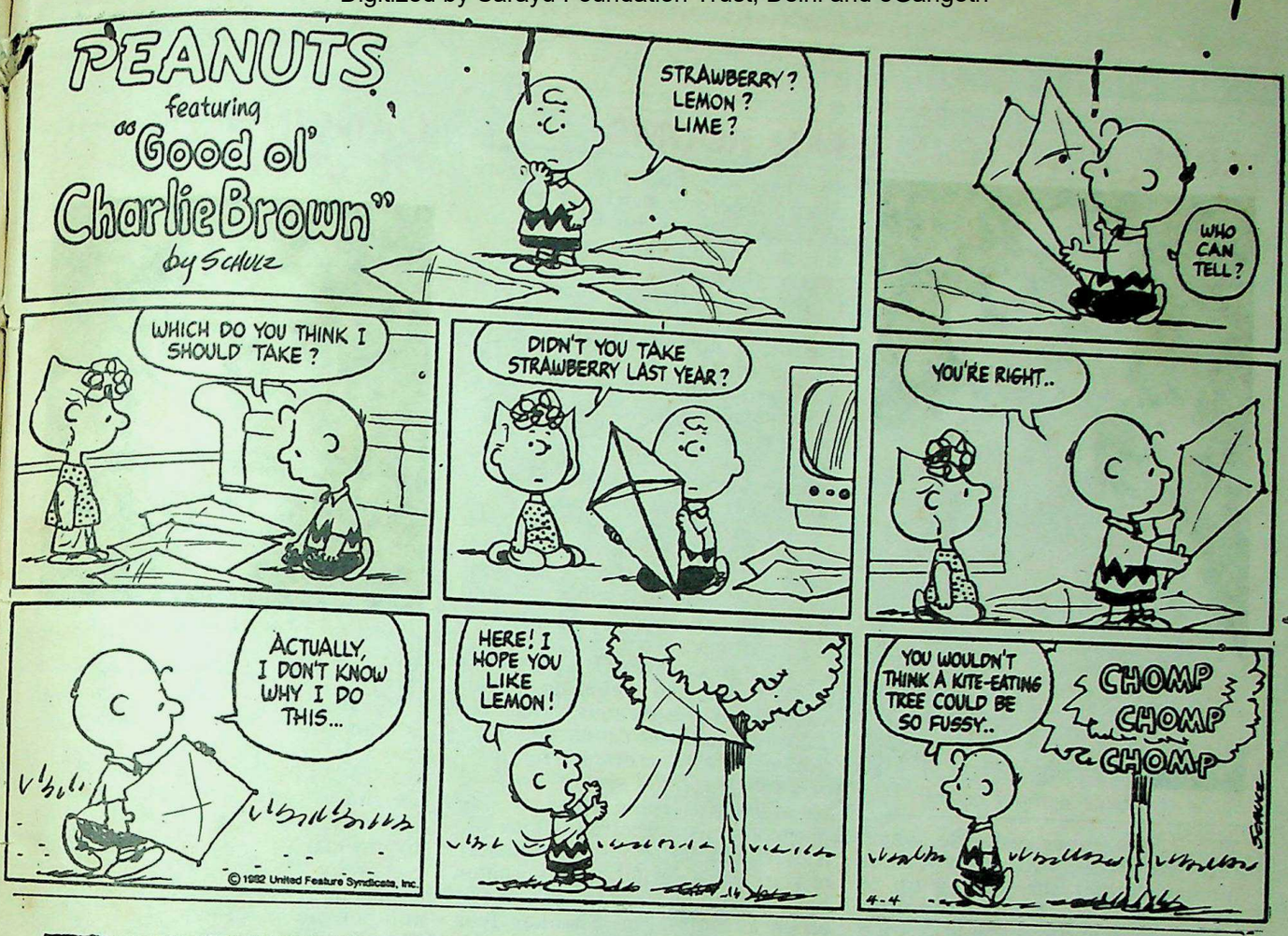

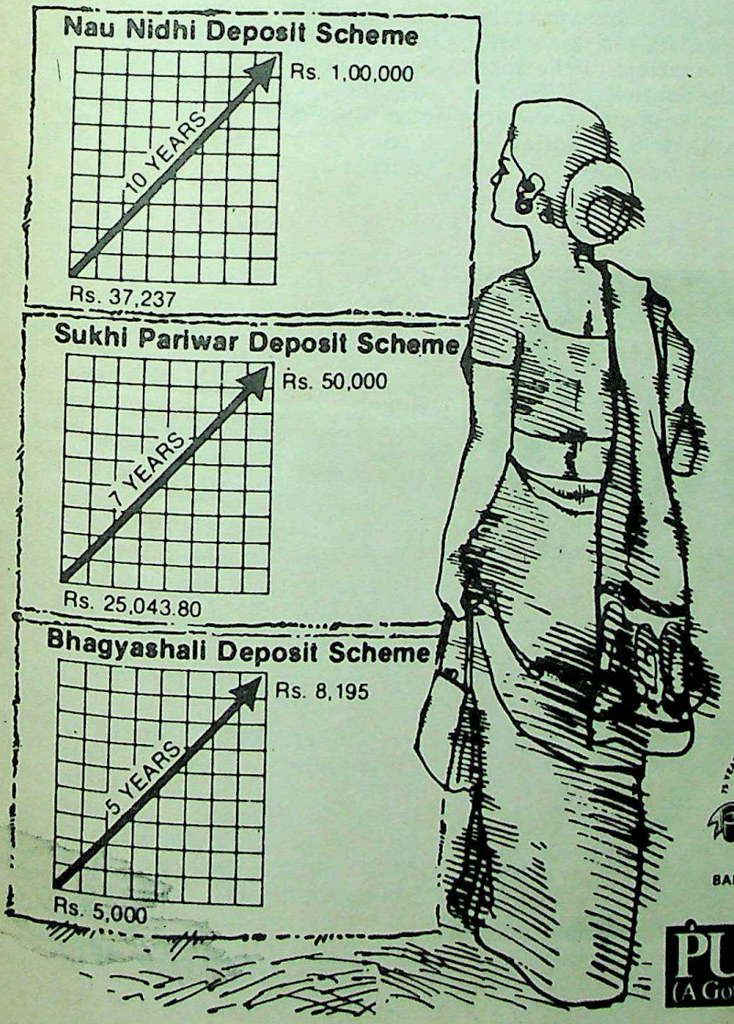

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MORE MINISTERS THAN ROOMS

Jayanta Das

Sathe :minister without office

THE 2 September reshuffle, which resulted in the splitting up of some ministries and the setting up of some new posts, has created utter confusion regarding the allocation of rooms for ministers and senior officers in New Delhi. The worst affected is Mr Vasant Sathe, who has been shunted from the post of minister for information and broadcasting to the truncated chemicals and fertilisers ministry. Mr Shiv Shankar, who held the composite charge of petroleum, chemicals and fertilisers before he became the minister for petroleum, energy and coal, continues to occupy his office on the second floor of Shastri Bhavan (which houses the petroleum, chemicals and fertilisers departments) in addition to the energy minister's room at the Shram Shakti Bhavan. This has created a difficult situation for Mr Sathe. Till a proper room is furnished to suit his cabinet rank, he has decided to function from his residence.

Another person who has been badly affected by the reshuffle is Mr Mani Shankar Iyer, the joint secretary (external publicity) and the official spokesman of the external affairs ministry. Since the return of the Congress(I) in January 1980, there had been no junior minister in the foreign office. So, the junior minister's room had been occupied by a secretary-level officer and the official spokesman had been given a room close to the foreign minister's office. With Mr A. A. Rahim becoming the minister of state for external affairs, rooms had to be reallocated in the foreign office and Mr Mani Shankar Iyer has now been allotted a room in the Shastri Bhavan, half a km away from the headquarters of the foreign office at the South Block. Surely the official spokesman's presence in the South Block is essential for proper external publicity?

DANCING TO THE *DURBAR'S* TUNES

Sondeep Shankar

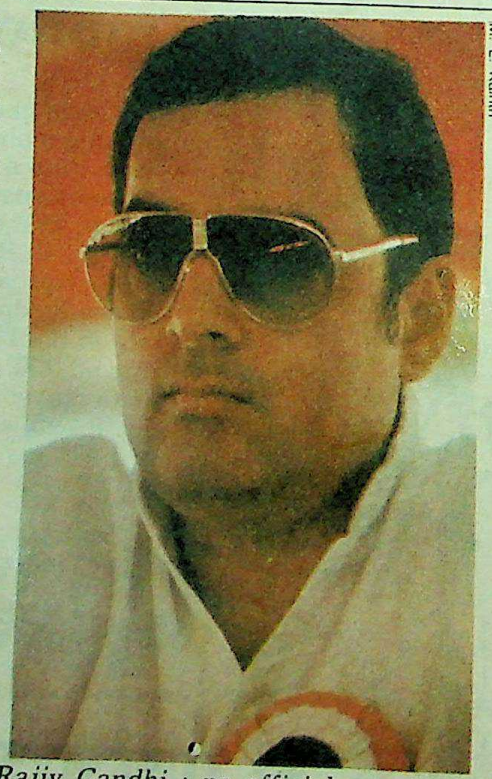
Pranab Mukherjee: love for the finer things

THE daughters of two union cabinet ministers have shown interest in learning classical dancing. This love for aesthetics among the ministers' families is being made use of by those who would like to be on the right side of the official hierarchy. So, the daughters of finance minister Pranab Mukherjee and petroleum and energy minister Shiv Shankar are much in demand at festivals of performing arts these days. There is nothing wrong with that. For, after all performing arts traditionally have grown in India under the patronage of the "durbar "

UNITY DRIVE

THE irrepresible Mr Raj Narain seems to have taken up the cudgels for opposition unity very seriously. He had invited top opposition leaders to his residence for tea on 27 August, and placed before them a formula for unity and formation of a new party; his argument is that since none of the opposition parties are carrying out any serious membership drive at present, his formula may be the right option at this time. Mr Raj Narain wants the opposition unity convention to have as delegates all those who were given tickets by the opposition parties in the last Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha, Zilla Parishad and Gaon Sabha elections. According to Mr Raj Narain's formula, the delegates of this convention could elect the leadership of the new party. But what he has, perhaps, overlooked is an electoral college as vast as the one suggested, would be unweildy. Secondly, none of the other opposition leaders seem to be keen on trying out his plan.

FROM ONE ARUN TO ANOTHER



M. L. Kainth

Rajiv Gandhi : no official post now?

RAJIV Gandhi seems to have shifted his preference from Arun Nehru to another aid, Arun Singh. Arun Nehru, a distant cousin of Mr Gandhi's and the MP from Rae Bareli, had been his favourite adviser for a long time. But now the limelight seems to have been stolen by Arun Singh, a schoolmate of Mr Gandhi who resigned his managerial job with a Calcutta firm last year to be an aide of the Prime Minister's son. When Rajiv and Sonia Gandhi decided to go to London to attend the Farnborough air show, Arun Singh and his wife Nina were selected to be the companions of the VIP couple. Incidentally, in September, Rajiv Gandhi will be spending more time abroad than at home. He was in the UK in the first week, and will accompany his mother to the Soviet Union in the third week. The chances of his being made an AICC(I) general secretary, in the meantime, have somewhat receded.

D.E.NIZAMUDDIN

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